Individual differences in the acceptance of stereotyping

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Abstract

Previous research has documented individual differences in a range of constructs relating to social stereotyping, prejudice, and intergroup attitudes. However, research has not sought specifically to measure a general acceptance of social stereotyping. In the present research, we explored attitudinal, cognitive, emotional, and personality correlates of a person’s self-reported willingness to rely on stereotypical information when interacting with people of different social and cultural groups. In six studies (N = 1080) we found that more acceptance of stereotyping was associated with more explicit and implicit stereotyping of particular groups, less liberal gender-role values, more authoritarian attitudes, preference for hierarchies, higher social dominance orientation, less universal outlook, less complexity in describing others’ emotions, less utilization of emotional information, and more utilization of social categories (gender and race) when rating the similarity of faces, less agreeable and more agentic personality, and more rigid and simplistic cognitive style (all independent of one’s gender). Female and African-American participants were less accepting of stereotyping than male and...
Caucasian participants. The general tendency to accept stereotyping in daily life is a measurable individual difference that may prove useful in social-personality research.

Keywords: Acceptance of stereotyping; Individual differences in stereotyping; Attitudes; Emotions; Personality; Intergroup perception

1. Introduction

Many people would agree that because stereotypes about social groups may be inaccurate and negative, relying on them in daily life may be inappropriate. However, even the most liberal-minded people engage in stereotypical thinking, probably far more often than they would like to admit. In daily life, we often feel that knowing something about another person’s social and cultural group memberships helps us to interact with that person, and the lack of such knowledge can produce uncertainty about how to behave and undermine our feeling that we know the other person. Furthermore, uncertainty about others’ group memberships (whether these relate to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social class, religion, political party, social clique, etc.) can make a person anxious about making social gaffes.

Stereotype application may also seem to have a certain functionality to it, insofar as a simplifying assumption is at least a starting point from which to plan behavior toward another person. From the perspective of the person who has to make behavioral choices, using stereotypes—that is, making assumptions about members of social and cultural groups—may seem like a useful, sensible, and adaptive thing to do, and such a person might, as a consequence, feel a strong need to know about others’ social and cultural memberships as a guide for his or her own behavior. On the other hand, another person may be highly doubtful of the utility or validity of stereotypes and be more willing to build knowledge of others from the ground up. Thus, any attempt to assess the extent to which stereotyping occurs must consider the issue of individual differences in stereotyping.

In the present research, we were interested in individual variation in the tendency to accept stereotyping in daily life. Acceptance of stereotyping as a general tendency not aimed at any particular group is an individual difference that could have considerable relevance for research on personality and social behavior. Acceptance of stereotyping as a general trait has been central to much theorizing (e.g., Allport, 1954), and there are numerous measures of stereotype application and prejudice (e.g., Brigham, 1993; Glick & Fiske, 1996) or willingness to show prejudices toward specific groups (Dunton & Fazio, 1997; Plant & Devine, 1998). Research also exists on personality types (e.g., Altemeyer, 1981) and other individual difference variables associated with stereotyping (e.g., Moskowitz, 1993). However, no research that we have found has examined the extent to which individuals explicitly report their general willingness to use stereotypical information in the course of daily life. Evidence does exist, however, to suggest that this might be a general trait among adults, as indicated by positive correlations among prejudices towards several different social groups (Bierly, 1985).

Stereotyping has been defined in numerous ways throughout the history of research conducted on the topic (Lee, Jussim, & McCauley, 1995). Thus, it is important to be clear that in the current investigation we define acceptance of stereotyping as the belief that
social and cultural group differences exist, comfort with thinking about groups in abstract
terms, willingness to use information about group memberships in conducting interper-
sonal relations, and the belief that stereotypes are useful, essential, and relatively harmless
in daily life.

1.1. Overview of present research and predictions

Because no measure existed that captures the general tendency to accept stereotyping,
we developed one and administered it in six studies of college students along with other
measures that fell into five general categories: stereotyping and prejudice, social/interper-
sonal attitudes, cognitive style, emotion-related measures, and personality. In addition, the
participants’ gender and ethnicity were measured. Following is a brief description of each
of these categories of measures and the predicted relationships with acceptance of stereo-
typing.

Members of social/cultural groups who have been the target of negative stereotypes and
prejudice have been found to be less likely to express prejudice or discrimination (Alte-
meyer, 1998; Whitley, 1999). Similarly, women have been shown to have less negative or
stereotypic attitudes toward women than men do (Bierly, 1985; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Swim,
Aiken, Hall, & Hunter, 1995) and less prejudice than men towards homosexuals, African
Americans, old people, Jews, and Catholics (Allport & Kramer, 1946; Bierly, 1985; Carter,
1948). We predicted that African Americans and women would score relatively low on
acceptance of stereotyping.

General willingness to endorse use of stereotypical information in making judgments
about others implies the tendency to think stereotypically about specific groups, specifi-
cally African Americans and women in the present research. Regarding racial attitudes, we
predicted that more acceptance of stereotyping would be associated with more negative
attitudes measured both explicitly (measured with paper-and-pencil scales) and implicitly
(measured with reaction times). Regarding sexist attitudes, we predicted that more accep-
tance of stereotyping would be associated with both negative and positive (idealizing)
forms of stereotyping, and also less liberal (i.e., favorable to women) gender-role values.

Acceptance of stereotyping was also predicted to be related to social/interpersonal atti-
attitudes. We predicted that more acceptance of stereotyping would occur in people who believe
there should be hierarchies between social/cultural groups and among individuals, and who
endorse more authoritarian values, because such beliefs and values reflect the conviction that
group differences are real and important and also because stereotypes can be used in the ser-
vice of reinforcing social hierarchies (Moskowitz, 1993). We predicted that people scoring
higher on acceptance of stereotyping would have less trust in others and profess less faith in
the (positive) universalism of human nature, consistent with the possibility that holding many
stereotypes may reflect a generally misanthropic outlook. People scoring high on acceptance
of stereotyping were also expected to see personality as fixed rather than malleable, consistent
with the reasoning of Levy, Stroessner, and Dweck (1998) regarding the relation of entity
thinking to the endorsement of specific group stereotypes. Levy et al. proposed that an entity
approach to personality reflects the belief that individual traits are fixed, useful, and predic-
tive, just as the acceptance of stereotyping suggests similar beliefs about groups. Finally, we
predicted that people highly accepting of stereotyping would view their own outcomes as
more controlled by powerful other people, consistent with both the hierarchical and some-
what suspicious outlook hypothesized earlier.
Variables relating to cognitive style were also examined. People differ in how much they prefer quick, simplistic ways of thought and rigid, structured rules for living. Stereotypes have traditionally been defined as simplistic overgeneralizations (Lee et al., 1995), and there is indeed evidence that a person with a rigid or simplistic way of thinking would also be prone to use stereotypes (Fiske, 1998; Schaller, Boyd, Yohannes, & O’Brien, 1995; Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). Therefore, it was expected that acceptance of stereotyping would have a positive relationship with a cognitive processing style that is more simplistic (i.e., less elaborative) or categorical in nature. Another cognitive style variable we included was the need to evaluate, an individual difference variable that Jarvis and Petty (1996) predicted might be related to stereotyping.

Another category of predicted correlates relates to attending to the emotional qualities of people and objects. Because paying attention to others’ emotions requires one to attend to transient states in others, such attention runs logically counter to the notion that others are homogeneous members of their category. Thus, attending to individuals’ emotions can be seen as intrinsically individuating and antithetical to the notion of stereotyping. Consistent with this, it has been found that individuating outgroup members reduces outgroup bias (e.g., Bettencourt, Miller, & Hume, 1999). It has also been suggested that one way to denigrate outgroups may be to deny that they experience subtle emotions (Leyens et al., 2000). We therefore speculated that there may be an inverse relation between acceptance of stereotyping and several variables suggestive of an interest in others’ emotions. We administered a behavioral (not self-report) measure of how much a person used emotion (versus race and gender) as a grouping dimension when rating the similarity of pairs of faces. We also administered questionnaire-based instruments that assessed how complexly a person described others’ imagined feelings and how much a person reported being able to get others to “open up” in conversation (where “opening up” implies emotional disclosure). We also measured how much participants projected emotion into interpretations of abstract drawings. If the proposed reluctance of people high in acceptance of stereotyping to deal with emotions is a general trait, we would predict a negative relation with this variable, but if their reluctance pertains to people as targets (not abstract line drawings), then we would predict no relation.

Finally, to gain further insight into the personalities of people low versus high on acceptance of stereotyping, the Big-Five traits of extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and openness to experience were measured, as well as self-esteem, agency, and communion. No specific predictions were made regarding these personality variables. However, among men, traditional masculinity was associated with more negative attitudes about race and gender equality in the research of Wade (2001) and Wade and Brittan-Powell (2001), suggesting that an association might emerge between agency and acceptance of stereotyping.

Because the basic methodology and some of the instruments were the same across studies, we describe all methodology in one section rather than present each study separately, and we group the studies’ results together thematically. When the same measures were used in more than one study, we report meta-analytic summaries (Rosenthal, 1991).

2. Method

2.1. Participants

Participants were recruited from introductory psychology classes at Northeastern University and received credit toward their course requirements. Sample sizes were: Study 1,
3. In Studies 1, 2, and 4, no demographic data other than gender were collected. Data on ethnicity were gathered for 311 of the participants in Study 3, with the percentages being 76% Caucasian, 6% African-American, 7% Asian, 3% Hispanic, and 8% “Other.” Ethnicities in Study 5 were: 70% Caucasian, 13% African American, 3% Asian, 5% Hispanic, and 9% “Other.” In Study 6, participation was limited to Caucasian students (for unrelated research purposes).

2.2. Measures

Cronbach’s z coefficients are based on the present studies.

2.2.1. Acceptance of stereotyping

To measure this construct, 20 items were developed and administered in Studies 1–3. In these three studies, the same 12 items occurred among the highest-loading 13 items on the first unrotated factor in principal components analyses. Further analysis revealed that shortening the scale to these 12 items (shown in Table 1) did not compromise internal consistency or the correlations with other scales. This 12-item scale, which we call the Acceptance of Stereotyping Scale, was the basis for all analyses in the six studies reported here.4

In Studies 1–5, items were responded to on a 6-point scale going from 0 (strongly disagree), 1 (moderately disagree), 2 (slightly disagree), 3 (slightly agree), 4 (moderately agree), to 5

4 Some results for the preliminary 20-item version of the Acceptance of Stereotyping Scale were previously reported for Studies 1 and 2 (Hall & Carter, 1999). In the present article, we re-analyzed these two studies using the final 12-item version of the scale.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sometimes when I meet new people, I can predict their behavior or attitudes just from knowing what social/cultural groups they belong to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In daily life, there’s so much to pay attention to, it helps if you can make a few assumptions about a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>When interacting with others it’s very important to have a sense of what social/cultural groups they belong to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Stereotypes can be harmful but they are essential for interacting with members of real groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>People differ so much from one another, it is impossible to generalize about them (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>You cannot get through life without generalizing about people, even though such generalizations may be overstated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>It’s impossible to know how a person will behave from knowing what social/cultural groups the person belongs to (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>If you hold a stereotype about people you’ll never be able to see them for who they really are (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Stereotypes have too much influence on our behavior toward others (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>To hold a stereotype does not necessarily mean that you are looking down on someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>If we did not stereotype each other, there would be a lot less conflict in the world (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Stereotypes are useful in daily life even though they are not always correct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* R, item reversed in scoring.
(strongly agree). In Study 6, the scale had 7 points going from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scale is scored by averaging the items, after appropriate reversals, so that higher scores indicate greater acceptance of stereotyping.

Descriptive statistics for the six studies are given in Table 2. (The mean and variance for Study 6 are larger than in the other studies because it used the 7-point rather than 6-point scale.) Overall, levels of acceptance of stereotyping were not high, as the means corresponded roughly to “slightly disagree” on the scale. This may reflect the normative values present on an urban college campus. Cronbach’s $z$ was good and very similar in all six studies (mean $z = .78$). An additional group of 24 students was recruited to assess retest reliability. These students filled in the scale in the laboratory and then agreed to do an additional questionnaire over email in two weeks; students were not told that the second questionnaire would be the same one again. The retest correlation was $r = .70$, $p < .001$.

Examination of the structure of the 12 items was made with both exploratory and confirmatory methods. In Studies 1–3, principal components analysis with varimax rotation was conducted separately for each study with nearly identical results. There was a strong first rotated factor (accounting for 54, 60, and 57 per cent of the total variance in Studies 1–3, respectively), as well as two additional, weaker factors (accounting for between 17 and 26 per cent of the variance). Studies 4–6 were used for cross-validation. Principal components analysis replicated this same structure, and confirmatory factor analysis yielded an acceptable fit to the 3-factor model. Items on the first factor were concerned with the utility of knowing about others’ group memberships, with none of these items using the term “stereotype” (items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7); three of the four items on the second factor used the term “stereotype” and the content included the necessity and/or utility of generalizing about groups as well as a moral defense (stereotyping does not mean you are looking down on someone) (items 4, 6, 10, and 12); and the third factor’s three items all used the term “stereotype” and all represented blanket condemnation (all reversed items) (items 8, 9, and 11). Thus, the three factors, though replicable, were not clearly different conceptually. This, plus the good internal consistency and retest reliability obtained with all 12 items and the fact that in the confirmatory factor analysis the three-factor model did not fit significantly better than the one-factor model, led us to use the full 12-item instrument in all subsequent analyses.

2.2.2. Gender-related attitudes

The 11-item Benevolent Sexism Scale (Glick & Fiske, 1996) was used in Studies 1–3 to measure the tendency to idealize and therefore positively stereotype women (mean $z = .72$).

Table 2
Descriptive statistics for the acceptance of stereotyping questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>Means (SD)</th>
<th>Cronbach’s $z$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>2.00 (.75)</td>
<td>2.19 (.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>2.07 (.77)</td>
<td>2.26 (.74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>2.02 (.70)</td>
<td>2.20 (.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2.03 (.79)</td>
<td>2.30 (.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2.16 (.76)</td>
<td>2.43 (.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3.40 (.94)</td>
<td>3.74 (.90)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Higher scores indicate more acceptance of stereotyping.
2.2.3. Racial attitudes

In Study 3 we gave the 7-item Modern Racism Scale, which measures the extent to which subtle racist attitudes are endorsed that may not appear blatantly prejudicial, but do in fact support discriminatory treatment toward African-Americans (McConahay, 1986; $\alpha = .77$). In Study 6, we administered the 20-item Attitudes Towards Blacks Scale (Brigham, 1993), which asks questions explicitly about participants’ attitudes towards Blacks ($\alpha = .88$), and we administered the Black-White racial attitudes Implicit Association Task (Race-IAT; Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003). This instrument measures participants’ reaction time of categorizing faces (of Blacks and Whites) and words (positive and negative words) into “Black-Bad” versus “White-Good” categories relative to their ability to categorize these stimuli into “Black-Good” versus “White-Bad” categories. The extent to which participants make the former categorization more quickly than the latter categorization is indicative of a stronger association between the concepts of “Black” and “Bad.”

2.2.4. Social–interpersonal attitudes

The 14-item Social Dominance Orientation Scale was used in Studies 1–2 to measure the belief that some groups are superior to, and deserve to dominate, others (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; mean $\alpha = .82$). The 20-item Universalism Scale was used in Studies 1–2 to measure the belief that human beings are all basically similar in nature and value, implying a resistance to stereotyping (Phillips & Ziller, 1997; mean $\alpha = .64$). On the original scale, higher values indicated more universalistic values; however, we reverse-scored the scale to make its polarity match the other stereotyping measures. In Study 3, we gave the 24-item Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale to measure the tendency to believe that laws and individuals in positions of power should be respected and obeyed (Altemeyer, 1981; $\alpha = .77$) and the 8-item Implicit Theories Measure to measure the degree to which human behavior is perceived to be fixed or malleable (Levy and Dweck, 1997, as cited in Levy et al., 1998; $\alpha = .87$). In Study 4, we used the 8-item Interpersonal Hierarchy Expectation Scale to measure the expectation for hierarchy in interpersonal interaction (Schmid Mast, 2005; $\alpha = .74$), the 5-item Faith in People Scale to measure professed trust in other people (Rosenberg, 1957; $\alpha = .59$) (on this scale, we reversed the polarity of the scores to be consistent with the other measures, making high scores indicative of less trust in others), and Levenson’s (1974) 8-item Powerful Others Scale to measure the belief that other people control one’s outcomes ($\alpha = .71$).

2.2.5. Cognitive style measures

The 18-item Need for Cognition Scale was used in Studies 1–2 to measure liking for intellectual stimulation and cognitive novelty (Cacioppo & Petty, 1982; mean $\alpha = .86$). On the original scale, higher values indicated higher need for cognition; however, in the present research the scale was reversed to be consistent with the other cognitive style measures.
The 12-item Personal Need for Structure Scale was used in Studies 1, 2, and 4 to measure the desire for predictable and rigid life routines and the avoidance of novelty (Thompson et al., 1989, cited in Neuberg, Judice, & West, 1997; mean \( \mu = .74 \)). The 16-item Need to Evaluate Scale was used in Study 3 to measure the tendency to engage in quick evaluation of social stimuli (Jarvis & Petty, 1996; \( \mu = .80 \)).

2.2.6. Emotion-related measures

In Study 5, we used a behavioral measure of categorization preference that we developed in our laboratory. This task, called the Similarity Rating Task, is an ipsatively scored measure of individual preference for using gender, race (Japanese vs. Caucasian), and emotion (happy vs. sad expression) as categorization principles when rating the similarity of pairs of faces (Carney, Hall, & Carmichael, 2005; see also Fazio & Dunton, 1997). Eight photographs of adult faces varying on the dimensions of emotional expression (happy and sad), gender (female and male), and race (Caucasian and Japanese) were randomly selected from the Japanese and Caucasian Facial Expressions of Emotion slides (JACFEE; Matsumoto & Ekman, 1988). All nonredundant pairings of the eight faces were made to produce a set of 28 face pairs. The face pairs were shown in a random order in a booklet and participants were asked to rate each face pair from 1 (not similar at all) to 9 (extremely similar). Each participant's use of emotion, race, and gender in making the similarity ratings was calculated using INDSCAL (Carroll & Chang, 1970), and the importance placed on each was expressed ipsatively as a ratio where a higher number represented more emphasis on each category relative to the other two.

In Study 5, we also used the 10-item Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale, which measures the complexity of one's descriptions of others' imagined emotional experiences (Lane, Quinlan, Schwartz, Walker, & Zeitlin, 1990; \( \mu = .66 \)); the 32-item Physiognomic Cue Test, which measures the tendency to attribute emotional meaning to abstract drawings (Stein, 1983; \( \mu = .84 \)); and the 10-item Opener Scale, which measures the extent to which one can elicit self-disclosure from another person (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983; \( \mu = .86 \)).

2.2.7. Other personality variables

Rosenberg's 10-item Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) was used in Study 4 (\( \mu = .87 \)). In Study 5, we administered the 44-item Big Five Inventory to assess extraversion (\( \mu = .83 \)), agreeableness (\( \mu = .77 \)), conscientiousness (\( \mu = .72 \)), neuroticism (\( \mu = .76 \)), and openness (\( \mu = .79 \)) (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991), and the long form of the Personal Attributes Questionnaire to measure masculinity (agency) and femininity (communion) on separate scales (Spence & Helmreich, 1978; \( zs = .68 \) and \( .80 \), respectively).

2.2.8. Socially desirable responding

To assess relations with socially desirable responding, we administered the Marlowe–Crowne Social Desirability Scale (MCSDS; Crowne & Marlowe, 1960) in Study 3. In Study 5, we administered the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (Paulhus, 1984, 1998), which has two subscales, Impression Management and Self-Deceptive Enhancement.

2.3. Procedure

In Studies 1–5, the Acceptance of Stereotyping Questionnaire was administered to participants in small groups, in a packet of individual-difference measures that were
counterbalanced in their order. In Study 5, some instruments were administered to all participants and others were counterbalanced across participants in the knowledge that not all participants could complete all instruments in the experimental hour; therefore, sample sizes varied across instruments. In Study 6, participants were run individually, with the Acceptance of Stereotyping Questionnaire included in a packet of other measures. Statistical tests are two-tailed unless stated otherwise.

3. Results

3.1. Gender differences

Men were significantly more accepting of stereotyping than women in all six studies (Table 3). In the table, the difference is expressed as the point-biserial correlation between gender and acceptance of stereotyping, which shows the magnitude of effect along with the same p value that a t test between males and females would have (the male and female means are shown in Table 2). Across the six studies, a meta-analytic summary (Rosenthal, 1991) found an unweighted mean correlation of .26, a weighted (by sample size) mean correlation of .24, and a combined Z (Stouffer method; Rosenthal, 1991) of 7.72, p < .001. Thus, the gender difference was of moderate magnitude, very consistent, and highly significant statistically. All subsequent correlations shown in Table 3 controlled for gender using partial correlation.

3.2. Ethnic group differences

In Study 3 (the only study large enough for such a comparison), acceptance of stereotyping was compared between African American (n = 20), Asian American (n = 22), and Caucasian (n = 235) participants (other ethnic groups were too small to include). The overall effect for ethnicity was F(2, 274) = 2.85, p = .059 (M African American = 1.63, M Asian American = 2.03, and M Caucasian = 2.03). Focused comparisons showed that African Americans were less accepting of stereotyping than Caucasians, t(253) = 2.38, p < .05.

3.3. Gender-related attitudes

As shown in Table 3, people who were more accepting of stereotyping had significantly more benevolent sexist attitudes toward women (Studies 1–3), with a meta-analytic summary showing an unweighted mean correlation of .19, a weighted (by sample size) mean correlation of .19, and a combined Z of 5.28, p < .001. Also, people higher on acceptance of stereotyping scored significantly higher on hostile sexist attitudes toward women, scored higher on the modern sexism scale, and had more traditional (i.e., less favorable to women) gender-role values (all Study 3).

3.4. Racial attitudes

Table 3 shows that people who were more accepting of stereotyping scored higher on the modern racism scale and held more explicitly anti-black attitudes as assessed by the Attitudes towards Blacks Scale. In addition, the implicit Race-IAT was marginally significantly related, such that people holding more negative implicit associations toward Black
Table 3  
Correlates of acceptance of stereotyping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and measure</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Pearson correlation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Sociodemographic variables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (male = 0, female = 1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>−.25***</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>−.21***</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>−.24***</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>−.26*</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−.32**</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>−.31*</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (African American, 0; Caucasian, 1)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Gender-related measures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benevolent sexism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.21***</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.19***</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile sexism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern sexism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.18***</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional gender-role values</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Race-related measures</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern racism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.24***</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards blacks</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.51***</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit association task</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.21+</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. General social/interpersonal attitudes</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarianism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social dominance orientation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.41***</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.52***</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference for hierarchies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.45***</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of universalism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.31***</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>228</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of trust in others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed view of human nature</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control by powerful others</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Cognitive style</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low need for cognition</td>
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<td>.14*</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for evaluate</td>
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<td>.13**</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>−.04</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.28*</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>VI. Emotion-related measures</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of emotion in rating similarity of faces</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−.27*</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity of describing others' feelings</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−.43*</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sees emotion in abstract drawings</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−.13</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets others to “open up”</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−.25</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>VII. Personality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
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<td>−.01</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<td>.30+</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−.04</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(continued on next page)
people tended to be more accepting of stereotyping. Most likely, there was not a more significant relationship between the two measures due to the Acceptance of Stereotyping Questionnaire assessing an explicit attitude reflecting an intentional preference to use stereotypes while the Race-IAT assesses an implicit tendency to make certain types of associations. Since these measures are assessing different constructs, it is understandable that the correlation between them would not be greater. The explicit and implicit attitudes instruments were not significantly related to each other, controlling for gender, partial $r(65) = .14, p < .27$.

### 3.5. Social–interpersonal attitudes

Table 3 shows that people who were more accepting of stereotyping were significantly more likely to believe that certain groups deserve to be dominated (social dominance orientation, Studies 1–2), with a meta-analytic summary showing an unweighted mean correlation of .47, a weighted (by sample size) mean correlation of .47, and a combined $Z$ of 9.60, $p < .001$. They were significantly more likely to believe that people are not all alike (universalism, Studies 1–2), with a meta-analytic summary showing an unweighted mean correlation of .26, a weighted (by sample size) mean correlation of .26, and a combined $Z$ of 5.43, $p < .001$. They also scored significantly higher on authoritarianism, the fixed (entity) view of human nature, and preference for hierarchies; had significantly lower trust in others; and felt more controlled by powerful others.

### 3.6. Cognitive style

As shown in Table 3, need for cognition had an inconsistent relation to acceptance of stereotyping in terms of significance tests, but when the $p$-values of Study 1 and 2 were combined meta-analytically (Stouffer method; Rosenthal, 1991), the overall relation was significant in showing the greater acceptance of stereotyping was associated with lower need for cognition, combined $Z = -2.45, p < .01$, one-tail, unweighted mean correlation = .12, weighted (by sample size) mean correlation = .12. Personal need for structure also had an inconsistent relation, but when combined meta-analytically across Studies 1, 2, and 4, it was related to acceptance of stereotyping such that greater acceptance was associated with a greater personal need for structure, combined $Z = 1.68, p < .05$, one-tail, unweighted mean correlation = .11, weighted (by sample size) mean correlation = .05. Higher need to evaluate was also significantly related to greater acceptance of stereotyping (Study 3).

### Table 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and measure</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Pearson correlation</th>
<th>$N$</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. All correlations are partial correlations that control for gender.

* Correlation for use of gender in rating similarity of faces = .26, $p < .05$; correlation for use of race in rating similarity of faces = .26, $p < .05$.

** $p < .05$.

*** $p < .001$.

+ $p < .10$.
3.7. Emotion-related measures

The Similarity Rating Task (Study 5) measured participants’ preference for using emotion, gender, or race when rating the similarity of faces. Table 3 shows that greater use of emotion was significantly negatively related to acceptance of stereotyping and, correspondingly, greater use of gender and race was positively related to acceptance of stereotyping. Because of the ipsative nature of the task (i.e., using one dimension more required using one or both of the other dimensions less), scores on the similarity rating task were highly related to each other: participants’ use of emotion in the similarity rating task was negatively related to use of gender, $r(60) = -.96, p < .001$, and to use of race, $r(60) = -.98, p < .001$, and use of gender and use of race were positively related to each other, $r(60) = .87, p < .001$. Thus, use of the race and gender categories was used to the exclusion of using emotion, and vice versa. The results show that the tendency to use information about social categories (race and gender) and the tendency to use emotion had opposite relations to acceptance of stereotyping.

People scoring higher on acceptance of stereotyping were significantly less likely to describe the imagined emotions of others in a complex way than people scoring lower (Table 3). The self-rated ability to get others to “open up” through self-disclosure was also moderately negatively related, though not significantly so. The tendency to see emotions in abstract drawings was not related to acceptance of stereotyping (all from Study 5).

3.8. Other personality variables

Self-esteem was not related to acceptance of stereotyping (Table 3, Study 4). Results from Study 5 showed that less agreeable personality, more agentic personality, and to some extent more extraverted and neurotic personality were associated with more acceptance of stereotyping; agency was significantly related not only when gender was controlled for, but also for men and women separately—for men, $r(14) = .59, p < .05$, and for women, $r(20) = .52, p = .01$.

3.9. Socially desirable responding

In Study 3, the correlation between acceptance of stereotyping and the Marlowe–Crowne Social Desirability Scale was $r(421) = -.28, p < .001$, suggesting that people who endorsed stereotyping were less interested in looking good than people who did not (conversely, that people who disavowed stereotyping were more interested in looking good). Importantly, when social desirability was partialled out of the Study 3 correlations shown in Table 3 (along with gender), the results were indistinguishable from those shown in the table. Thus, social desirability did not bias relations between acceptance of stereotyping and other variables in Study 3.

Social desirability was examined in Study 5 as well. The correlations for the two subscales of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding were as follows: Impression Management, $r(55) = -.33, p < .05$, and Self-Deceptive Enhancement, $r(55) = -.17$, ns. These correlations suggest that people who score high on acceptance of stereotyping are less interested in manipulating others’ impressions in a favorable way than people who score low, who may be motivated to present a socially desirable image of themselves, but those scoring high on acceptance of stereotyping do not differ appreciably in the extent to which they have a falsely positive self-view.
4. Discussion

The goal of this research was to understand attitudinal, cognitive, emotional, and personality correlates of the general tendency to accept social stereotyping, that is, to believe that making use of beliefs about group differences is both functional and relatively harmless in daily life. To measure this construct we devised a self-report instrument, which we used in six studies. It was predicted that men and Caucasians would score as more accepting of stereotyping than women and African Americans, respectively, and also that people scoring as more accepting of stereotyping would hold more negative stereotypes of specific groups, hold more hierarchical and more negative general social attitudes, see people as differing more from one another and as having more fixed natures, have a more simplistic and rigid cognitive style, and be less attuned to emotion in others. All of these predictions were supported. Together these findings provide good construct validity evidence for the instrument as a measure of the general tendency to find value and utility in stereotypes.

It was no surprise to find that general acceptance of stereotyping was associated with prejudicial and categorical thinking (Levy, 1999). However, the findings regarding the apparent willingness to process emotions in other people (though not in abstract line drawings) are more subtle and suggest interesting implications for the acceptance of stereotyping trait. These findings suggest that the tendency to think in terms of social categories is associated with reluctance to engage in the intrinsically individuating activity of attending to emotions in others, a result also consistent with the Leyens et al. (2000) study described earlier. Because emotions are transient states, attending to them can be considered antithetical to the idea of thinking of people as exemplars of social categories. Thus, attending to others’ emotions and thinking of others in social categorical terms may be competing response tendencies (indeed, they were strongly inversely related on the Similarity Rating Task), consistent with the extensive literature on perceived outgroup homogeneity (e.g., Brewer, Manzi, & Shaw, 1993). In fact, researchers have begun to examine whether learning to be empathic (i.e., learning to attend to others’ emotional cues or experiences) will moderate the extent to which individuals perceive/hold outgroup members to be more like each other relative to ingroup members (Finlay & Stephan, 2000). It makes sense, then, that we found acceptance of stereotyping as a trait to be negatively related to the tendency to notice or interpret the more unique emotional qualities expressed by individuals. Thus, our findings indicate that relations between thinking in terms of groups and attention to emotions are relevant within an individual differences as well as experimental framework.

Future research on correlates of acceptance of stereotyping should examine a wider range of stereotypes, especially the more positive ones. Although we did find a positive correlation with benevolent sexism, that scale is not entirely positive in that an overly idealizing view of women is construed as a negative attitude (Glick & Fiske, 1996). More unambiguously positive stereotypes—for example, that Asians are excellent in mathematics, or that beautiful people have many positive social attributes—should also be examined. If acceptance of stereotypes applies to all stereotypes, then positive ones should be predicted as strongly as negative ones. However, our finding that people high in acceptance of...
stereotyping held somewhat negative and distrustful views of human beings, and reported themselves to be low on agreeableness, suggests that the trait might predict negative stereotypes more strongly than positive stereotypes.

Another domain of future research is related to interpersonal interaction style. It would be interesting to know whether a person high on acceptance of stereotyping has a discernible manner of engaging with others. Such a person may betray a lack of interest in, and may be relatively insensitive to, others’ affective states and individuating qualities. On the other hand, acknowledging the existence of group-level characteristics may sometimes be a good thing. The notion of cultural sensitivity implies that one can, in a prosocial way, take group-level information into account when interacting with others. Future research could profitably explore prosocial and non-prosocial applications of acceptance of stereotyping.

Finally, considering the predominantly White composition of our samples, we should generalize the correlations found in the present research only to this group, and future studies should examine whether the pattern of correlates of acceptance of stereotyping that we found is also present within other ethnic groups. By the same token, developmental studies could examine the pattern of correlates in different age groups as well as describe the development of acceptance of stereotyping as a general trait. Powlishta, Serbin, Doyle, and White (1994) found evidence against such a general trait among elementary school children.

5. Uncited reference


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6 We are grateful to a reviewer for pointing this out.


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