GROUP INCLUSIVENESS, GROUP IDENTIFICATION, AND INTERGROUP ATTRIBUTIONAL BIAS

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Two studies examined the effects of group inclusiveness and the strength of group identification on intergroup attributional bias. Thirty-seven Hakka students (Study 1) and 53 Chaoshanese students (Study 2) in China read scenarios in which members of an excessively inclusive in-group, optimally inclusive in-group, or an out-group engaged in desirable or undesirable behaviors. They then made causal attributions for each behavior. Results consistently showed that intergroup attributional bias (i.e., attributing desirable behaviors of in-group members to internal causes and undesirable behaviors to external causes; for events associated with members of out-groups, opposite directions of attributions are observed) was especially visible when the in-group size was optimally inclusive. Moreover, in-group identification with optimally inclusive in-group was stronger than that with excessively inclusive in-group. The strength of group-identification was positively correlated with the magnitude of intergroup attributional bias at the individual level. The results were interpreted from the viewpoint of Self-Categorization Theory.

Key words: causal attribution, attribution bias, group identification, self-categorization

Studies of causal attribution have established a phenomenon called the “self-serving bias” (e.g., Bradley, 1978). People, particularly those living in Western cultures, tend to attribute their own desirable performance and outcomes (i.e., success) to internal causes such as ability, effort, and positive characteristics, whereas they explain undesirable performance and outcomes (i.e., failure) in terms of external causes such as task difficulty, bad luck, situational constraints, and so forth. There is a mitigated, or even reversed pattern observed for success and failure by other people. A similar bias is found at the intergroup level as well. Members of a social group are more likely to make internal attributions for success by members of their own group (i.e., in-group), while they make external attributions for their failure. For events associated with members of other groups

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(i.e., out-groups), opposite directions of attributions are observed. This is called "intergroup attributional bias," and a great deal of research has evidenced this bias (e.g., Hewstone, Bond, & Wan, 1983; Hewstone & Ward, 1985; Islam & Hewstone, 1993; Ma, 2003; Stephan, 1977; Taylor & Jaggi, 1974; Weber, 1994; for reviews, see Hewstone, 1990; Pettigrew, 1979).

Intergroup attributional bias is one form of another well-established phenomenon, in-group favoritism. Group members often show judgments and overt behavior (e.g., resource distribution) in favor of their in-group over the out-group (Brewer, 1979; Tajfel, 1981). Currently, one of the most widely accepted theoretical explanations for in-group favoring tendencies, including the intergroup attributional bias, is an account based on Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). SIT proposes that group members are motivated to achieve positive in-group identity so that their positive self-images can be established or maintained. Attributing success by fellow in-group members to intrinsic causes of group members' behavior should help members promote their self/group evaluations, while attributing their failure to external causes of group members’ behavior should prevent them from self-blame and from lowering their self/group esteem (Hewstone, 1990; Weber, 1994). In contrast, internal attributions for out-group members’ undesirable outcome may bolster out-group stereotypes.

According to the SIT account for in-group favoritism, self-identification with the in-group is a key factor in influencing in-group favoritism. SIT argues that an individual’s behavior can be defined along a dimension which ranges from a purely interpersonal end to an intergroup end. To the extent to which a member identifies with the group, his/her behavior is construed as intergroup behavior rather than an individual’s act. Consequently, the quest for group esteem rather than that for individual self-esteem will be more apparent. Indeed, a number of studies (e.g., Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Branscombe, Wann, Noel, & Coleman, 1993; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1997; M. Karasawa, 1988, 1991) have demonstrated that group identification facilitates in-group favoritism. Surprisingly few studies, however, have examined the relationship between identification and causal attributions made by group members. The present study directly addresses this issue. We examined how different levels of group identification affect intergroup attributional bias.

Self-Categorization Processes

Self-Categorization Theory (SCT), proposed by Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, and Wetherell (1987) is an important extension of SIT. Individuals are often conceived as a member of multiple groups that are hierarchically structured in-groups (e.g., social psychologists comprised by the “psychologists” category, furthermore subordinate to the “researchers” category). SCT maintains that the level of inclusiveness in such a hierarchical self-categorization structure determines the degree of self-group identification. The inclusiveness is the extent to which the in-group category can be differentiated into subgroups, and is assumed to vary as a function of intra-category similarity among the members vis-à-vis inter-category distinction (i.e., the meta-contrast ratio). Taking a social psychologist as an example, defining him/herself as a “psychologist” may be informative
to represent his/her social identity when the person is surrounded by people from other occupational categories (e.g., lawyers, bank tellers) or from other disciplines (e.g., economists, physicists) because the difference between the in-group and the out-group renders an optimal amount of information about the his/her identity. However, the “psychologist” category might be too broad and even uninformative when the people at present are all psychologists. Instead, it is more meaningful to define the self as a “social psychologist” as compared to psychologists from other subfields (e.g., clinical, developmental). In Roschean terms (Rosch, 1978), the “psychologist” category may function as a basic level of categorization in the former case, whereas the “social psychologists” is a necessary basic category in the latter case. Because the basic level of self-categorization is assumed by SCT to maximize self-group identification, it would serve as a basis for self-enhancement through intergroup biases (see also Brewer, 1991).

In order to test the above assumptions derived from SCT, we examined in the present study the effect of different levels of category inclusiveness on the intergroup attributional bias. Specifically, we asked students living in Guangdong province of China to read a series of scenarios in which each protagonist displayed either a desirable or undesirable act. Protagonists were described in three different ways. In one condition, protagonists were depicted as “Cantonese”, indicating the membership of a highly inclusive in-group. In the second condition, a less inclusive in-group identity was given, so that an optimal level of group identification was elicited. A third condition provided an out-group protagonist. After reading each scenario, participants made causal attribution for each behavior. Their in-group identification as an individual difference was also measured. On the basis of SCT, we predicted that in-group identification should be stronger with an optimally inclusive in-group than with a high-inclusive in-group (Hypothesis 1). We also expected that intergroup attributional bias would be decreased in magnitude when in-group inclusiveness was too high (Hypothesis 2). Furthermore, we predicted that strength of group-identification would be correlated with magnitude of attribution bias at the individual level (Hypothesis 3).

### Causal Attributions by Chinese People

In recent years, cultural psychologists challenged the idea that self-serving tendencies in various domains may be culturally bound. Substantial evidence shows that East Asians are less prone to show self-serving bias than people living in Western cultures (e.g., Heine, 2003; Kashima & Triandis, 1986; Kitayama, Takagi, & Matsumoto, 1995). Different theoretical perspectives provided explanations for this phenomenon, such as those drawing on individualism versus collectivism (e.g., Kashima, Yamaguchi, Kim, Choi, Gelfand, & Yuki, 1995; Leung, 1988; Leung & Bond, 1982, 1984; Triandis, McCusker, & Hui, 1990) and interdependent versus independent construal of the self (e.g., Kitayama & Karasawa, 1995; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). These perspectives commonly emphasize that East Asian cultures tend to value group harmony and interdependence over achievements on individual bases relative to Western cultures, and that Asians may consequently regard it socially desirable to withhold attributions that give credit to the self as an individual (but see Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002).
In contrast to these tendencies at the individual level, attributions by Asians at the group level do show in-group serving biases (e.g., K. Karasawa, 2002; Ma, 2003; Muramoto & Yamaguchi, 1997). However, empirical evidence concerning Chinese populations is still sparse, or mixed at best. For instance, Hewstone and Ward (1985) and Morris and Peng (1994) both failed to show intergroup attributional bias in their Chinese samples. Furthermore, issues in the methodological limitations in these studies can be raised. Specifically, the participants in Hewstone and Ward were ethnic Chinese living in Malaysia and Singapore. In order to generalize these findings from people living in foreign cultures as “outsiders” to Chinese people as a whole, further investigation is needed. Also, Morris and Peng used an extremely negative case as their experimental materials (i.e., a murder case). In order to examine attribution biases among Chinese people more extensively and thoroughly, we presented multiple scenario situations depicting both positive and negative instances to respondents living inside of the authentic Chinese context of the mainland.

**STUDY 1**

In our first study, we recruited students from “Hakka” groups living in Guangdong province, China, as participants. The overlapped area of two circles in Figure 1 illustrates the multiple group identification that was presumed for the participants. Hakkas are a special kind of tribal group in China with a long tradition, whose members show very strong bonding in various aspects of their lives. We hence predicted that the participants would show a strong level of in-group identification with this category as a “basic level” of self-categorization. In addition, because of the region where they lived, the participants were expected to identify themselves as “Cantonese.” Note, however, that this category could be overly inclusive because it comprises very diverse and potentially more meaningful subcategories such as “Hong Kongers,” “Macanese,” “Guangzhouese,” “Chaoshanese,” as well as “Hakkas.” It was therefore anticipated that even though group identification as “Cantonese” was likely, the level of identification would not be optimally strong to elicit visible attributional bias. Finally, we presented “laborers from other provinces” as the out-group. This category is often mentioned in daily conversations among Cantonese living in various regions as a typically negative out-group. This category label often renders stigmatized connotations with regard to a lower socioeconomic and educational level. We expected that the present participants would clearly view this category label as the out-group.

**METHOD**

*Participants:* We recruited 48 Hakka students of Jinan University located in Guangzhou city of Guangdong Province, China, through the cooperation of administrators of the university.

*Experimental Material and Procedure:* Participants paced themselves through a questionnaire consisting of two parts. First, each participant read a total of six scenarios (see Appendix). They included
three situations containing the protagonist’s desirable behaviors and three others describing undesirable behaviors. The scenarios were presented in a mixed order: The protagonist of each scenario was labeled as either a “Hakka”, “Cantonese,” or “laborer from other provinces.” Each participant was presented with all combinations of the protagonist categories and behaviors, and thus responded to a total of 18 scenarios.

After reading each scenario, participants were asked to choose one out of two plausible causes. One was an internal cause (e.g., “because the Hakka wanted to help you”) and the other was an external cause (e.g., “because the Hakka could not see the luggage on the too crowded bus”).

Participants then completed a questionnaire with three open-ended questions and 16 Likert-type questions to assess their group identification. First, they were asked to nominate the name of the region by which they would define themselves, such as “Guangzhouese”, “Beijingese”, “Shanghaiese”, and so forth. Next, they indicated the name of the place where they had lived the longest time in their life, along with the actual length of time. They next completed 8 group-identification scale questions developed by M. Karasawa (1991). This was a 7-point Likert-type scale and contained questions to assess cognitive aspect of identification with a group as a whole (e.g., “If someone characterizes you as a ‘typical Cantonese’, how appropriate do you think this is?”) as well as affective aspect (e.g., “How strongly are you attached to the group Cantonese?”), and ties to other in-group members (e.g., “Are there many Cantonese people who have influenced the way you think and behave?”). The measurement was carried out for both “Cantonese” and “Hakka.”

RESULTS

We identified 37 participants (15 males, 16 females, 6 not indicating their gender) who indicated in open-ended questions that the place they lived for the longest time in life was inside of Guangdong province. We defined these participants as the “Hakkas who lived in the Guangdong province” and submitted data from these participants to the subsequent analyses. Seven participants who indicated areas outside of the Guangdong province as their longest place of residence, and 4 participants who did not respond to the questions were deleted from the analyses.

Group Identification: Measurement of group-identification showed a high reliability for “Cantonese” (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .75$) as well as for “Hakka” ($\alpha = .95$). The score was therefore averaged across eight questions for each target group. The difference in mean identification scores between the Hakka target ($M = 5.49, SD = 1.35$) and the Cantonese ($M = 5.05, SD = 0.86$) approached significance ($t(36) = -1.88, p < .10$). Hence consistent with Hypothesis 1, a higher level of group identification was observed for the less
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Inclusive Hakka in-group than for the abstract Cantonese group.

**Causal Attribution**: To construct a measure of causal attribution, the number of internal attributions out of three situations (i.e., bus, bicycle, and restaurant) was counted for each participant. The scores (ranging from 0 to 3) were then submitted to a 2 (desirability of behavior) × 3 (protagonist’s group membership) repeated-measure Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The desirability × membership interaction was the only significant effect, $F(2, 70) = 9.65, p < .001$. Table 1 shows the mean scores and the results from Ryan’s Multiple Comparison Test. With regard to desirable behavior, a greater number of internal attributions were found for the Hakka protagonist than for the protagonist of Cantonese and laborers from other provinces (both $p$s < .05). In contrast, when the behavior was undesirable, internal attribution was significantly less likely for the Hakka protagonist than for the protagonist of Cantonese and laborers from other provinces ($p$s < .05). The difference between protagonists of Cantonese and laborers from other provinces reached significance in neither case. Thus, in-group serving attributions were clearly observed for the Hakka in-group, both in positive and negative events. However, no such bias was found for the Cantonese in-group. These results supported Hypothesis 2.

In order to examine intergroup attributional bias more directly, we analyzed the difference in attribution scores, with the number of internal attributions for undesirable scenarios subtracted from that of desirable scenarios for each participant. The means of the difference scores are shown in the rightmost column of Table 1. An one-way ANOVA revealed a significant main effect ($F(2, 70) = 9.66, p < .001$). The bias score was significantly greater for the Hakka group than for the Cantonese and the out-group (both $p$s < .05, by Fisher’s LSD test).

**Correlational Analysis**: To test Hypothesis 3, we examined the correlation between the strength of in-group identification and internal causal attributions, separately for the Hakka and Cantonese protagonists. As Table 2 illustrates, group identification was significantly correlated with internal causal attributions of desirable behaviors in the Cantonese scenario ($p < .05$), and the correlation approached significance in the Hakka scenario ($p < .10$). Correlations involving undesirable behaviors did not reach significance. As a single index of the in-group serving bias, we subtracted the attribution scores of undesirable behaviors from those of desirable behaviors, and then correlated these scores with the strength of in-group identification. Again, the correlation reached significance for the Cantonese scenario, and approached significance for the Hakka

Table 1. Means (and Standard Deviations) of the Number of Scenarios Attributed to Internal Causes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protagonist Identity</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Undesirable</th>
<th>Difference (Desirable–Undesirable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hakka</td>
<td>2.03 (0.88)$_a$</td>
<td>1.36 (1.15)$_b$</td>
<td>0.67 (1.72)$_a$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>1.44 (0.94)$_b$</td>
<td>1.83 (1.06)$_a$</td>
<td>−0.39 (1.55)$_b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer from other provinces</td>
<td>1.22 (0.76)$_b$</td>
<td>1.81 (1.01)$_a$</td>
<td>−0.58 (1.30)$_b$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means with different subscripts within each column significantly differ at $p < .05$. $N = 36$. 
protagonist. These results indicate that members of these groups favored their in-group in causal attributions, to the extent that they identified with the group. Hypothesis 3 was hence confirmed.

**DISCUSSION**

The results were generally consistent with our hypotheses. Even though the participants of the present study could identify themselves both as a Cantonese and as a Hakka, they showed a stronger identification for the less inclusive Hakka group than for the excessively broad Cantonese category. Furthermore, they showed intergroup attributional bias for the Hakka in-group by attributing more desirable behaviors to internal causes and more undesirable behaviors to external causes as compared to the out-group target. No such bias was found for the Cantonese in-group. Presumably, the less inclusive Hakka group rendered a better fit as a “basic level” of in-group category than did the abstract Cantonese group, and thereby eliciting a stronger in-group serving tendency.

In addition, it was confirmed that group members showed a strong intergroup attributional bias to the extent that they identified the group, either in the Hakka category or in the Cantonese category. The result also suggested that the strength of group-identification was correlated with the magnitude of attribution bias at the individual level.

It may be noted, however, that the difference in inclusiveness was not the sole explanation for the observed effects. As depicted in Figure 1, the Cantonese and Hakka categories were partially overlapped, but not completely. The difference in causal attribution tendencies might have been due to differences in the unique aspects of each category. In order to minimize this possibility, we conducted a second study in which we presented two completely overlapped, hierarchical categories as targets.

**STUDY 2**

In our second study, we recruited students from the “Chaoshanese” group living in Guangdong province of China as participants and compared the participants’ “Cantonese” identity with their “Chaoshanese” identity. Chaoshanese is a regional group completely
subsumed under the Cantonese category (see Figure 2). We expected that the Chaoshanese membership would provide an optimal level of self-categorization and replicate the effect of the Hakka category found in Study 1.

**METHOD**

*Participants:* We recruited 63 Chaoshanese students at Jinan University in Guangzhou city through the cooperation of administrators of the university.

*Materials and Procedure:* The scenarios used in study 2 were identical to the ones employed in Study 1 with one exception. Instead of Hakka category, the protagonists were described as Chaoshanese in the supposedly optimal inclusiveness condition.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In the three open-ended questions section, 53 respondents (38 male, 11 female, and 4 not indicating their gender) indicated the place they lived the longest inside of Guangdong province, hence we identified them as the “Chaoshanese lived in Guangdong province.” Data from these participants were subjected to the subsequent analyses. Ten participants did not indicate the longest place they lived and it is likely that they were not a Chaoshanese or a Cantonese, therefore their data was deleted from the analyses.

*Group Identification:* The identification scale showed a high reliability again (αs = .87 and .86 for Cantonese and Chaoshanese, respectively), and the scores were able to be averaged for each target group. Identification with the Chaoshanese category (M = 5.50, SD = 0.99) was significantly higher than that of the Cantonese category (M = 4.56, SD = 1.10), t(50) = –5.34, p < .001. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported again.

*Causal Attribution:* A 2 (behavior desirability) × 3 (target group membership) repeated-measure ANOVA was conducted for internal attribution scores computed in the same manner as in Study 1, with a theoretical score range from 0 to 3. The desirability × membership interaction reached significance again and it was the only one
significant effect, $F(2, 104) = 6.02, p < .01$. As Table 3 illustrates, desirable behaviors by the Chaoshanese protagonists were more likely to be attributed to internal causes than were those by the Cantonese ($p < .05$) and the out-group protagonist ($p < .10$) in Ryan’s Multiple Comparison Test. Results from the undesirable behavior condition showed an exactly opposite pattern. Undesirable behaviors by the Chaoshanese protagonists were less likely to be attributed to internal causes than those by the Cantonese and the out-group members (both $p < .05$). These results were consistent with Hypothesis 2 and no intergroup attributional bias was found for the Cantonese in-group.

Here too, we analyzed the difference in internal attributions of desirable and undesirable events. An one-way ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for target category, $F(2, 104) = 6.02, p < .01$. Again, the Chaoshanese target resulted in a significantly greater in-group serving bias than did the Cantonese and the “Laborers from other provinces” categories (both $p < .05$, by Fisher’s LSD test). As in Study 1, the “Cantonese” category appeared overly inclusive to be a basis for intergroup attributional bias.

**Correlational analysis:** To test Hypothesis 3, correlational analyses were conducted between the difference in score of desirable/undesirable behaviors and in-group identification, following the same procedure as in study 1. As shown in Table 4, group identification was significantly correlated with internal causal attributions of undesirable behaviors in the Chaoshanese scenario and desirable behaviors in the Cantonese scenario ($p < .05$). Correlations involving desirable behaviors in the Chaoshanese scenario and undesirable behaviors in the Cantonese scenario did not reach significance. However, the correlation coefficient showed marginal significance between the difference in score of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protagonist Identity</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Undesirable</th>
<th>Difference (Desirable–Undesirable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chaoshanese</td>
<td>2.02 (1.03)</td>
<td>1.32 (0.98)</td>
<td>0.70 (1.61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>1.57 (1.01)</td>
<td>1.96 (0.92)</td>
<td>–0.40 (1.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer from other provinces</td>
<td>1.66 (1.14)</td>
<td>1.74 (0.98)</td>
<td>–0.08 (1.83)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Means with different subscripts within each column significantly differ at $p < .05$ (except Chaoshanese vs. Laborer in desirable behavior, $p < .10$). $N = 53$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-group</th>
<th>Desirable</th>
<th>Undesirable</th>
<th>Difference (Desirable–Undesirable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chaoshanese</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>–0.26*</td>
<td>0.20†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantonese</td>
<td>0.27*</td>
<td>–0.15</td>
<td>0.26*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ** $p < .01$, * $p < 0.5$, † $p < .10$. $N = 53$.
Chaoshanese protagonist’s desirable/undesirable behaviors and the identification with Chaoshanese category \((p < .10)\) and was significant in the Cantonese category \((p < .05)\). These results supported Hypothesis 3 again.

Taken together, the results from Study 2 generally replicated the findings from Study 1.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION**

The present study is among the first attempts in the attribution bias literature that systematically manipulated the level of inclusiveness of the target group. Across the two experimental studies, the results consistently demonstrated that optimality in inclusiveness of in-group category influenced strength of self-group identification and elicited in-group serving attribution. As predicted in Hypothesis 1, Hakkas (Study 1) and Chaoshanese (Study 2) as less inclusive categories resulted in a higher level of identification than overly inclusive Cantonese category. Furthermore, as predicted in Hypothesis 2, less inclusive in-group gave rise to a significantly greater amount of intergroup attributional bias than superordinate Cantonese category and out-group. From the viewpoint of SCT, the present results can be explained that less inclusive categories provided an optimal level of self-categorization, and it seems to have functioned as a “basic category” to maximize a meaningful contrast between the in-group and the out-group (Brewer, 1991; Turner et al., 1987).

It should be noted that the effect of inclusiveness was demonstrated in two different contexts. Study 1 manipulated inclusiveness between partially overlapping categories, whereas Study 2 employed a completely inclusive relationship between superordinate and subordinate categories. The duplicated results in the latter fully inclusive design suggest that the findings from the former partially overlapping case can be mainly attributed to the difference in inclusiveness rather than other unique characteristics of each category. Overall, the present results have provided an important support for the SCT conceptualization of hierarchical self-categorization processes as an explanation for group identification and causal attribution biases.

Correlational analysis also examined effect of identification on causal attributions by group members. As predicted in Hypothesis 3 derived from the viewpoint of SIT, the results of correlational analyses in study 1 and 2 indicated consistently that the strength of group-identification is correlated with magnitude of intergroup attributional bias at the individual level. The results in this present study demonstrated effects of group identification in influencing in-group serving attribution consistently (see also K. Karasawa, 2002).

According with SCT, we maintained that the optimal level of category inclusiveness would be a critical antecedent of both group identification and attribution bias. A mediation analysis proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) would allow us to test this assumption. However, because inclusiveness was manipulated in the present design as a within-participant variable, we could not run the standard mediation analysis. This is an important limitation of the present study, and future research is definitely needed to...
address this problem.

Finally, the present data has provided important implications for the literature in cultural psychology. It has been argued that East Asians are willing to show intergroup attributional bias even though they do not always exhibit self-serving attributional bias at individual level (e.g., Brown & Kobayashi, 2002; Ma, 2003; Muramoto & Yamaguchi, 1997; but see also Heine, 2003). Empirical support for this contention, however, has not been sufficient especially in research referring to Chinese people. Lack of robust evidence in Chinese people may have been attributed to limitations in methodology such as the non-representativeness of sample (Hewstone & Ward, 1985) and extremity of presented materials (Morris & Peng, 1994). Specifically, Hewstone and Ward (1985) examined Chinese participants’ responses in Malaysia and Singapore, as these authors correctly noted. Chinese people in these regions might have established their idiosyncratic social positions and status in each region, and these actual factors seem likely to have influenced expressions of self-evaluations in specific manners. As such, it is difficult to generalize their results to Chinese people in all regions. In contrast, the present samples were expected to be relatively free from those peculiar circumstances involving ethnic Chinese people because the data were collected from respondents who lived in mainland China. Certainly, Hakka preserve a highly distinct group identity in the Chinese community, but their in-group identity does not necessarily imply a higher or lower status. In fact they appear to have varying feelings toward their social position depending on which domain (e.g., education, economic status, and so forth) is in question. As for Chaoshanese, the categorization is mainly region-based and can be seen as even free from evaluative status. Taken together, we can emphasize that this present study has provided clear evidence, nearly for the first time, in the literature of intergroup attributional bias among the citizens of “Chinese” in a relatively status-free context. Research in the future may be recommended to demonstrate further support of the present findings.

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Appendix

Positive Behavior
1. You fell down while riding a bicycle, and the passer-by cyclist helped you up.
2. You were carrying a heavy luggage on a bus, and the passenger stood up to give up his seat to you.
3. When you went into the restaurant, the waiter greeted you (showing his courtesy).

Negative Behavior
1. You fell down while riding a bicycle, but the passer-by cyclist did not help you up.
2. You were carrying a heavy luggage on a bus, and the passenger did not give up his seat to you.
3. When you went into the restaurant, the waiter did not greet you (showing discourtesy).

Note. The protagonist is indicated by an underline.