

STEREOTYPE USE AND REBOUND FOLLOWING DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS AND
INDIRECT CUES: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY

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PREVIEW

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STEREOTYPE USE AND REBOUND FOLLOWING DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS AND INDIRECT CUES: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY

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University of Nebraska, 2005

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Research has found that stereotype suppression often leads to a rebound effect. People who attempt to suppress stereotypes are more likely to use them in subsequent judgments compared to people who did not initially attempt suppression. However, the rebound effect may be culturally specific (Zhang & Hunt, 2004). Further, research only has examined the effects of direct instructions to avoid stereotypes. This dissertation examined stereotype use following direct suppression instructions and indirect anti-bias cues from a cross-cultural perspective. We also explored how internal motivation (IM) and external motivation (EM) to avoid prejudice moderated these processes. We hypothesized that, like direct suppression instructions, indirect anti-bias cues would lead to stereotype suppression and rebound. Because they have more experience suppressing unwanted thoughts, Chinese participants would be less likely than U.S. participants to experience stereotype rebound regardless of type of instructions. Finally, because

Chinese individuals prefer indirect communication styles, indirect cues were expected to be particularly effective for their suppression.

Participants were 439 college students from the U.S. and China, randomly assigned into one of three conditions: direct suppression instructions, indirect anti-bias cue, or a control condition. They wrote two stories about individuals from similarly stereotyped social groups in both cultures: illegal immigrants in the U.S. and migrant workers in China. As predicted, both direct suppression instructions and indirect cues were effective at eliciting stereotype suppression. Stereotype rebound was found to be a culturally specific phenomenon moderated by motivations to avoid prejudice. U.S. participants showed increased stereotype use regardless of instruction type. In contrast, Chinese participants who received indirect cues and high IM Chinese individuals who received direct instructions did not experience the rebound effect. The only Chinese participants who showed increased stereotype use were low IM individuals in the direct instruction condition, suggesting that indirect cues were more effective for Chinese individuals to maintain stereotype suppression. This study also provided initial evidence suggesting that the joint effects of IM and EM vary according to the suppression context.

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Stereotype Use and Rebound Following Direct Instructions and Indirect Cues:
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PREVIEW

Stereotype Use and Rebound Following Direct Instructions and Indirect Cues: A Cross-Cultural Study

As a basic cognitive process, stereotyping can simplify complex judgments and save cognitive energy (Macrae, Milne, & Bodenhausen, 1994), but stereotype use also has potential negative consequences such as leading to prejudice and discrimination. People are often unaware that their thoughts and actions are being influenced by stereotypes (for reviews, see Fiske, 1998; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). When individuals are concerned that their judgments may be biased due to stereotyping, they often attempt to control stereotype use through suppression efforts (Devine, 1989; Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991; Monteith, 1993; Moskowitz, Gollwitzer, & Wasel, 1999). However, several studies suggest that stereotype suppression is difficult and likely to be ineffective in that it often leads to a later “rebound” effect of increased stereotype activation and use (Macrae, Bodenhausen, & Milne, 1998; Macrae, Bodenhausen, Milne, & Jetten, 1994; Wegner & Erber, 1992; for a review, see Monteith, Sherman, & Devine, 1998). Nevertheless, stereotype rebound may not always occur. Recent research showed that several factors moderate stereotype use and rebound (Monteith, Sherman, et al., 1998).

In this dissertation, after reviewing existing research on stereotype suppression and its moderating factors, we will discuss the likely role of culture in those processes. We then will expand the previous research and present an experiment investigating how different types of suppression instructions moderate people’s stereotype use and rebound

in different cultural environments. The study also will examine how internal and external motivations to avoid prejudice impact these processes.

PREVIEW

Chapter 1 Literature Review

Stereotype Suppression and Rebound

Although stereotypes can be automatically activated by exposure to cues such as a group label or a member of a stigmatized group (for reviews, see Bodenhausen & Macrae, 1998; Fiske, 1998), people are not bound to apply them. They can suppress stereotype use by banishing those thoughts from their minds. For example, people may try not to think about the stereotypes associated with a target by focusing on other characteristics that the target also might possess. Stereotype suppression is difficult because it is a motivated and resource-consuming process. Individuals who are sufficiently motivated can inhibit stereotype-relevant thoughts through effortful processes. However, cognitive capacity (Wegner, 1994) or self regulatory resources (Gordijn, Hindricks, Koomen, & Knippenberg, 2004) are essential for these processes to succeed. The suppression process is easily disrupted, for example, when individuals have to dedicate their cognitive resources to other tasks. Also, research has shown that initial suppression attempts can deplete people's regulatory resources and therefore their later attempts to suppress stereotypes about a different target group will fail (Gordijn et al., 2004).

When individuals stop consciously trying to suppress stereotypes, they often experience a rebound of stereotypical thoughts, leading them to be more strongly influenced by stereotypes than they were prior to suppression attempts (Macrae, Bodenhausen, et al., 1994; Monteith, Spicer, & Tooman, 1998). For example, Macrae and his colleagues (Macrae, Bodenhausen, et al., 1994, Study 1) found that participants who initially were instructed to suppress stereotypes about a skinhead later wrote more

stereotypical stories than did participants who were never instructed to inhibit their stereotypes.

Different theories have attempted to explain why there is increased stereotype use after initial suppression attempts from both cognitive and motivational perspectives. Wegner's (1994) theory of ironic processes in mental control asserts that the rebound effect occurs because two cognitive processes must function simultaneously for suppression to be successful. An automatic monitoring process searches for unwanted thoughts, and a controlled operating process replaces located thoughts with distracters. When cognitive resources are diverted from stereotype suppression, the monitoring process continues to identify unwanted thoughts, but the operating process does not have the resources to generate distracters. As a result, stereotypes become more accessible and influential than they were before suppression. Another explanation was proposed by Liberman and colleagues (Liberman & Foerster, 2000). They claimed that suppressing a construct induces a need to use it, and subsequent expression satisfies this need and reduces the accessibility of need-related constructs.

Moderators of the Rebound Effect

Personal Standards

Accumulating research suggests that the stereotype rebound effect may not be inevitable. For example, the prejudice level of the suppresser was found to be related to the occurrence of the rebound effect. Consistent evidence showed that low-prejudice individuals not only are less likely to use stereotypes in their judgments of others (Devine, 1989; Kawakami, Dion, & Dovidio, 1998; Lepore & Brown, 1997), but they also show smaller rebound effects than do high-prejudice individuals (Monteith, Spicer,

et al., 1998). Researchers posit that these differences reflect the influence of personal standards related to the application of stereotypes. High- and low-prejudice people both learn to associate stereotypes with certain social groups during early socialization; thus both are equally knowledgeable of those stereotypes. However, they differ in their gradually developed personal standards that determine their behaviors (Devine, 1989; Fiske, 1998). For example, being egalitarian is important for low- prejudice people. Such standards often are internalized to be part of the self concepts of these individuals (Devine et al., 1991), therefore low –prejudice individuals continue stereotype suppression even when not directly told to do so. In contrast, high-prejudice individuals lack personal standards about being egalitarian and may attempt to suppress stereotypes only when motivated by self-presentational concerns or when instructed to do so by an authority figure. They therefore easily experience a rebound effect when the situational demands no longer exist (Devine, 1989; Monteith, Sherman, et al., 1998; Monteith, Spicer, et al., 1998). Although this work has enhanced our understanding of stereotype rebound, recently, researchers have moved beyond theoretical arguments related to personal standards associated with low and high prejudice levels to directly measure underlying motivations related to prejudice regulation.

Internal Motivation versus External Motivation to Control Prejudice

Recent research has pointed out that it is important to distinguish between internal motivation (IM) and external motivation (EM) to control prejudice when investigating people's regulation of stereotype use (Plant & Devine, 1998). IM is defined as motivation that arises from internalized, personally important, non-prejudiced

standards. In contrast, EM is defined as motivation derived from social pressure to comply with non-prejudiced norms (Plant & Devine, 1998).

Because theoretically IM and EM are two independent constructs, the correlation between them is small (Plant & Devine, 1998). The relationships between IM/EM and traditional prejudice measures are complex. Research has found that IM is closely related to traditional attitude measures, and high IM is associated with low prejudice levels, because of the emphasis on internalized personal standards. In contrast, EM is only slightly correlated with attitude measures, such that high EM is associated with higher prejudice levels (Plant & Devine, 1998). Another distinction is that high IM individuals experience high levels of guilt-related feelings when they violate their personal standards about egalitarianism, but high EM individuals experience fearful or threatened affect when they fail to meet external demands to respond without prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998).

As EM focuses on how others will react to prejudice responses and IM focuses on oneself as an evaluative audience, IM is necessary to sustain efforts to respond without prejudice over time, particularly when there is lack of social pressure for avoiding prejudice (Plant & Devine, 1998). Consistent with this proposition, in Gordijn and colleagues' (2004) study, high IM individuals showed a weaker rebound effect than low IM individuals following direct suppression instructions. This finding has been explained in terms of both the underlying cognitive and motivational processes.

A cognitive explanation states that regulating stereotype use is a type of self control, which requires inner resources (Muraven & Baumeister, 2000). Because low IM individuals are less internally motivated to control stereotypes, when a situation requires

suppression, they have to exert more effort to meet the requirement, and the suppression process will be more resource consuming. In contrast, high IM individuals have internal motivations in line with the situational demand, and therefore they are likely to exert similar levels of effort regardless of suppression instructions (Gordijn et al., 2004). Thus the lack of a subsequent rebound among high IM individuals might be due to their lower consumption of regulatory resources during the initial suppression.

A more motivational difference also might lead to differences in suppression experience and ability. Like low-prejudice individuals who are likely to attempt stereotype suppression whenever they realize the possibility of being biased against stereotyped individuals (Monteith, Sherman, et al., 1998; Monteith, Spicer, et al., 1998), high IM individuals also may frequently practice stereotype suppression. As a result, they may develop more efficient operating processes that can maintain stereotype suppression under higher cognitive loads (cf., Wegner, 1994).

Joint effects of IM and EM. Although high IM individuals are overall less likely than low IM individuals to behave in prejudiced ways, it is necessary to study the joint effects of IM and EM on people's stereotype use. Due to the different natures of IM and EM, levels of high and low IM and EM may lead to differences in individuals' self-generated regulation efforts (i.e., self-initiated suppression behavior; Plant & Devine, 1998). Individuals who report being primarily externally motivated to respond without prejudice (low IM-high EM) are very low in their self-initiated efforts for non-prejudiced reactions; in contrast, individuals who are motivated primarily by internal reasons to respond without prejudice (high IM-low EM) should be very high in self-initiated efforts for regulation. Individuals who are motivated for both internal and external reasons (high

IM-high EM) should possess intermediate levels of self-initiation, because their efforts to regulate prejudiced responses are not completely derived from internalized standards. Finally, individuals who are not motivated by either internal or external motivations have the lowest levels of self-initiated regulation as they rarely attempt to control their stereotyped thoughts (Plant & Devine, 1998).

Consistent with this reasoning, individuals who scored high on both IM and EM reported being more likely to violate their personal standards compared with their more self-determined high IM-low EM counterparts (Plant & Devine, 1998). This finding might explain why some low-prejudice individuals cannot avoid acting in a prejudiced manner occasionally. Individuals who are low in prejudice because of their high IM, but are also high in EM, (which is not captured in the traditional prejudice measures) may find it harder to regulate biased responses (Plant & Devine, 1998).

In addition, IM and EM may help explain difference between explicit and implicit measures of bias. Recently, researchers have investigated the use of implicit measures for assessing prejudice and stereotyping. For example, if an individual responds more quickly to negative words following Black names than White names on a computerized lexical decision task, one may infer that the individual has more negative attitudes toward Blacks than Whites (Devine, Plant, Amodio, Harmon-Jones, & Vance, 2002; Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). The extremely short period of time that the primes show on the computer screen make it very difficult to control one's responses during those kinds of tasks (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). Notably, research often reveals inconsistent findings between explicit and implicit measures (e.g., Karpinski & Hilton, 2001; for a review, see Fazio & Olson, 2003), which might be explained as a joint

effect of IM and EM on different types of prejudice control (Devine et al., 2002). IM moderates the “easy” types of bias control associated with explicit attitude measures. High IM leads to low explicit prejudice, no matter the EM level is. In contrast, both IM and EM moderate “difficult to control” types of prejudice such as implicit lexical decision tasks. As individuals high on both IM and EM have less self-initiated regulation efforts compared with high IM-low EM individuals, they show biases on implicit measures, in which it is more difficult for someone to control displays of bias.

As a result, individuals’ responses toward certain social groups are likely to vary as a function of their IM and EM as well as the social context (Plant & Devine, 1998). This dissertation included different types of suppression instructions as different contexts to examine the joint effect of IM and EM on stereotype suppression, particularly to further distinguish between the responses of high IM-low EM individuals and high IM-high EM individuals.

Cues for Stereotype Control

To date, most studies have investigated people’s stereotype use and rebound by providing them with explicit experimental suppression instructions. This kind of instruction does not differ in its accessibility or interpretability to different individuals. However, in real life situations, people might encounter indirect anti-bias cues, which might be interpreted differently by different individuals. Some people might be more sensitive to and even actively search for cues to regulate intergroup behaviors. For instance, when reading indirect messages about fairness toward people with AIDS contained in a non-profit advertisement, some individuals might grasp its anti-bias nature and spontaneously regulate their reactions toward people with AIDS, whereas some

others might not. Further, the advertisement might become a generalized anti-bias reminder for certain individuals, resulting in their regulation of stereotyped responses toward another social group, such as illegal immigrants.

Although existing research on stereotype suppression has not examined indirect cues, studies related to detecting this type of cue can be found among research that demonstrates the power of social norms on curbing people's attitudes and responses. For example, hearing a confederate express non-prejudiced opinions influences participants' reports of their own attitudes (Monteith, Deneen, & Tooman, 1996). However, even in these studies, the degree of "indirectness" of the suggestion is limited. For instance, in Monteith et al.'s study (1996), the suppression cue was pro-Black remarks, and the target for the later attitude measures also involved Blacks. Further, this line of studies usually does not distinguish between the effects of IM and EM.

Therefore, this dissertation goes beyond the limitations of previous research by examining stereotype use following indirect cues suggesting the need for stereotype control. We expected that individual differences in suppression motivation might be related to differences in detecting indirect cues and responding with attempts at stereotype control.

IM, EM, and indirect cues. Because IM is associated with internalized standards to avoid prejudice, high IM suggests strong self-generated regulation efforts. In contrast, EM is associated with external needs for controlling prejudice and usually is considered to undermine self-initiated regulation efforts. Thus, high IM-low EM individuals should have stronger ability to regulate prejudice than should high IM-high EM individuals (Devine et al., 2002; Plant & Devine, 1998). However, when the suppression context

involves indirect anti-bias cues, actual suppression may not totally depend on self-initiated regulation capacity; it also may be related to the ability to detect such anti-bias cues. As high EM individuals tend to focus on situational demands, they may pay more attention to and be better at detecting whether there are situational or normative demands to control stereotype use. Therefore, compared with high IM-low EM individuals, high IM-high EM individuals might have an advantage at detecting indirect cues, and thus be the ones who show the best suppression results in that context. Thus, the joint effects of IM and EM may depend on whether a context requires suppression ability exclusively, or emphasizes detection ability as well.

To summarize, IM and EM are important moderators of stereotype suppression and rebound. How they jointly affect people's stereotype suppression, especially in different contexts, needs to be studied further. We now proceed to another potential moderator that is also very important to understand stereotype suppression, that is, cultural orientation.

The Influence of Culture

A considerable amount of research has demonstrated that cultural values, practices, and modes of thinking provide norms that govern people's behaviors and exert an influence on many important social psychological phenomena, such as individuals' self-concepts and information processing strategies (for reviews, see Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, & Nisbett, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Miller & Schaberg, 2003; Nisbett, Peng, Choi, & Norenzayan, 2001). Although most research on the stereotype suppression and rebound effect has been conducted with U.S. and European participants, our previous research (Zhang & Hunt, 2004) suggests that the stereotype rebound effect may be a

culturally specific rather than universal phenomenon. In our research, we asked both Chinese and U.S. participants to write two stories based on pictures about two different homosexual males. For their first stories, half of the participants received suppression instructions that asked them not to let stereotypes influence their writing. Regardless of condition, participants did not receive any suppression instructions for their second stories. Then we coded the contents of the stories for stereotypes and rated how stereotypical each story was. Our analyses with both types of data revealed consistent patterns. Chinese participants showed less increased of stereotype use over time compared with the U.S. participants following direct suppression instructions.

The finding that the cultural background of the perceiver moderates the stereotype rebound effect can be understood from the different construal of selves and emphasis on personal relationships in the different cultures. In individualist cultures such as the U.S., the self is seen as independent and constructed largely on the basis of internal attributes, such as traits and values. People often pay attention to their unique selves instead of the whole group, and personal expression and autonomy are highly emphasized. In contrast, in collectivist cultures such as China, group harmony and collective goals are valued more than personal beliefs and desires (Fiske et al., 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). People pay more attention to personal relationships and exert control on their own needs to keep harmony within the group. These differences on self construal might lead to differences on individuals' cognitive resources, motivation to follow instructions, and reasoning styles- factors that may eventually contribute to differences in stereotype rebound.

Cognitive resources. Collectivist cultures place a strong emphasis on inhibiting personal beliefs and desires in order to maintain group harmony (Heine, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Learning how to follow rules and orders is a basic part of socialization. Therefore, people in those cultures are likely to have extensive experience suppressing beliefs and desires that are in conflict with those of others (Gabrenya & Hwang, 1996). This experience may increase their ability to regulate unwanted thoughts (Muraven, Baumeister, & Tice, 1999), shifting it from a resource-intensive controlled process to a less effortful, potentially automatic process (Bargh, 1997; cf. Wegner, 1994). Because fewer cognitive and/or general resources are consumed during suppression, collectivists may be less likely to experience stereotype rebound than individualists, who have less suppression experience.

Motivation to follow instructions. The dominant Confucian philosophy in Chinese culture emphasizes the hierarchical order in society and interpersonal relationships (Bond, 1996; Gabrenya & Hwang, 1996; Russell & Yik, 1996). Chinese individuals are strongly motivated to fit in and maintain their appropriate places in these hierarchies (Gabrenya & Hwang, 1996), for instance, being submissive to one's parents or elders, or individuals in authority positions (Gow, Balla, Kember, & Hau, 1996). Therefore, in experiments, Chinese participants may be more motivated than U.S. participants to follow instructions from the experimenter, who may be seen as an authority figure. As a result, Chinese individuals may strive to maintain stereotype suppression for considerable periods of time, thereby outlasting individualists.

Reasoning styles. People's views of relationships between objects and their reasoning styles also may impact suppression efforts. Individuals from Eastern Asian

cultures are more likely than U.S. participants to consider the relationship between objects and contexts. They tend to use a more holistic approach and pay more attention to the context, whereas U.S. individuals tend to take an analytic approach to cognitive tasks, which involves detaching objects from their context and using formal logic and decision rules to make explanations and predictions (Nisbett et al., 2001). Collectivists are more likely to detect covariation between objects and contexts (Ji, Peng, & Nisbett, 2000); they are less likely to experience the fundamental attribution error (Choi & Nisbett, 1998) and make more situational rather than dispositional attributions (Morris & Peng, 1994); and they are more likely to consider multiple causal factors when trying to understand events (Choi, Dalal, & Kim-Prieto, 2003). In the same vein, when asked to write consecutive stories, collectivists might be more likely than individualists to treat these tasks as being related to each other, and they may even unconsciously apply the instructions for the initial story to the second story. Therefore in stereotype suppression research these individuals can sustain suppression effort across the two stories. In contrast, individualists may less likely to make associations between separate story writing tasks, and thus may not attempt to suppress stereotypes in the second story.

Possible cultural influences on perceiving indirect anti-bias cues. Our earlier study (Zhang, & Hunt, 2004) revealed cultural differences in stereotype rebound using direct suppression instructions. However, it is possible that the interpretation of indirect anti-bias cues may be influenced by culture as well.

Based on the earlier discussion of different reasoning styles, just as collectivists are more likely to pay attention to environmental information than are individualists (Masuda & Nisbett, 2001; Nisbett et al., 2001), they also may be more likely to notice

and be influenced by indirect anti-bias cues, compared with their individualist counterparts.

Cross-cultural studies on indirect communication styles also support this prediction. Indirect communication involves two dimensions: the extent to which the hearer looks for and finds indirect meanings in the remarks of others (the interpretation dimension) and the extent to which the speaker speaks indirectly (the production dimension; Holtgraves, 1997). Cross-cultural variability in terms of individual autonomy and group connectedness suggests motivational differences to use and attend to indirect communication cues. Research has established an overall preference for indirectness in communication in collectivist cultures (Gao, Ting-Toomey, & Gudykunst, 1996; Holtgraves, 1997; Okabe, 1987; Yum, 1988). Indirectness in communication serves to preserve face and interpersonal harmony in people's daily interactions (Gao et al., 1996; Sanchez-Burks, Lee, Choi, Nisbett, Zhao, & Koo, 2003). For Chinese people, implicit or indirect communication becomes a social rule to follow in various contexts, so "one does not spell out everything, but leaves the 'unspoken' to the listeners" (Gao et al., 1996, p. 284). Likewise, in comparisons of Japanese organizations and American organizations, it has been noted that American employees strive to communicate with each other in a precise and explicit manner, whereas Japanese often deliberately communicate in a vague and indirect manner (Hirokawa, 1987). Holtgraves (1997) also found that Korean participants tended to be more indirect, scoring significantly higher than the U.S. participants on both the interpretation and production dimensions of measures of indirectness.

Taken together, cultural differences in reasoning styles and communicating styles suggest that U.S. and Chinese participants may approach the indirect anti-bias cues differently. Chinese might be more sensitive to such cues appearing in social contexts and attend to them to a stronger degree. Moreover, unlike U.S. cultures in which context is assumed to play a much smaller role in communication, Chinese might “read between the lines,” interpret what they infer as relevant information, and engage in the later tasks under the influence of that information. As a result, indirect anti-bias cues might have a stronger influence on Chinese than on U.S. individuals.

Overview of the Present Study

The present study sought to replicate and extend the findings of our earlier research (Zhang & Hunt, 2004) by using both direct suppression instructions and indirect anti-bias cues to examine whether there are cultural differences in stereotype suppression and rebound. We also investigated how individual’s internal and external motivations to avoid prejudice moderate their stereotype use.

In order to do this, we conducted a study in both the U.S. and mainland China. We applied Macrae and colleagues' research paradigm (Macrae, Bodenhausen, et al., 1994) measuring stereotype use and rebound by having each participant generate two stories about an individual from a stigmatized social group. The rebound effect is reflected as an increase of stereotype use from the initial story to the second story. Before their initial story writing, participants received either direct suppression instructions or an indirect anti-bias cue consist of an advertisement promoting awareness of prejudice against another social group. For their second story, no participants received any suppression instructions. Participants then finished questionnaires including measures of