

Implicit and explicit attitudes towards rich and poor people

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Abstract. In modern society, people's social economic status (SES) can be determined whether individuals are wealthy or poor. Many research indicated that people tend to believe rich people exerted positive impact to the society, in contrast poor people are negative. According to certain research, individual's mentality can be tested by implicit and explicit social attitudes. (8. Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003). Specifically refer to individual's social background, races and ages etc. People especially adults reflected positive evaluation on rich over poor implicitly. But explicitly the result is opposite, individual's SES can be decisive as well. Nevertheless, implicit and explicit social attitudes can juggle to determine different races as well. (Pro-white and Anti-black). Nowadays people tend to judge things based on their objective thoughts and circumstances they are under. Therefore, I believe the social tendency for future study might possibly changed by the development of the world. I am also really intriguing of future research on people's attitudes on everything that are associated to them

Keywords: implicit, explicit; social attitudes; social class

1. Background

Economy displays an important role in both developing and developed countries. Disparity in economy is increasingly large across countries, and different regions based on US census data (2020), poverty rate varies across different racial groups, for example, the poverty rate of non-Hispanic Whites (8.2%) is significantly lower than that of Hispanics (17%). Blacks had the highest poverty rate (19.5%). In addition, poverty rate increases from 2019 to 2020 by 1 percent, after five consecutive annual declines (United States Census Bureau, 2021). Such disparity exerts negative impacts on society and individuals.

At interpersonal level, attitudes towards people of different social economic status biased individuals' perception and decision making. People tend to judge others based on their social status. For example, rich people tend to be judged as competent while poor people being judged as incompetent (1. Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008). Those judgement could generalize from attributions of personal traits to various domains, including business (2. Johnson, Stevenson and Letwin 2018), social media (3. Yang and Chuentarawong 2021), politics (4. Lee and Fiske 2006).

2. Implicit and Explicit Attitudes: Definition, Measurement

Implicit social attitudes refer to people's automatic reactions without directly asking for their thoughts and beliefs (8. Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Greenwald, Nosek, & Banaji, 2003). In contrast, explicit social attitudes represent statements that are aware and are often measured by self-report, such as questionnaire or survey (9. Greenwald et al., 1998). Implicit and explicit social attitudes have been theorized to be distinct processes underlying human mind (5. Bargh, 1999). Implicit social attitudes predict behaviors that are less noticeable, more automatic, such as non-verbal behaviors (e.g., eye contact in interracial interaction), while explicit social attitudes predict behaviors that need more deliberate thought process (6. Dovidio, Kawakami, & Beach, 2001). Therefore, the distinct conceptualization and predictive power suggest the importance to focus on both implicit and explicit process of social cognition.

Implicit social attitudes are usually measured by indirect methods, such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The logic of the IAT is to measure the relative association of targets (e.g., rich versus poor) and attributes (e.g., good versus bad words). IAT is a test to measure people's authentic feelings

and thoughts in relatively limited time. People respond more accurately in a shorter period when two concepts are closely associated with each other. Participants are given instruction in 5 different parts. The first part is to distinguish and categorize White and Black people. Second part is to categorize good and bad words. Then the next part is to associate White with good words, and Black paired with bad words. Afterwards, participants are instructed to categorize Black and White again but with reversed key response. Then the last part is to pair black with good words, and white with bad words (9. Greenwald et al., 1998).

Explicit social attitudes define how people can be required to provide a questionnaire or self-report to his or her attitude. There are different ways to measure explicit social attitudes. For example, previous work has been using scales, such as Likert scale, semantic differential scale, and Thurstone attitudes scale. Take Likert scale as an example, Likert scale is a measurement that reflects people's attitudes towards an object with positive and negative evaluation. In a typical Likert scale, it usually uses expressions that vary in the extent of extremity (e.g., strong agree, agree, no preference, disagree, Strong disagree) (Likert, 1932).

3. Implicit and explicit attitudes towards rich and poor people

Previous work has explored implicit and explicit social attitudes in the domain of social class. (11. Zhou and Wang (2007)) examined such question. Specifically, the authors sampled a group of Chinese college students in Beijing and measured their implicit and explicit attitudes towards rich and poor people. Zhou and Wang found a dissociation in implicit and explicit social attitudes towards rich versus poor people in China. In explicit attitudes, especially in a questionnaire, people have shown more negative evaluation towards rich people. In contrast, the results of implicit social attitudes are opposite, such that people show more positive evaluation towards rich than poor people. (11. Zhou and Wang (2007)) did not find a significant correlation between implicit and explicit social attitudes towards rich and poor people.

The same question has been explored in the United States as well. For example, (12. Horwitz and Dovidio (2015)) examined American adults' implicit and explicit attitudes towards rich people. Across three studies, they found that participants showed implicit preference for rich people, but not explicit preference. Additionally, they found that implicit and explicit pro-rich attitudes predict different behaviors (e.g., implicit attitudes, but not explicit attitudes, uniquely predict leniency on a rich driver who causes a car accident).

The intention to make this research is to find out what children in age between 6-12 in elementary school think of people in different social status. Preadolescent people are influenced by their subjective social status. Cultural differences are included in this research as well. The research has indicated that higher SSS (subjective social status) children have fewer positive perspective to poor and higher positive attitudes to middle class people. Then higher positive perspective in rich. Conversely, children that are relatively lower subjective social status reflects their negative perspective are lower to poor than higher SSS people ratings (10. Rashmita, Christia, Elizabeth, Kriby 2015). Both articles expand the existing knowledge of implicit wealth attitudes and suggests that implicit pro-rich attitudes are an important factor in understanding how social class influences daily life.

4. The development of implicit and explicit attitudes

Race is a domain of interest for implicit and explicit attitudes. In order to see if distinction of social attitudes across diverse of regions exist. Researchers find different targets in China, The United States, Japan and Cameroon. (13. Baron & Banaji 2006; Qian et al., 2016). IAT is necessary to precisely conclude the result from each region. However, the result remains constant at age of 6 to 12. The research has indicated the importance of how knowledge perceiving as they grow up with abundant perception restoring to different groups of people. No matter social status, background and diverse

cultural impressions. The result remains no difference. (14. Dunham, Baron, and Banaji (2006)) examined the implicit race attitudes from children to adults in America and Japan. They sampled a group of 6, 10 and adults, and measured their implicit race attitudes by an implicit method. Across two experiments, they found that in the America, anti-black grow steady more than ages development. But anti-Japanese decreased in strength more than development. Both are steady at age 6. But as soon as they grow up to 10. Implicit and explicit attitudes begin to disassociate. Eventually explicit social attitudes will be disappeared in adults. They assume that their social preference is based on ingroup influences at the age 6 to the outgroup people. Specifically in concern the social status of people from outgroup. Experiment 2 indicates how can participants from a village of Japan who never received any knowledge from America, differentiated from Experiment 1. However, the result showed that children in age of 6 behave no difference of social preference in contrasting to white American children. Thus, outgroup people will not be affected in the earlier ages. Others remains constant as experiment 1. After the hypothesis and assumption were established, researchers began to set up for an experiment that indicate this phenomenon. Including two different social outgroups. Americans and Japanese, for easier distinguishing and analyzing with the same method to different people and social background.

These articles maintain a fundamental problem of how implicit or explicit racial bias are emerged due to the distinction of different societies. In terms of differences in ages, cultures, social status etc. Researchers from different articles originally hold the base in common. They all start to digging out with comparing diverse of regions. Including The United States, Japan, Cameroon and China. To precisely conclude the result from each region, taking an implicit racial bias experiment is necessary. Moreover, for keeping the experiment successfully done, they have made some modifications on the button they pressed, the audio they about to release in the experiment. Nevertheless, the result remains stable at last. The result remains constant at the age of 6-12. The research has indicated the importance of how knowledge perceiving as they grow up with abundant perception restoring to different groups of people. No matter social status, background and diverse cultural impressions. The result remains no difference. By the record, these articles have several precise steps have in common that guide the researchers to the conclusion that satisfied them. In other words, “Method” “Materials” “Procedures” “Result and Discussions” appeal to be routines as the following researchers tried to look for the answers.

5. Conclusion

The present study reviewed the existing literature on people’s implicit and explicit social attitudes, and specifically focused on these two forms of attitudes in the domain of social class and race. The results consistently suggest that people show some degree of implicit and explicit attitudes in both domains, such that people show implicit preference for higher social class, and that people also show implicit preference for white people. These results provide important evidence informing the theories of implicit and explicit attitudes, as well as the practice or interventions to reduce negative attitudes towards poor or minority groups. Future research should be added to further explore social attitudes in other domains, such as culture or religion. Additionally, future research could also explore the reason why people show preference for rich or higher social class.

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