

Accuracy and Anger Bias: Judging Black and White Children's Emotions

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Background

- Racism is prevalent in the school system. Black students are given harsher and more frequent punishments than their white peers, (e.g., Ford, 2013; Skiba et al., 2011).
- One mechanism by which racism may be activated is through biases in emotion recognition, such that black people are seen as angry even when they are displaying other emotions or are seen as angry much more quickly than white people (Halberstadt et al., in review; Hugenberg, 2005; Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2004).

Present Study: We tested associations between **emotion recognition** with regard to student race and gender.

Method

Participants: 178 preservice teachers

Age: 22.48 (18-50) years

Gender: 88.2% Female

Ethnicity: 66.9% White, 7.3% Biracial, 5.6% Black, 20.2% Other

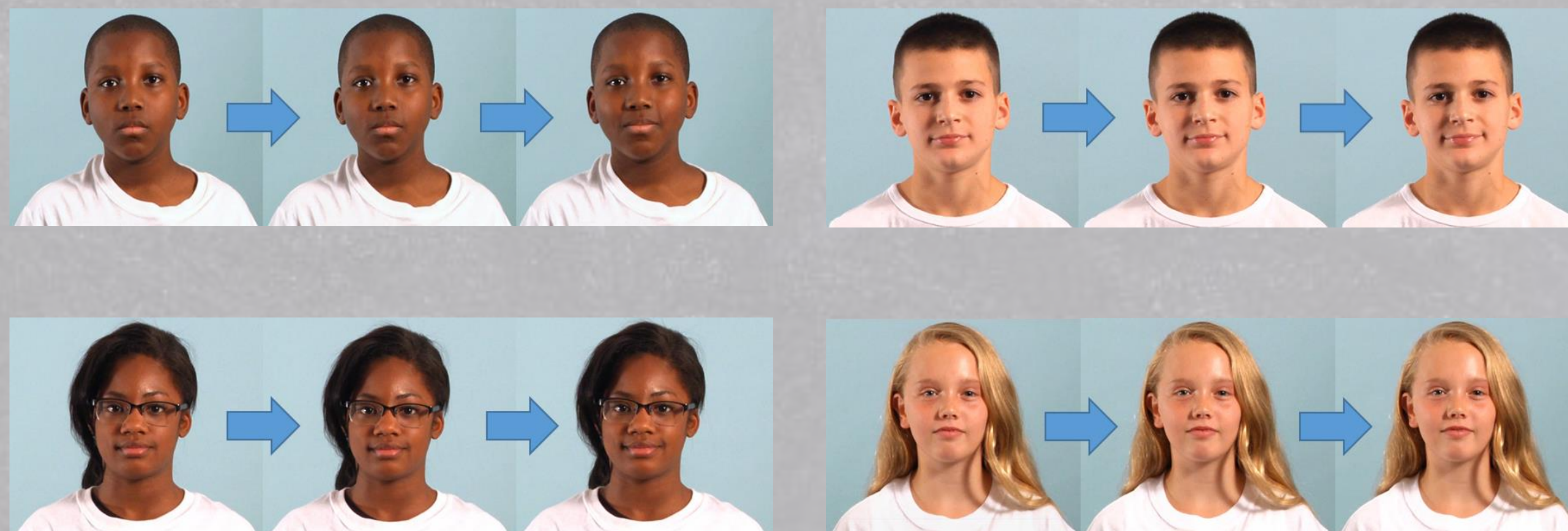
Measures:

- Child Increasingly Clear Emotions Task
- Child IAT Task of Implicit Bias
- Racialized Explicit Attitudes of Classroom Teachers

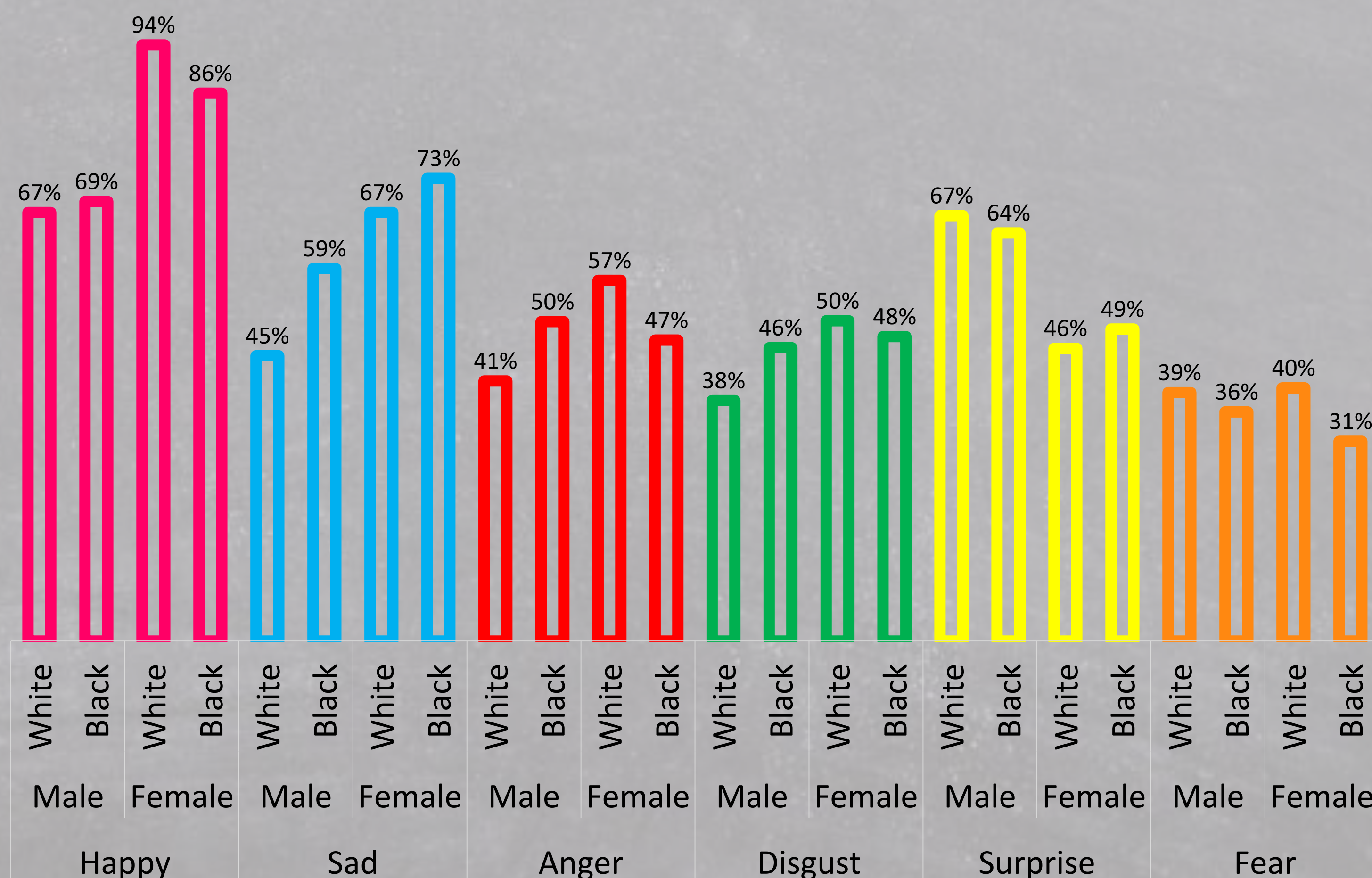
Operationalization:

- Emotion Accuracy:** Correct identification of 6 emotional expressions
- Anger Bias:** Incorrect identification of the other 5 emotional expressions as **anger**

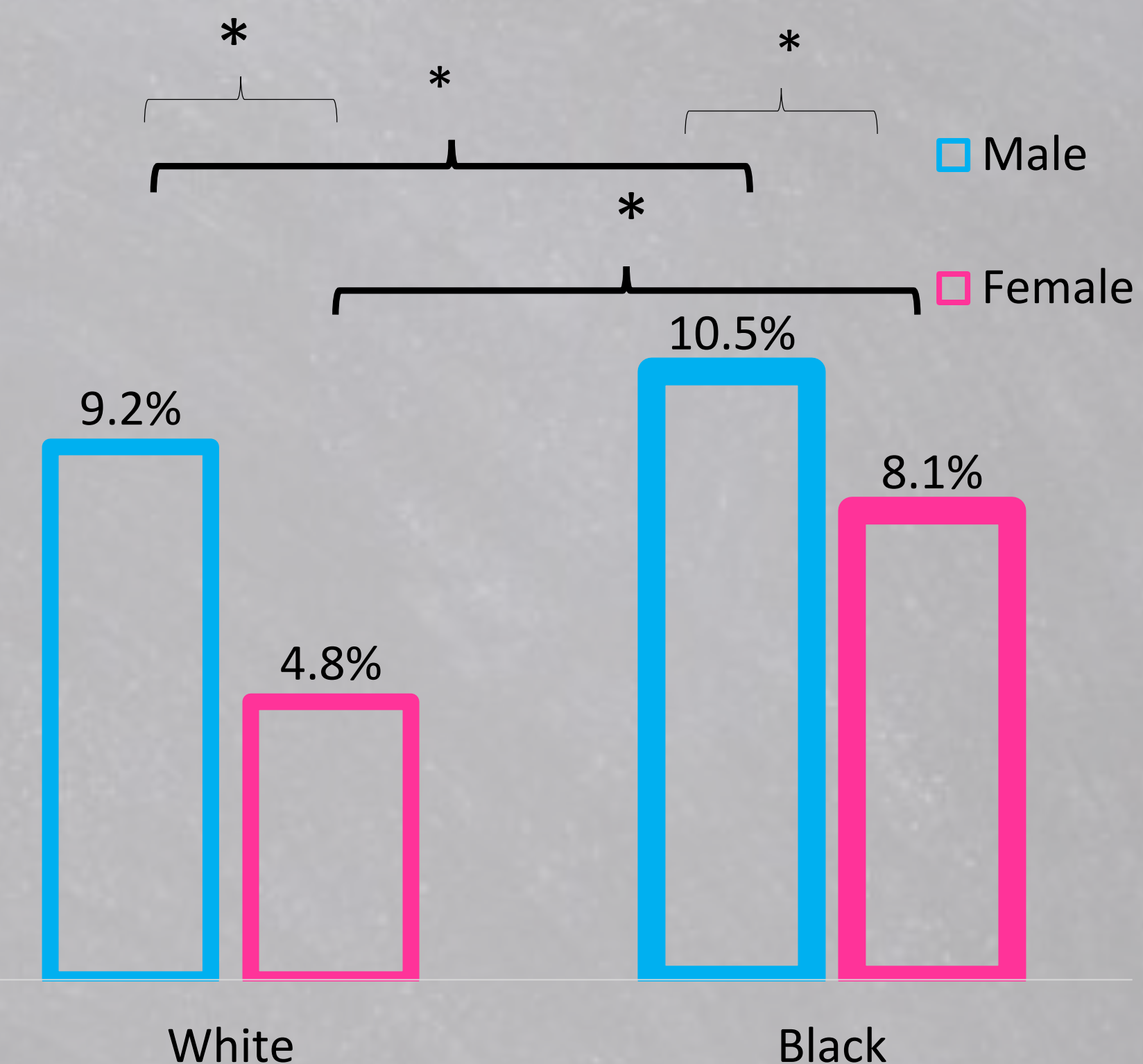
Increasingly Clear Emotions



Results: Accuracy



Results: Anger Bias



Conclusions

Although accuracy did not differ for Black vs White children, **anger bias** told a very different story: Preservice teachers **INCORRECTLY** perceived Black boys as angry more often than White boys, and also perceived Black girls as angry more often than White girls.

In sum, emotion recognition may be one pathway by which racism is perpetuated in the schools.

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