

Stigma Consciousness Among Asian Americans: Impact of Positive Stereotypes in Interracial Roommate Relationships

Deborah Son and J. Nicole Shelton
Princeton University

The present research examined the intrapersonal consequences that Asian Americans experience as a result of their concerns about appearing highly intelligent, a positive stereotype associated with their racial group. A daily diary study of Asian-American college students ($N = 47$) revealed that higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with greater anxiety, contact avoidance, perceived need to change to fit in with a roommate, and concerns about being viewed as intelligent for Asian Americans living with a European-American (vs. racial minority) roommate. Further, among Asian Americans with a European-American roommate, concerns about appearing intelligent partially mediated the relationships between stigma consciousness and the outcomes of anxiety and perceived need to change to fit in. In sum, these findings demonstrate that positive stereotypes about the group—not just negative stereotypes—may lead to undesirable intrapersonal outcomes.

Keywords: Asian Americans, stigma consciousness, stereotypes, interracial, roommates

Stereotypes are often defined as negative overgeneralizations about a group of people. People are aware of unflattering stereotypes about their group and suffer from their adverse effects. Considerable research on stereotype threat, for example, demonstrates that concerns about negative stereotypes regarding the in-group's ability in a domain leads to performance deficits in that domain (Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). The majority of stereotype research has examined the impact of negative stereotypes, yet groups are often stereotyped in positive ways. Asian Americans are consistently stereotyped as being highly competent and possessing traits of intelligent, diligence, and skillfulness (Maddux, Galinsky, Cuddy, & Polifroni, 2008). To what extent do concerns about positive stereotypes affect individuals' affective and cognitive outcomes in intergroup interactions, such as anxiety and perceptions that one must change to fit in? Our research examines the potential negative consequences that Asian Americans experience because of

their concerns about appearing intelligent, a positive stereotype associated with their racial group.

Stigma Consciousness

The extent to which Asian Americans wrestle with concerns about being stereotyped varies by person. Some Asian Americans are particularly prone to think that people view them stereotypically, whereas others are less likely to endorse such beliefs (Chan & Mendoza-Denton, 2008). In other words, Asian Americans vary in levels of stigma consciousness. Stigma consciousness refers to individual differences in the extent to which people expect to be stereotyped based on their group membership (Pinel, 1999). Stigma consciousness has serious consequences for intergroup interactions, with divergent outcomes for people who are high and low in stigma consciousness.

Concerns about being stereotyped influence people's willingness to engage in intergroup interactions and their experiences during these interactions. Highly stigma conscious individuals try to avoid situations where the likelihood of being stereotyped is high (Pinel & Paulin, 2005). When avoiding the situation is not possible, however, these individuals negotiate the situation in ways to reduce the chances of being stereotyped. In a study that required women to

Deborah Son and J. Nicole Shelton, Department of Psychology, Princeton University.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Deborah Son, Psychology Department, Green Hall, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ 08540. E-mail: dson@princeton.edu

interact with men during a game of "Jeopardy," the higher women scored on gender stigma consciousness, the more likely they were to avoid stereotypically male topics (e.g., automobile names and the military; Pinel, 1999, Study 6). In addition, the more people expect to be stereotyped, the more negative outcomes they experience during actual intergroup interactions (Shelton, Richeson, & Salvatore, 2005). For example, racial minorities (Asians, blacks, and Latinos) who expected to be targets of racial prejudice experienced more negative affect, liked their partner less, and felt less authentic during interactions with European Americans (Shelton et al., 2005). Taken together, research in this area provides unequivocal evidence that expecting to be the target of prejudice is associated with negative intrapersonal consequences.

The Model Minority Stereotype

Not only do Asian Americans vary in the extent to which they are concerned about being stereotyped, they may also vary in terms of which stereotype they are concerned about. Unlike many other racial minority groups, Asian Americans are stereotyped positively by being seen as highly competent. The so-called model minority stereotype arose in part to blame other racial minority groups as being personally responsible for their shortcomings in education, income, and socioeconomic status instead of acknowledging the existence of systemic and historical racism (Cheng, 1997). Although positive in nature, the stereotype that Asian Americans are intelligent incurs undesirable costs, particularly in interpersonal relationships with European Americans. Whereas other Asian Americans may be more sympathetic about academic difficulties because they experience firsthand the burden of living up to the model minority stereotype, European Americans may stereotype all Asian Americans as being highly competent and pressure them to retain the facade of academic success. In addition, given that European Americans are also perceived to be highly competent compared to other racial minority groups (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), Asian Americans may feel greater pressure to embody the model minority stereotype when around European Americans compared

with when they interact with other racial minorities.

Moreover, if Asian Americans do confirm the stereotype that they are intelligent, they may encounter a backlash. Although the endorsement of the competence stereotype is associated with admiration and respect, it is also associated with feelings of hostility (Ho & Jackson, 2001; Lin, Kwan, Cheung, & Fiske, 2005). These feelings stem primarily from outgroup members' feelings of threat that Asian Americans might gain power and control over desirable resources (Maddux et al., 2008). Given that European Americans exist at the top of the social hierarchy, they are more likely to feel threatened by Asian Americans' success compared with other racial groups. Therefore, Asian Americans who are concerned with appearing intelligent may be particularly anxious that they will be the targets of European Americans' negative reactions.

The Present Study

In this study, we build upon the aforementioned research on stigma consciousness and intergroup interactions by focusing specifically on Asian Americans' concerns with being stereotyped as intelligent during intergroup interactions. Using a daily diary method with college roommates, we examined the extent to which stigma consciousness among Asian Americans is related to appearing smart during daily interactions with European Americans. We also examined whether stigma consciousness is associated with greater anxiety during intergroup interactions and the desire to avoid these interactions. Intergroup interactions are likely to heighten the relationship between stigma consciousness and negative interpersonal outcomes because they often evoke anxiety and the desire to flee the situation (for a review, see Trawalter, Richeson, & Shelton, 2009). Because Asian Americans express feeling more anxious around European Americans than around any other racial group (Stephan & Stephan, 1989), having a European-American roommate may exacerbate their apprehensions about being stereotyped. We therefore hypothesized that higher levels of stigma consciousness among Asian Americans would predict anxiety, desire to avoid contact with their roommates, and concerns with appearing smart in roommate relationships with European Americans. In addition, we predicted

that concerns with appearing smart would mediate the relationship between Asian Americans' stigma consciousness and reactions during interactions with a European-American roommate.

Method

A total of 47 Asian-American undergraduates (32 females) at a private university participated in a diary study on roommate relationships for \$50 and a lottery drawing for monetary prizes (up to \$250). The students were randomly assigned to be roommates by university officials during the summer before their freshman year. The majority of participants self-reported as being Chinese (62%), followed by Southeast Asian (17%), Korean (13%), and Japanese (2%); the remaining 6% did not report their specific ethnic background. Moreover, the vast majority of our participants was born in the United States (62.5%), with the next largest percentage born in China (25%); the remaining participants were born in Korea, Canada, or did not list their country of birth. Considering that most freshmen are 18 years old, participants spent the majority of their lives in the United States ($M = 14.86$, $SD = 4.81$).

Procedure

We recruited participants at the beginning of the school year to participate in a study about freshmen roommates and college experiences. Participants attended an orientation session where they completed a prediary questionnaire and were instructed that they would complete daily diary questionnaires during the next 3 weeks. The prediary questionnaire included demographic questions and several individual difference measures. After the participants completed the prediary questionnaire, we gave them instructions about how to complete the daily diary questionnaires. Specifically, we told participants that they would receive an e-mail at the end of the day with the URL for the diary webpage to remind them to complete the diary questionnaire. We urged participants to complete a diary entry every night. Participants who failed to complete the questionnaire by 8 a.m. the following morning received an automatic e-mail reminder at that time. Participants completed the diary questionnaire from Sun-

day to Thursday for 3 weeks (15 days total). At the end of this period, participants attended a postdiary session to complete a final questionnaire, hear a debriefing about the study, and receive payment.

Background Measures

Roommate demographics. Participants indicated the race and sex of their roommate. All participants had a same-sex roommate. Twenty-five participants had a European-American roommate and 22 had a racial minority roommate (8 Asian Americans, 4 blacks, 2 Latinos, 3 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, 5 biracial minorities).

Stigma consciousness scale. We used Pines's (1999) stigma consciousness scale to assess the extent to which participants expected to be stereotyped as a result of their race/ethnicity. Participants indicated agreement with items, such as "Stereotypes about my ethnic group have not affected me personally" and "I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypical of my ethnic group" using a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). After reverse coding appropriate items, we created an averaged composite with higher values indicating greater stigma consciousness ($\alpha = .71$).

Daily Level Measures

Anxiety. Participants completed eight items (e.g., anxious, uncomfortable, uncertain) to assess how anxious they felt during interactions with their roommate that day using a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The items were averaged to form an anxiety composite ($\alpha = .89$), with higher values indicating greater anxiety. We adapted these items from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule and the Profile of Mood States, and they have been used in previous research to assess anxiety in an intergroup context (e.g., see Shelton, West, & Trail, 2010).

Contact avoidance preference. Participants indicated how often they wished they had a different roommate that day using a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*a great deal*).

Need to change to fit in. Participants indicated agreement with the statement "I felt I had to change myself to fit in with my room-

mate today” using a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Stereotype concerns. Participants answered several questions that assessed their concerns about how they were being viewed by their roommate using a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). To assess concerns with the stereotype that Asian Americans are smart, participants indicated agreement with the statement “I was concerned about not appearing smart during interactions with my roommate today.” To assess concerns with a stereotype not associated with Asian Americans, participants indicated agreement with the statement “I was worried about appearing prejudiced during interactions with my roommate today.” Finally, to assess a general level of impression management concern that is not explicitly tied to an Asian-American stereotype, participants indicated agreement with the statement “I felt concerned about the impression I was making during interactions with my roommate today.”

Results

Main Analysis

We used mixed-model analyses, which can yield fractional degrees of freedom, to explore the relationships between Asian Americans’ stigma consciousness and the race of their roommate on the outcome variables while also exploring whether these relationships change over time. We entered stigma consciousness (centered), roommate race, day of study (centered), all two-way interactions, and the three-way interaction in the model. None of the two-way interactions between stigma consciousness and race of roommate reported below were

qualified by a three-way interaction with day of study, indicating that the relationships did not change over time. Therefore, day of study will not be discussed further in the results. In addition, participant gender will not be discussed further because it did not moderate any of the effects reported in the manuscript. Below, we only discuss the significant main effects and interactions yielded from our analyses. Descriptive statistics for all of the variables can be found in Table 1.

Anxiety. A mixed-model analysis with stigma consciousness, race of roommate, day of study, and their interactions as the predictors and anxiety as the outcome variable revealed a main effect for stigma consciousness, $t(42.06) = 3.54, p = .001$, and a significant two-way interaction between stigma consciousness and race of roommate, $t(42.06) = 2.55, p = .015$ ($BIC = 736.660$). The main effect indicates that higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with greater anxiety (estimate = .210, $SE = .059$). The pattern of results for the two-way interaction supported our prediction (see Table 2 for estimates). Specifically, simple effects analyses revealed that for Asian Americans with a European-American roommate, higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with more anxiety during daily interactions, $t(42.07) = 4.44, p < .001$. However, for Asian Americans with a racial minority roommate, stigma consciousness was unrelated to anxiety experienced during daily interactions, $t(42.04) = .680, p = .500$.

Contact avoidance preference. A mixed-model analysis with stigma consciousness, race of roommate, day of study, and their interactions as the predictors and participants’ desire to have a different roommate as the outcome vari-

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

| Variables | <i>M (SD)</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Stigma consciousness | 3.548 (1.077) | 1.000 | | | | | | |
| 2. Anxiety | 1.291 (0.056) | .450 | 1.000 | | | | | |
| 3. Contact avoidance | 1.411 (0.708) | .361 | .614 | 1.000 | | | | |
| 4. Need to change to fit in | 1.902 (0.993) | .322 | .571 | .437 | 1.000 | | | |
| 5. Concern with appearing smart | 1.758 (0.925) | .377 | .644 | .546 | .869 | 1.000 | | |
| 6. Concern with appearing prejudiced | 1.665 (0.977) | .390 | .581 | .545 | .828 | .843 | 1.000 | |
| 7. Concern with impression | 2.155 (1.154) | .320 | .596 | .357 | .884 | .799 | .800 | 1.000 |

Note. Correlations are pooled across time. All correlations are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 2
Estimates From Mixed-Model Analyses of Stigma Consciousness and Race of Roommate

| Outcome variables | Roommate race | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | European-American | Ethnic minority |
| Anxiety | .361 (.081) | .059 (.086) |
| Contact avoidance | .466 (.120) | -.007 (.127) |
| Need to change to fit in | .533 (.178) | .052 (.189) |
| Concern with appearing smart | .579 (.158) | .058 (.168) |

Note. Standard errors are in parentheses.

able revealed a main effect for stigma consciousness, $t(42.02) = 2.62$, $p = .012$, and a significant two-way interaction between stigma consciousness and race of roommate, $t(42.02) = 2.69$, $p = .010$ ($BIC = 1752.919$).

The main effect indicates that higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with a stronger desire to have a different roommate (estimate = .229, $SE = .088$). The pattern of results for the two-way interaction supported our prediction (see Table 2 for estimates). Specifically, for Asian Americans with a European-American roommate, higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with a stronger desire to have a different roommate during daily interactions, $t(41.95) = 3.88$, $p < .001$. However, for Asian Americans with a racial minority roommate, stigma consciousness was unrelated to the desire to have a different roommate during daily interactions, $t(42.09) = -0.06$, $p = .956$.

Need to change to fit in. A mixed-model analysis with stigma consciousness, roommate race, day of study, and their interactions as the predictors and the perceived need to change to fit in with the roommate as the outcome variable revealed a main effect for stigma consciousness, $t(41.98) = 2.25$, $p = .029$, and a marginally significant two-way interaction between stigma consciousness and race of roommate qualified the main effect, $t(41.98) = 1.85$, $p = .071$ ($BIC = 2039.233$). The main effect indicated that higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with a stronger need to feel one has to change to fit in with the roommate (estimate = .292, $SE = .129$). Consistent with predictions regarding the two-way interaction (see Table 2 for estimates), simple effect analyses revealed that for Asian Americans with a Euro-

pean-American roommate, higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with a stronger need to change to fit in during daily interactions, $t(42.02) = 2.99$, $p = .005$. However, for Asian Americans with a racial minority roommate, stigma consciousness was unrelated to the need to change to fit in during daily interactions, $t(41.95) = 0.28$, $p = .783$.

Stereotype concerns. Separate mixed-model analyses with stigma consciousness, roommate race, day of study, and their interactions as the predictors and the three items that assessed stereotype concerns as the outcome variables were conducted. The model with concerns about appearing smart as the outcome variable revealed a main effect for stigma consciousness, $t(42.17) = 2.75$, $p = .009$, and the predicted two-way interaction between stigma consciousness and race of roommate, $t(42.17) = 2.25$, $p = .029$ ($BIC = 1959.165$). The main effect indicated that higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with greater concerns about appearing smart (estimate = .318, $SE = .115$). Consistent with predictions (see Table 2 for estimates), simple effects analyses of the two-way interaction revealed that for Asian Americans with a European-American roommate, higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with greater concerns about appearing smart during daily interactions, $t(42.12) = 3.65$, $p = .001$. However, for Asian Americans with a racial minority roommate, stigma consciousness was unrelated to concerns about appearing smart during daily interactions, $t(42.22) = 0.34$, $p = .734$.

In contrast, the model with concerns about appearing prejudiced as the outcome variable did not reveal any significant effects. This finding is consistent with the notion that Asian Americans typically are not stereotyped as being prejudiced; thus, Asian Americans who are high in stigma consciousness are no more concerned about being perceived as prejudiced than those who are low in stigma consciousness.

The model with general concerns about forming a good impression as the outcome variable revealed a main effect for stigma consciousness, $t(42.04) = 2.25$, $p = .029$, indicating that higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with greater concern with making a good impression (estimate = .344, $SE = .152$). However, the two-way interaction between stigma

consciousness and race of roommate was not significant, $t(42.04) = 0.83$, $p = .413$ ($BIC = 2181.834$).

Taken together, the findings regarding different stereotype concerns suggest that Asian Americans with European-American (vs. racial minority) roommates who are high in stigma consciousness are particularly concerned about being evaluated by the specific stereotype associated with their group (i.e., intelligence), whereas no differences across stigma consciousness levels or roommate race were found regarding concerns with stereotypes unrelated to Asian Americans (i.e., prejudice) or concerns with general impressions.

Mediational Analysis

To test whether concerns about appearing smart among Asian Americans with European-American roommates mediated the relationships between stigma consciousness and the outcome variables of anxiety, desire to have a different roommate, and perceived need to change to fit in, we conducted the four-step mediational analysis outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). Concerns about appearing smart partially mediated the relationship between

stigma consciousness, anxiety, and perceived need to change to fit in but not for the desire to have a different roommate (see Figure 1).

Specifically, Step 1 tested the path from stigma consciousness and roommate race to the outcome variables, anxiety and perceived need to change to fit in. As noted previously, both paths were significant ($ps < .005$). In Step 2, we tested the path from stigma consciousness and race of roommate to the mediator, concerns about appearing smart. As previously reported, higher levels of stigma consciousness were related to greater concerns about appearing smart ($p = .001$). Steps 3 and 4 were tested simultaneously. Step 3 tested the paths from concerns about appearing smart to anxiety and perceived need to change to fit in. Significant effects for both paths ($ps < .001$) indicated that the more Asian Americans with European-American roommates were concerned about appearing smart, the greater anxiety they felt (estimate = 0.06, $SE = 0.01$) and the more they perceived that they needed to change to fit in (estimate = 0.35, $SE = 0.03$). In Step 4, we estimated the paths between stigma consciousness and the outcome variables while including concerns about appearing smart in the model. Consistent with partial mediation, the estimates

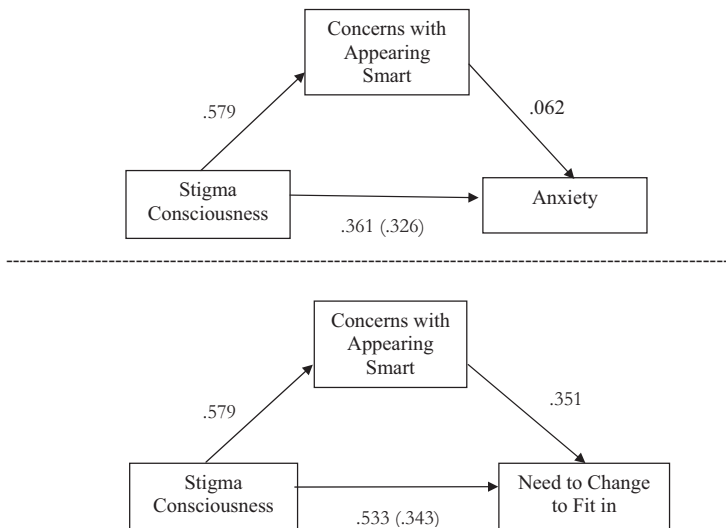


Figure 1. Partial mediation of stigma consciousness on anxiety and perceived need to change to fit in for Asian Americans with European-American roommates. Values in parentheses represent the direct effect of stigma consciousness on the dependent variables when the mediator is included in the model.

for stigma consciousness dropped but remained significant for both anxiety (estimate = 0.32, $SE = 0.07$, Sobel $z = 2.77$, $p = .002$) and perceived need to change to fit in (estimate = 0.34, $SE = 0.13$, Sobel $z = 3.39$, $p < .001$). Taken together, the data show that Asian Americans high in stigma consciousness are specifically concerned with the stereotype of being intelligent and that worries about this specific stereotype partially influence their outcomes in daily intergroup interactions.

Discussion

People hold different beliefs regarding the treatment they will receive from others. Given their experiences with prejudice and discrimination, some racial minorities unsurprisingly develop expectations that others will evaluate them according to stereotypes regarding their group. We have shown that these expectations are associated with Asian Americans' experiences during daily encounters with European Americans. Specifically, the more Asian Americans tend to expect to be stereotyped, the more they felt anxious, wanted to have a different roommate, perceived that they needed to change to fit in, and were concerned with appearing smart. These results, however, were not found for Asian Americans who had a racial minority roommate. This latter finding suggests that Asian Americans are less likely to expect that other racial minorities will stereotype them compared with European Americans. More importantly, even if Asian Americans expect other racial minorities to judge them according to the model minority stereotype, their expectations are not associated with the affective items measured in our study.

Interestingly, Asian Americans' stigma consciousness did not change—that is, increase or decrease—their concerns about appearing smart across 15 days of interacting with European Americans or racial minorities. Although previous research is consistent with this finding (Pinel, 2004), highly stigma consciousness Asian Americans could have become less concerned about appearing smart during daily interactions with a European-American roommate because European Americans may have acted in ways that diminished the validity of these concerns over time. Perhaps these concerns remained the same across time because European-American

roommates behaved in ways that perpetuated Asian Americans' beliefs that they were being stereotyped. Alternatively, the relatively short diary period (15 days) may not have been long enough to reduce Asian Americans' evaluative concerns. Future work is needed to examine this issue in more detail.

Unlike previous work that has shown that intergroup interactions are fraught with more negative outcomes compared with intragroup interactions (for a review, see Trawalter et al., 2009), the race of Asian Americans' roommates failed to yield significant main effects for any of the outcome variables. That is, Asian Americans did not experience greater anxiety, desire to have a different roommate, or need to change when they lived with a European-American roommate compared with a racial minority roommate. One explanation may be that our analyses compared Asian Americans with European-American and racial minority roommates, such that not all of the racial minority roommates were Asian Americans. A more positive alternative is that interactions with European Americans need not necessarily be more difficult than interactions with Asian Americans or other racial minorities. Our findings suggest that interracial interactions may not necessarily be aversive in and of themselves and that other individual differences (e.g., stigma consciousness) may account for interracial difficulties. In summary, our findings in general suggest that stigma consciousness is important to consider when examining the effects of intergroup contact.

Our findings contribute to the literature in several important ways. First, we add to the small body of findings that have examined the intrapersonal consequences of stigma consciousness outside of a laboratory setting. By using freshmen roommates who were randomly assigned to live together, we were able to examine the daily implications of stigma consciousness on intergroup contact. That is, rather than focusing on how concerns with being stereotyped influences brief, one-time interactions in the laboratory with a stranger, we were able to examine the implications of these concerns on multiple occasions (15 days) in a meaningful context. The anxiety that highly stigma conscious Asian Americans experienced during interactions with a European-American roommate could have devastating consequences for "real

world” outcomes, such as academic performance and interpersonal relationships. Consistent with Cheryan and Bodenhausen’s (2000) work, for example, the anxiety that these individuals experienced may have interfered with their ability to prepare for academic tasks, ultimately causing them to underperform during their freshmen year.

Second, the majority of research on the adverse reactions (e.g., anxiety) resulting from intergroup interactions has focused on the effects of negative stereotypes. Exposure to negative stereotypes about one’s group leads people to expect undesirable behaviors from outgroup members, which in turn causes anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1989). Our work shows that contending with positive stereotypes may lead to undesirable outcomes as well. Moreover, our work highlights that for Asian Americans who expect to be stereotyped, their specific concerns about appearing intelligent contribute to feelings of anxiety and the need to change themselves during interactions with European Americans. Given the existence of multiple stereotypes about Asian Americans, it is not surprising that concerns about appearing smart served only as a partial mediator. That is, these individuals are likely to be concerned about other group stereotypes as well (e.g., unsociable; Chu & Kwan, 2007). Interestingly, however, our data suggest that Asian Americans who are high in stigma consciousness are not necessarily concerned about making a general positive impression with European Americans. Rather, the concern is about the specific stereotype associated with their group. This research shows the importance of studying the stereotype content of each racial group over general impression management worries when examining stigma consciousness in intergroup interactions.

Limitations

These contributions aside, several limitations to our study offer areas of future research. First, because our data are correlational in nature, we cannot draw causal inferences. It is possible that a correlate of stigma consciousness is actually driving the relationships found in our work. Although this is feasible, our findings are consistent with laboratory work in which individuals have been primed to think about being a member of a stereotyped group (Shelton et al.,

2005). Second, we were unable to explore findings for specific Asian-American subgroups. Some researchers have suggested that the model minority stereotype is more pervasive for certain Asian groups than for others and that academic outcomes and school-related problem behaviors vary tremendously across groups (Choi, 2008). Future research should investigate if the relationships observed in our work are as strong for the different subgroups compared with the group as a whole. Third, consistent with most diary studies, we relied on participants’ self-report responses of their experiences with their roommate rather than objective responses that could be observed in their interactions. Given that we are concerned with individuals’ phenomenological experiences, we believe that self-report data are appropriate to analyze in this situation. Additional research from our laboratory that investigates stigma consciousness among Asian Americans and uses “direct assessment” supports our findings (Son & Shelton, 2010). In this study, Asian-American students believed that they were recording a videotaped message that would be given to a European American interaction partner in another room. Independent judges listened to the verbal contents (no visual input) of participants’ messages and rated how *approachable*, *unfriendly*, and *unlikable* participants seemed, and the items were averaged to form a composite of *contact avoidance* ($\alpha = .73$). Higher levels of stigma consciousness were associated with greater contact avoidance, $t(45) = 3.77, p < .001$. Thus, similar to the self-report findings in our manuscript, this result suggests that Asian Americans high in stigma consciousness behave in ways to avoid contact with European Americans.

Finally, the present research focused on the intrapersonal outcomes of expecting to be stereotyped and did not examine potential interpersonal consequences. What are the implications for Asian Americans’ roommates? Previous research that addresses this issue yields mixed findings. On the one hand, minorities expecting to be stereotyped regulate their behavior in interracial interactions such that European-American partners experience positive outcomes. Shelton et al. (2005) found that racial minorities who expected to be targets of prejudice displayed positive behaviors during interactions with European Americans that fa-

cilitated smooth and harmonious social experiences, such as leaning toward their partner, holding their arms in an open and inviting manner, smiling, asking their partner questions about themselves, and elaborating on their own thoughts and feelings. Indeed, European-American partners of these racial minorities experienced more pleasant interactions compared with those who interacted with minorities who did not expect to be targets of prejudice. Thus, European Americans may enjoy more favorable interactions with Asian-American roommates who are high (vs. low) in stigma consciousness. On the other hand, some research suggests that racial minorities who expect to be stereotyped react negatively to others. Pinel (2002) found that highly stigma conscious women behaved in a critical manner toward men in a joint decision-making task, causing men to evaluate them more harshly. Thus, highly stigma conscious Asian Americans may act negatively toward their European-American roommates, causing their roommates to experience negative affect and behave badly in return. Given the highly interdependent nature of roommate relationships, we suspect that highly stigma conscious Asian Americans tried to facilitate pleasant daily interactions with their roommate, resulting in positive experiences for their roommate. Additional research, however, is needed to examine the impact of Asian Americans' stigma consciousness on their partner's outcomes.

Concluding Remarks

The present research contributes to the growing literature on intergroup interactions by examining Asian Americans' experiences with prejudice and discrimination. Our work takes a step toward understanding the reactions that Asian Americans may have during daily encounters with European Americans. One might argue that the negative intrapersonal outcomes experienced by Asian Americans during encounters with European Americans could be eliminated if they did not view the world as a prejudiced place or believe that European Americans will stereotype them. On the contrary, we contend that the solution to this problem is far more complicated and that the onus of improving the dynamics of intergroup interactions should not be placed solely on the targets of prejudice. Instead, we suggest that educating

all people about the perils of both positive and negative group stereotypes may effectively improve individuals' experiences during intergroup interactions.

References

- Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic, and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1173–1182.
- Chan, W., & Mendoza-Denton, R. (2008). Status-based rejection sensitivity among Asian Americans: Implications for psychological distress. *Journal of Personality, 76*, 1317–1346.
- Cheng, C. (1997). Are Asian American employees a model minority or just a minority? *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 33*, 277–290.
- Cheryan, S., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (2000). When positive stereotypes threaten intellectual performance: The psychological hazards of "model minority" status. *Psychological Science, 11*, 399–402.
- Choi, Y. (2008). Diversity within: Subgroup differences of youth problem behaviors among Asian Pacific Islander American adolescents. *Journal of Community Psychology, 36*, 352–370.
- Chu, T., & Kwan, V. S. Y. (2007). Effects of collectivistic cultural imperatives on Asian American meta-stereotypes. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 10*, 270–276.
- Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J. C., Glick, P., & Xu, J. (2002). A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: Competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*, 878–902.
- Ho, C., & Jackson, J. W. (2001). Attitudes toward Asian Americans: Theory and measurement. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31*, 1553–1581.
- Lin, M. H., Kwan, V. S. Y., Cheung, A., & Fiske, S. T. (2005). Stereotype content model explains prejudice for an envied outgroup: Scale of Anti-Asian American stereotypes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 31*, 34–47.
- Maddux, W. W., Galinsky, A. D., Cuddy, A. J. C., & Polifroni, M. (2008). When being a model minority is good . . . and bad: Realistic threat explains negativity toward Asian Americans. *Personality and Psychology Bulletin, 34*, 74–89.
- Pinel, E. C. (1999). Stigma consciousness: The psychological legacy of social stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 76*, 114–128.
- Pinel, E. C. (2002). Stigma consciousness in intergroup contexts: The power of conviction. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 38*, 178–185.

- Pinel, E. C. (2004). You're just saying that because I'm a woman: Stigma consciousness and attributions to discrimination. *Self and Identity, 3*, 39–51.
- Pinel, E. C., & Paulin, N. (2005). Stigma consciousness at work. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 27*, 345–352.
- Shelton, J. N., Richeson, J. A., & Salvatore, J. (2005). Expecting to be the target of prejudice: Implications for interethnic interactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 31*, 1189–1202.
- Shelton, J. N., West, T. V., & Trail, T. E. (2010). Concerns about appearing prejudiced: Implications for anxiety during daily interracial interactions. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 13*, 329–344.
- Son, D., & Shelton, J. N. (2010). Unpublished data. Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.
- Steele, C. M., Spencer, S. J., & Aronson, J. (2002). Contending with group image: The psychology of stereotype and social identity threat. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (pp. 379–440). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Stephan, W. G., & Stephan, C. W. (1989). Antecedents of intergroup anxiety in Asian-Americans and Hispanic-Americans. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 13*, 203–219.
- Trawalter, S., Richeson, J. A., & Shelton, J. N. (2009). Predicting behavior during interracial interactions: A stress and coping approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 13*, 243–268.

Received December 4, 2009

Revision received December 3, 2010

Accepted December 6, 2010 ■

Online First Publication

APA-published journal articles are now available Online First in the PsycARTICLES database. Electronic versions of journal articles will be accessible prior to the print publication, expediting access to the latest peer-reviewed research.

All PsycARTICLES institutional customers, individual APA PsycNET® database package subscribers, and individual journal subscribers may now search these records as an added benefit. Online First Publication (OFP) records can be released within as little as 30 days of acceptance and transfer into production, and are marked to indicate the posting status, allowing researchers to quickly and easily discover the latest literature. OFP articles will be the version of record; the articles have gone through the full production cycle except for assignment to an issue and pagination. After a journal issue's print publication, OFP records will be replaced with the final published article to reflect the final status and bibliographic information.