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Publication Date

2020

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Santa Barbara

Positive Portrayal versus Positive Stereotype: The Effect of Media Exposure to the Model

Minority Stereotype on Asian Americans' Self-Concept and Emotions

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Master of Arts

in Communication

by

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December 2020

The thesis of Kevin Nguyen Do is approved.

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October 2020

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ABSTRACT

Positive Portrayal versus Positive Stereotype: The Effect of Media Exposure to the

Model Minority Stereotype on Asian Americans' Self-Concept and Emotions

by

Kevin Nguyen Do

The nature of racial stereotypes perpetuated about Asian Americans in the media is unique, given that the most prominent stereotype about this ethnic group is often purported to be positive. Known as the model minority, this characterization defines Asian Americans as intelligent and professionally, academically, and financially successful. This level of accomplishment is also often coupled with unfavorable characterizations, such as socially and romantically inept or altogether absent of personal complexity. Although seemingly positive, positive stereotypes can negatively affect Asian Americans' psychological well-being, but limited studies have explored its consequences. To this end, the current study examined whether media exposure to the varying portrayals of Asians as a model minority stereotype (i.e., unidimensional stigmatized, unidimensional non-stigmatized, and multidimensional) would indirectly affect ingroup audiences' self-concept (e.g., state self-esteem, community worth, ingroup stereotyping) and immediate positive affect, through depersonalization. Furthermore, this study sought to understand whether ethnic identification would moderate the proposed indirect effect. As a result, this study revealed an indirect effect on media exposure of Asians depicted unidimensionally stigmatized as a model minority stereotype on Asian Americans' community worth, ingroup stereotyping,

and immediate positive affect through depersonalization. However, results revealed no indirect effect of media exposure to Asians characterized multidimensionally or unidimensionally non-stigmatized as a model minority on Asian Americans' self-concept and immediate positive affect. Likewise, results revealed no conditional indirect effect via ethnic identification. The results of this study can inform media professionals and future studies on the harm that media exposure to racial/ethnic stereotypes can have for ingroup audiences.

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The number of Asians depicted in the media is gradually rising (e.g., Tukachinsky et al., 2015) and currently at an all-time high at 4.3%, compared to past rates of representation (Chin et al., 2017). Unfortunately, when considering *how* Asians are depicted when seen in the media, quantitative (e.g., Mastro & Stern, 2003) and qualitative (e.g., Chin et al., 2017) content analyses have consistently reported that Asians are often cast in stereotypical roles. Notably, the nature of the racial stereotypes perpetuated about Asian Americans in the media is unique, given that the most prominent stereotype about this ethnic group is often professed to be positive. Known as the model minority, this characterization defines Asian Americans as intelligent and professionally, academically, and financially successful (Chin et al., 2017; Deo et al., 2008). This, however, is often coupled with social and romantic ineptitude or an absence of personal complexity altogether. Accordingly, despite the seemingly auspicious nature of this characterization, activation of this stereotype in non-mediated contexts has been associated with adverse outcomes for Asians including increased psychological distress (e.g., depression, anxiety, and stress; Atkin et al., 2018) among other undesirable social and psychological outcomes. Surprisingly, despite the dominance of this stereotype across media portrayals of Asians (Chin et al., 2017; Deo et al., 2008), few empirical studies have examined the implications of exposure to the model minority stereotype on Asian American audiences. To this end, the current study examines whether exposure to this representation in the media affects ingroup audiences' self-concept and emotions. The role of ethnic identification and depersonalization are additionally considered in this context. The theoretical assumptions of the social identity approach guide this investigation.

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Asian Americans in the Media

Quantitative content analyses have consistently shown that Asians are underrepresented in the media compared to their proportion of the population in the United States (e.g., Chin et al., 2017; Glascock, 2001; Hunt et al., 2018; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000; Monk-Turner et al., 2010; Tukachinsky et al., 2015; cf. Harwood & Anderson, 2002). Even though the representation of Asians is steadily increasing (Chin et al., 2017; Tukachinsky et al., 2015), the consistently low number of Asians in the media has made it difficult to assess *how* Asian characters are portrayed quantitively (e.g., Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). Beyond content analyses of television commercials reporting that Asians are usually portrayed as intelligent and technologically savvy (Li-Vollmer, 2002; Mastro & Stern, 2003; Taylor & Stern, 1997), little is documented regarding the manner in which Asians are portrayed in the media. Nonetheless, insights can be gleaned from qualitative and critical assessments of media representations of Asians. Although not generalizable to the broader media landscape, this work cautiously indicates that a limited set of traits defines what it means to be Asian in U.S. media.

Specifically, qualitative and critical assessments of media representations of Asians commonly argue that Asians are associated with unique intellectual abilities in the media. Known as the model minority stereotype (Kawai, 2005; Lee et al., 2009; Ono, 2017), this depiction frames Asians as hardworking and intelligent, with particular proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). In particular, this stereotype conveys the notion that Asians have achieved success in the U.S. through hard work, without government assistance. That said, this stereotype pits Asians against other racial/ethnic groups in the U.S., defining Asians as an exemplar of financial and career

success that other racial/ethnic groups have failed to emulate (Lee et al., 2009; Ono, 2017). Despite the overall seemingly positive characteristics, research shows that the model minority stereotype is sometimes partnered with negative traits such as being nerdy, submissive, intellectually threatening, socially and romantically inept (Eguchi, 2013; Kawai, 2005; Ono, 2017). In the media, representations of Asian Americans with both positively and negatively valenced traits associated with the model minority stereotype can be seen throughout history and across various platforms.

The longstanding perpetuation of this stereotype in the media is reflected in everything from early depictions in the films of the 1930s (Aoki & Mio, 2009), to magazine advertisements throughout the 1960s (Lee et al., 2009), to contemporary film (Hunt et al., 2018; Ono & Pham, 2009) and television (Chin et al., 2017; Deo et al., 2008). In these roles, Asians are seen as smart, studious, and successful in their careers and finances. At the same time, they are often represented as devoid of any social or family connections and as outsiders, often with prominent accents (Aoki & Mio, 2009). Evidence supporting the persistence and prevalence of the model minority stereotype can also be found in the popular press and in news coverage that highlights the limited narratives and roles for Asians in the media. In an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine, popular film and television actress Constance Wu discusses the continued tendency for Asians to be relegated to roles as the "nerdy math guy" in the media, which inhibits audiences from seeing Asians as anything more than smart and academic (Wang, 2018). Similarly, an article in *Teen Vogue* addresses the ongoing stereotypical jokes in Hollywood that ridicule Asians as being advanced in math and having a geeky disposition (Briones, 2016). Considering that Asians are argued to be depicted as a model minority in the media, it is essential to note that the portrayal is not uniform.

Varying Portrayals of the Model Minority in the Media

The varying portrayal of the model minority stereotype can be classified as being multidimensional, unidimensional non-stigmatized, or unidimensional stigmatized. Notably, across these, positive features linking Asians with intelligence, success, and a strong work ethic, are central to the characterization (Lee et al., 2009). What differentiates the three is the extent to which negative characteristics outweigh positive characteristics, such that being docile, subservient, nerdy, effeminate, and a workaholic (Ono & Pham, 2009).

A multidimensional portrayal of Asians as a model minority in the media can be understood to primarily focus on the favorable characteristics while also representing these individuals as three-dimensional individuals, with fully developed identities. For example, a positive portrayal might represent Asians in higher-status careers (e.g., medical doctors), highlighting intelligence and achievement while also representing them as multifaceted characters with social and romantic lives who are more than merely their successful careers and accomplishments. In other words, highly successful individuals with a dynamic personality, work, and personal lives (e.g., Dr. Cristina Yang in ABC's *Grey's Anatomy*; Deo et al., 2008). When it comes to unidimensional non-stigmatized portrayals, the Asian characters reinforce the model minority stereotype such that they are seen in high-status careers or as intelligent but rarely, if ever, represented beyond characteristics of the archetype; this is typically how the archetype is generally understood in a real-world context. As for the unidimensional stigmatized, although the seemingly favorable traits are present (e.g., academic achievement), they are inextricably linked with wholly undesirable features such as social and romantic incompetence.

Though being stereotyped as nerdy and docile may be seen as benign when compared to stereotypes associated with other racial/ethnic groups such as being labeled

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thugs, criminals, and terrorists (Tukachinsky et al., 2015; Tyree, 2011), it does not mean the representation of Asians as a model minority is not damaging. Research indicates that Asians commonly view the model minority stereotype negatively, describing it as socially confining, inaccurate, alongside creating performance pressure in academic and other intellectual contexts (e.g., Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Rosenbloom & Way, 2004; Thompson et al., 2016). Existing literature has also generally shown that activation of the model minority stereotype in non-mediated contexts can lead to psychological distress (e.g., Gupta et al., 2011), anxiety (e.g., Lee, 2009) and threaten intellectual performance (e.g., Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000; Ho et al., 1998; cf. Shih et al., 2002). Varying studies have taken into account different factors (i.e., depersonalization) (e.g., Siy & Cheryan, 2013) to understand how and why exposure can affect Asian Americans in interpersonal settings. However, little to no research has investigated how exposure to portrayals of Asians as a model minority in the media and the different variations of the model minority stereotype might affect ingroup audiences. Given the importance of media depictions of one's social groups to one's self-concept (see Mastro, 2016), this is not a trivial question.

Most existing research examining exposure to the model minority stereotype in the media focuses on White audiences (e.g., Zhang 2010) with virtually none focusing on Asian American audiences or the different variations of the model minority stereotype in the media. Considering the potential for media exposure to impact the well-being and self-concept of people of color (see Mastro, 2016), it is crucial to examine if exposure to varying representations of the model minority stereotype influences Asian Americans' self-concept and immediate positive affect. The social identity framework (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1999) offers insights into understanding this relationship.

Social Identity Approach

From a social identity perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1999), people are perceived and understood not only as unique individuals but as members of relevant social groups or categories (e.g., racial/ethnic groups). As such, through social categorization, people cognitively classify themselves and others as members of their groups (i.e., ingroup) or members of contextually relevant other groups (i.e., outgroups). When one's social identity becomes psychologically salient in a particular social context, people then perceive and understand themselves and others less as idiosyncratic individuals and more in line with social group prototypes, a set of characteristics that are considered emblematic of a social group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). As a result, a person's self-concept becomes depersonalized, which is conceptualized as perceiving the attributes of oneself or a person's self-concept less as idiosyncratic individuals and more according to the prototypical characteristics of one's social group (Turner, 1999, 1987).

The theory argues that in intergroup contexts, processes of social comparisons are typically activated (Tajfel, 1978). Via social comparison, individuals attempt to acknowledge and accentuate a positive distinctiveness, or a positive evaluation of one's ingroup over a relevant outgroup (Tajfel, 1978). If intergroup comparisons result in a positive evaluation of one's ingroup, this supports one's group esteem and self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). In other words, the theory suggests the social comparison process functions to serve identity needs such that favorable intergroup comparisons benefit the self by bolstering group esteem and self-concept (Hogg, 2016). If an individual is unable to establish a positive evaluation of their ingroup in comparisons with the relevant outgroup, an individual's self-esteem, and psychological well-being may be threatened (Hogg, 2016). In the context of this study, one could argue that media exposure to a positive, racial stereotype such as the multidimensional or unidimensional non-stigmatized characterization of the

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model minority stereotype, given the valence of the characteristics, would help Asian Americans to establish a positive distinctiveness of their ingroup, in turn, leading to prosocial outcomes. However, considering that most Asian Americans have an unfavorable interpretation of the model minority stereotype, being labeled studious and advanced in STEM can leave them feeling frustrated, annoyed, and even ridiculed (Thompson et al., 2016); exposure to the model minority stereotype among Asian Americans would not be considered a positive ingroup evaluation. Consequently, exposure to unidimensional non-stigmatized depictions, given that it simply characterizes Asians one-dimensionally (as exceptionally smart and stellar in STEM), and the unidimensional stigmatized depictions, given that the portrayal includes unfavorable traits such as nerdiness, geekiness, and submissiveness, may lead to harmful effects among Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions. As for multidimensional depictions of Asians as a model minority, although the characterization includes traits beyond the archetype, the depiction may also lead to harmful outcomes given the disdained feelings Asian Americans have for the archetype and the multidimensional depiction still having similar characteristics of the model minority stereotype. However, there may be some potential for the multidimensional depiction to produce prosocial outcomes, considering its focus on three-dimensionally depictions Asians as a model minority.

To protect, promote, or preserve one's self-concept, self and group esteem, individuals may be motivated to employ a variety of protection strategies (i.e., social mobility, social competition, social creativity) to safeguard their positive social identity, self-esteem, and psychological well-being (Tajfel, 1969). Despite their best attempts, there is still a potential for an individual's self-concept and psychological well-being to be negatively impacted. For instance, such as during media use, exposure to racial

discrimination can negatively affect people of color's self-esteem and psychological well-being (see Mastro, 2016).

Media Effects of Racial/Ethnic Stereotypes

Media have the ability to construct and disseminate messages about racial/ethnic groups that focus primarily on a limited set of features; in turn, media messages can potentially accentuate group differences that privilege dominant groups over racial/ethnic groups (Mastro, 2009). Furthermore, media messages about racial minorities also have the capability of making audiences of color's racial/ethnic identity psychologically salient (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Consequently, these messages have the potential to negatively affect audiences of color's group esteem and self-concept.

A scant number of studies has generally found that media exposure to stereotype-confirming representations among audiences of color can negatively impact their self-esteem. Among these, most focus on examining the effect of media exposure to negative racial stereotypes as opposed to positive stereotypes. Nevertheless, existing studies examining the effects of exposure to negative racial stereotypes can partially inform this study. Specifically, despite the seemingly positive valence of the model minority stereotype and the varying level of favorable traits among the three classifications of the model minority stereotype in the media, media exposure to variations of the model minority stereotype might elicit a similar reaction to exposure to negative ingroup stereotype to varying degrees. In other words, exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized depiction may lead to similar outcomes as exposure to negative racial stereotypes among ingroup members, given that the characterization primarily focuses on more unfavorable traits.

That said, the few studies examining the effects of racial stereotypes across a variety of different mediated content (e.g., news, primetime, music videos) has, for the most part,

revealed that exposure among ingroup audiences can negatively impact the self-concept and psychological well-being of Black, Latinx, and Native American audiences (e.g., Fryberg et al., 2008; Rivadeneyra et al., 2007; Ward, 2004). For example, Ward (2004) examined the relationship between media use and Black adolescents' self-esteem, finding that exposure to music videos and sports programming was negatively correlated with different dimensions of self-esteem (i.e., performance, social, appearance, total, and racial esteem). Likewise, Rivadeneyra and her colleagues (2007) found that increased television exposure (which quantitative content analyses have found continue to underrepresent and negatively stereotype Latinxs) among high school and college students, was related to lower social and appearance self-esteem.

Notwithstanding the contribution and importance of the existing literature among this line of research, it is important to acknowledge that virtually no study has examined how media exposure to ingroup stereotypes effect Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions, let alone the effect of media exposure to positive racial stereotypes among ingroup members. Therefore, this study will attempt to address these gaps in the literature.

Positive Stereotypes

Virtually no studies have focused on the effects of exposure to seemingly positively valenced racial stereotypes in the media – perhaps owing to perceptions that positive stereotypes are not seen as problematic (Czopp et al., 2015). However, empirical evidence reveals that when a positive stereotype is not self-endorsed but instead activated by an outgroup member, it can be perceived as threatening and may elicit negative emotions such as anger (Cottrell & Neuberg, 2005; Siy & Cheryan, 2013, 2016; van Zomeren et al., 2007). A possible explanation for the adverse reaction could be due to the process of

depersonalization. Specifically, depersonalization is considered a feeling or sense that one is being perceived to be an indistinguishable or exchangeable member of one's social group.

Although depersonalization is not intrinsically harmful, being exposed to a positive stereotype can elicit a negative response because it can be perceived as though a person's individuality is being threatened by being reduced to an interchangeable member of the group (Siy & Cheryan, 2016). Indeed, Siy and Cheryan (2016) found that Asian Americans primed in an interpersonal context with a positive stereotype related to the model minority (e.g., Asians are good at math) reported increased feelings of depersonalization, in turn, increasing suspiciousness about the explicit or implicit bias of the other individual. When it comes to the portrayal of Asians as a model minority in the media, exposure may also evoke feelings of depersonalization among ingroup audiences, which can also potentially lead to adverse outcomes, such as negatively harming Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions.

In this case, consideration needs to be made for the varying portrayal of this stereotype in the media. Previous research on the effects of the model minority stereotype in interpersonal contexts primarily presents participants with the archetype characterizing Asians as academically successful and proficient in math; that is, the unidimensional non-stigmatized conceptualizations of this stereotype (e.g., Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000; Siy & Cheryan, 2013, 2016). In the context of the media, however, multidimensional and unidimensional stigmatized portrayals of the model minority also are presented. When investigating the effects of the model minority stereotype in a mediated context, then all three classifications of the archetype, multidimensional, unidimensional non-stigmatized, or unidimensional stigmatized, should be considered, as exposure may be associated with varying levels of harmful outcomes on Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions.

Given that the unidimensional stigmatized portrayal of Asians as a model minority in the media predominantly focuses on the unfavorable traits, the assumption is that exposure to this characterization will lead to similar effects of exposure to negative, ingroup stereotypes (e.g., Ward, 2004). For the unidimensional non-stigmatized representation, considering that this characterization is representative of the perpetuation of the archetype in real-world settings, it is expected that media exposure to the unidimensional non-stigmatized characterization of the model minority will elicit the same harmful effect as previous studies examining the effect of the model minority stereotype among Asian Americans (i.e., Siy & Cheryan, 2013, 2016). As for the multidimensional portrayal, given that a majority of Asian Americans aversion to model minority stereotype can remain consistent over time (Thompson et al., 2016), attesting to the level of disapproval that Asian Americans have about the archetype, even though multidimensional characterization of the model minority stereotype include traits beyond the archetype, exposure to this characterization might also lead to harmful outcomes on Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions. Altogether, it is also assumed that exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized characterization of the model minority stereotype will increase depersonalization, in turn, lead to harmful effects on Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions more so than the unidimensional non-stigmatized portrayal. Whereas for a multidimensional portrayal, this portrayal is the least likely of the three to produce adverse outcomes.

Ethnic Identification

Given that ethnic identity is a critical component of people of color's self-concept (Phinney, 1996; e.g., Charmaraman & Grossman, 2010), those who report their ethnic identity is of great importance to them are particularly vulnerable to exposure to devaluing messages about one's ingroup. To illustrate this assertion, a study conducted by Schmader

and Lickel (2006) found that exposure to inappropriate ingroup members (e.g., reinforcing negative ingroup stereotypes) among Latino students can elicit high levels of shame and anger. However, for participants who report their ethnic identity is of great importance to them, the feeling of shame become more pronounced, compared to Latino students whose ethnic identity is of lesser importance.

Similarly, when exposed to stereotype-confirming ingroup representation in the media, audiences of color who report their ethnic identity is of great importance may experience stronger negative reactions compared to those whose ethnic identity is of less importance. Specifically, Schmader and colleagues (2015) found that Mexican Americans have a negative emotional reaction (i.e., shame, guilt, and anger) when exposed to negative stereotype-confirming ingroup in film. Notably, identity importance and group pride moderated the emotional reaction to media exposure of stereotype-confirming ingroup behavior. For those that report increased pride in one's Latino identity, they reported significantly less shame, anger, and guilt, compared to those who report low pride in one's ethnic identity. As for identity importance, those that report their ethnic identity is of great importance to their self-concept, when exposed to negative, stereotype-confirming ingroup in the film, this led to more shame and anger. Thus, increased ethnic identity importance can exacerbate the harmful effects of media exposure to negative stereotype-confirming ingroup behavior.

In the context of this study, given Asian Americans' dislike of the model minority stereotype, exposure to the multidimensional, unidimensional non-stigmatized, and unidimensional stigmatized characterization of the model minority will lead to increased harmful outcomes on self-concept and emotions for those that report higher importance of their ethnic identification. Specifically, for Asian Americans who report their ethnic identity

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is of great importance to their self-concept, compared to those who report their ethnic identity is not that important to their self-concept, media exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized will lead to increased harmful outcomes, relative to the unidimensional non-stigmatized depiction, followed by the multidimensional portrayal.

Current Study

Considering that Asian Americans seem to be persistently represented as a model minority in the media, alongside theoretical and empirical evidence in the context of social identity theory indicating that such racial stereotypes can, under certain conditions, threaten minorities' self-concept and well-being, the current study experimentally examines the effect of exposure to the varying portrayals of Asian Americans as a model minority in the media and how it may impact ingroup audience's self-concept and psychological well-being.

The expectations are that the effect of media exposure to the multidimensional, unidimensional non-stigmatized, or unidimensional stigmatized depiction of Asians as a model minority will prompt depersonalization (**H1$_A$**), which, in turn, will negatively impact Asian Americans' self-concept (**H1$_B$**) and emotions (**H1$_C$**). These relationships will be moderated by ethnic identification (**H2**). It is also predicted that exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized condition will result in more pronounced outcomes than exposure to unidimensional non-stigmatized depiction, followed by a multidimensional depiction, and a no-exposure at all (**H3**). In other words, for Asian Americans who are exposed to ingroup members depicted as a model minority in the media, as ethnic identification increases, so too will depersonalization, leading to increased adverse effects on Asian Americans' self-concept and emotions in the unidimensional stigmatized, followed by the unidimensional non-stigmatized, multidimensional, and no-video condition (see Appendix, Figure 1).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) on a voluntary and anonymous basis. Only participants who identified as Asian American (defined here as a person of Asian descent, U.S. citizen, and/or been in the U.S. for longer than 5 years) and had at least a 97% completion rate on previous studies took part in the main study.

In part one of the study, 867 participants completed a questionnaire containing the ethnic identification measure, demographic information, and attention checks. They were compensated ($0.50) for their involvement. Participants who did not fail any of the five attention check items were contacted a week after completing part one to participate in part two of the study, to minimize the association between the two studies. In part two of the study, participants were randomly assigned to watch either a clip of Asians depicted multidimensionally, unidimensionally non-stigmatized, or unidimensionally stigmatized as a model minority, or were placed in a no-video control condition. After watching the video, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire assessing depersonalization, conceptualizations of self and group, attention checks, manipulation checks, and demographic information. Participants were compensated for completing part two ($1.00). A total of 652 participants completed part two.

Participants who failed any of the five attention checks in part two ($n = 214$) and who reported to have seen the video clip before the study ($n = 28$) were removed from the final sample, leaving $N = 410$. The participants had a mean age of 26.89 years old ($SD = 5.33$), 43% ($n = 177$) identified as male, and 57% ($n = 233$) as female. Approximately 71% of the sample identified as Democrats ($n = 291$), 17% as Republican ($n = 73$), 11% as other ($n = 46$). The average completion time for part one of the study was 6.58 minutes ($SD = $

4.86). The average completion time for part two of the study was 18.47 minutes (*SD* = 17.80).

Experimental Manipulation

The experimental stimuli were adapted from primetime television shows aired on a major broadcasting networks (i.e., CBS, ABC, NBC). To ensure consistency across the conditions, the video clips were taken from the same television genre (i.e., sitcom television series), edited to be similar in duration (i.e., approximately 6 minutes), and had a demographically similar main character (i.e., financially successful middle-aged, average-weight Asian male).

The clips varied on different attributes of the model minority stereotype. In the multidimensional condition, an Asian businessman is going through an expansion of his small business and is seen trying to find a balance between being a good husband and father while trying to achieve greater financial success. In the unidimensional non-stigmatized condition, an Asian educator is assigning an enormous amount of assignments to his students and his students are then seen discussing the absurd level of strictness they are experiencing from the educator. In the unidimensional stigmatized clip, an Asian business manager is seen trying to improve the customer service in his establishment only to be met with derogatory statements from his employees pertaining to his masculinity, height, accent, and sexual experience.

Pilot Test

Participants and Procedures

To ensure the video clips successfully reflected the desired dimensions of the model minority stereotype, but were otherwise comparable, 3 clips were created and piloted tested. Participants outside the experimental sample received course credit from a large public

university for their involvement. Participants who took part in the pilot test were not allowed to partake in the full study. Only participants who identified as Asian American (e.g., a person of Asian descent, U.S. citizen, and/or been in the U.S. for longer than 5 years) participated in the pilot study.

Participants were assigned to one video condition and answered a questionnaire about the quality of the clip, the depiction of Asians as a model minority, and attention checks (see Appendix for complete pilot questionnaire). After filtering out responses that failed the attention checks ($n = 12$), 53 participants remained in the sample for the pilot test. Among those, 20% ($n = 11$) were female, 75% ($n = 40$) were male, and 3% ($n = 2$) identified as other. The average age of the sample was 20.60 years old ($SD = 2.92$).

Assessing Clip Quality and the Model Minority Stereotype

To identify stimuli that did not vary along dimensions other than those intentionally manipulated, participants responded to 2 clip quality items. Participants were asked on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*) if "the clip kept my attention" and if "the clip was typical of shows from this genre [sitcoms]." To determine whether the clips were equally representative of commonly shared dimensions of the model minority stereotype, participants were asked to rate their perceptions of the main Asian male character. Participants were asked on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much*) if "the Asian man in the clip was intelligent," "the Asian man in the clip was portrayed as studious," and if "the Asian man in the clip was portrayed as an expert." Based on response to these items, 3 clips were identified which reflected the appropriate characterization of the model minority stereotype but also were consistent along other features that may impact responses to the shows. Specifically, results revealed no significant differences in the selected clips in terms of keeping the participants' attention [$F (2, 50) = 1.30, p = .282$] or how emblematic the

clips were of the sitcom genre [F (2, 50) = .807, p = .452]. In other words, the multidimensional (attention, M = 4.79; SD = 1.78; genre, M = 5.05; SD = 1.22), unidimensional non-stigmatized (attention, M = 5.21, SD = 1.53; genre, M = 5.43, SD = 1.45), and unidimensional stigmatized (attention, M = 4.35; SD = 1.31; genre, M = 5.55; SD = 1.14) clips all kept participants attention and were perceived to be typical of the sitcom genre. Additionally, results revealed no significant differences in participants' perceptions of the Asian male characters' intelligence [F (2, 50) = 1.30, p = .28], expertness [F (2, 50) = .67, p = .512], or studiousness [F (2, 50) = .88, p = .418]. Specifically, portrayal of Asians in the multidimensional (intelligent, M = 5.21, SD = .855; expert, M = 4.47, SD = .61; studious, M = 4.00, SD = 1.82), unidimensional non-stigmatized (intelligent, M = 4.90, SD = .641; expert, M = 4.20, SD = .894; studious, M = 3.70, SD = 1.52), and unidimensional stigmatized (intelligent, M = 4.86, SD = .864; expert, M = 4.21, SD = .893; studious, M = 3.21, SD = 1.67) were perceived to be equally intelligent, expert, and studious.

Finally, to determine whether representations of the Asian male characters in the clips varied according to the different dimensions of the model minority stereotype of interest in the current study, participants were asked to rate the character in terms of favorability, likeability, and respectability. Again, responses were scored on a 7-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). Results revealed that the clips varied according to expectations for the different categories of the model minority stereotype. There was a significant main effect on how likeable [F (2, 50) = 118.67, p < .001], favorable [F (2, 50) = 173.73, p < .001], and respected [F (2, 50) = 171.81, p < .001] the lead Asian males in all three clips were. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test revealed significant differences between clips (p < .001) in perceptions of likeability, favorability, and respectability in the expected direction. Specifically, Asians in the multidimensional clip

were perceived as more likeable ($M = 6.00$, $SD = .745$), favorable ($M = 6.05$, $SD = .621$), and respect ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 5.63$), followed by the unidimensional non-stigmatized (likeable, $M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.01$; favorable, $M = 3.50$, $SD = .760$; respect, $M = 3.29$, $SD = .82$) and unidimensional stigmatized (likeable, $M = 2.05$, $SD = .68$; favorable, $M = 1.85$, $SD = .74$; respect, $M = 1.50$, $SD = .68$).

Furthermore, participants were asked to rate the character in terms of nerdiness and weak. These responses were also scored on a 7-point scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). Results revealed there was a significant main effect of how nerdy [$F(2, 50) = 42.51$, $p < .001$] and weak [$F(2, 50) = 56.13$, $p < .001$] the lead Asian males in all three clips were perceived. Post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD revealed significant differences between clips ($p < .001$) in perceptions of nerdiness and weak in the expected direction. Specifically, Asians in the unidimensional stigmatized were perceived as more nerdy ($M = 5.60$, $SD = .940$) and weak ($M = 6.00$, $SD = .795$), followed by the unidimensional non-stigmatized (nerdy, $M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.08$; weak, $M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.19$) and multidimensional (nerdy, $M = 2.32$, $SD = 1.15$; weak, $M = 2.37$, $SD = 1.16$).

As such, these three clips were deemed appropriate for the main study. All three clips equally kept participants' attention and were all perceived to be of the same genre. Likewise, all three clips were similarly perceived to embody the general characteristics of the model minority stereotype (i.e., experts, studious, intelligent). However, the videos differed appropriately along dimensions that are of interests in manipulating (i.e., characteristics of the variations of the model minority stereotype). The multidimensional clip depicted the Asian with features beyond the archetype (i.e., likeable, favorable, respected), the unidimensional non-stigmatized primarily emphasized the traditional features of the archetype, while the unidimensional stigmatized heavily partnered unfavorable

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characterizations (i.e., nerdy and weak) alongside traditional features of the model minority stereotype.

Measures

All variables (i.e., moderator, mediator, independent and dependent measures) were reverse coded, where appropriate, and screened for missing data. After, all variables were factor analyzed to test the validity of the factor structure. All variables were then screened for normality (i.e., skewness and kurtosis) and outliers. As suggested by Curran and colleagues (1996), the cut off for skewness is |2.0|, and the cut off value for kurtosis is |7.0|; all items were deemed appropriate (i.e., normal) and included in the subsequent analyses. Alphas are reported individually below (see Appendix for full questionnaire).

Mediator

Depersonalization. Two Likert-type items (modified from Simon et al., 1997; Siy & Cheryan, 2013) were used to assess depersonalization ($M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.15$, $r = .605$) (i.e., Currently, I feel similar to most people in my racial/ethnic group; Currently, I believe people in my racial/ethnic group are different from people in other racial/ethnic groups). Responses were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much so*), such that higher numbers indicate increased depersonalization.

Moderator

Ethnic Identification. Nine Likert-type items (adapted from Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992; Phinney, 1992) were used to assess level of ethnic identification *($M = 5.40$, $SD =$ 1.00, $\alpha = .929$)* (e.g., I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means to me). Responses were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much so*), such that higher numbers indicate higher levels of ethnic identification.

Dependent Variables

State Self-Esteem. Seventeen Likert-type items (modified from Heatherton & Polivy, 1991; Rosenburg, 1965) were used to assess self-esteem, which consisted of the following: *performance (M* = 5.14, *SD* = .987, α = .892) (e.g., I feel confident about my abilities), *social (M* = 3.75, *SD* = 1.40, α = .870), (e.g., I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure) and *self-worth (M* = 4.94, *SD* = 1.50, α = .893) (e.g., I currently feel useless). Responses were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much so*), such that higher numbers indicate higher levels of self-esteem.

Community Worth. Four Likert-type items (modified from Fryberg et al., 2008) were used to assess community worth (*M* = 5.60, *SD* = .942, α = .827) (e.g., I respect people in my community). Responses were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much so*), such that higher numbers indicate higher levels of community worth.

Ingroup Stereotyping. Ten semantic differential scale items (modified from Tan et al., 2000) were used to assess ingroup stereotyping, which consisted of the following: *professionalism (M* = 5.82, *SD* = .947, α = .862) (e.g., lazy vs hard working) and *personality* (*M* = 4.38 *SD* = 1.13, α = .679) (e.g., aromantic vs romantic). Responses were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much so*), such that higher numbers indicate higher levels of ingroup stereotyping.

Immediate Positive Affect. Six Likert-type items (adapted from Schmader & Lickel, 2006; Watson et al., 1988) were used to assess immediate positive affect. Immediate positive affect was assessed as the average score to 6 items (*M* = 2.70, *SD* = 1.02, α = .905) (e.g., *excited, inspired, strong*). Responses were scored on a 5-point scale (1 = *very slightly or not at all*, 5 = *extremely*), such that higher numbers indicate greater feelings of emotions.

Manipulation and Quality Checks

Participants who were placed in a video condition were asked to report their perception of the Asian in the clip (i.e., the depictions of the Asian man in the clip is unfavorable, the Asian man in this clip is depicted as intelligent). To ensure the clips did not vary among other dimensions than those intentionally manipulated, participants were asked if "the story-line was easy to follow" and if "the clip was typical of shows from this genre [sitcoms]." Responses were scored on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *very much so*).

Data Analyses Procedure

To test the hypotheses, PROCESS macro in SPSS was used (Hayes, 2018). Specifically, Model 4 was used to test the proposed indirect effect (**H1**; see Hayes, 2018) and Model 7 was used to test the proposed conditional indirect effect (**H2**; see Hayes, 2018). Using this statistical approach is beneficial in addressing this study's proposed hypotheses, given that the PROCESS macro provides information on the direct and conditional indirect effects for the independent, dependent, mediator, and moderator variable in one model. Furthermore, the PROCESS macro utilizes bootstrapping techniques which is the most appropriate and effective way to statistically analyze conditional indirect effect (Hayes, 2009).

The independent variable was coded into four indicator (dummy) variables, the control condition served as the reference group. For the analyses, the 95% confidence intervals for all effects used 5,000 bootstrapped samples. A given indirect effect was considered significant if the indirect confidence interval does not contain 0 (Hayes, 2018). For the conditional indirect effect, this study relied on the index of the moderated mediation confidence interval, given that it directly tests whether a moderated mediation exists in the analyses (Hayes, 2015, 2018); if the confidence interval did not contain 0, then it was considered significant. To examine the mean differences between the fully factored

experimental conditions and the control conditions, ordinary least squares regression analyses were used via the PROCESS macro.

One-way analysis of variance and Tuckey HSD post hoc tests were conducted to examine the main effect of media exposure to variations of the model minority stereotype on self-esteem, ingroup stereotyping, community worth, and immediate positive affect (see Appendix, Table 1-4).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Manipulation Checks

A subset of items used in pilot testing was included in the experiment as a manipulation check. Consistent with expectations and results from pilot testing, there was no significant main effect of the clip on the characterization of Asians as intelligent (F (2, 304) = .243, p = .784), and a there was a significant main effect on favorability (F (2, 304) = 71.27, p < .001). Specifically, portrayals of Asians in the multidimensional (M = 5.77, SD = .446), unidimensional non-stigmatized (M = 5.75, SD = .434), and unidimensional stigmatized (M = 5.73, SD = .491) were perceived to be equal in intelligence. At the same time, a post hoc comparison using Tukey HSD revealed significant differences in favorability (p < .001) such that Asians in the unidimensional stigmatized clip were perceived most unfavorably (M = 5.22, SD = 1.59), followed by the unidimensional non-stigmatized clip (M = 4.36, SD = 1.53), and multidimensional clip (M = 2.71, SD = 1.41). Also as expected, the clips did not differ in terms of ease in following the storyline (F (2, 304) = 2.64, p = .073) or typicality for the genre (F (2, 304) = .269, p = .764). Participants perceived the multidimensional (follow, M = 6.26, SD =.906; genre, M =5.91, SD = .793),

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unidimensional non-stigmatized (follow, $M = 6.00$, $SD =1.06$; genre, $M =5.90$, $SD = .815$),

and unidimensional stigmatized (follow, $M = 6.03$, $SD =.621$; genre, $M =5.83$, $SD = .891$)

clips to be easily followable and representative of the sitcom genre.

Hypotheses Testing

Indirect Effect of Experimental Condition

H1 predicted that there would be an indirect effect of exposure to media depictions

of an Asian as a model minority through depersonalization, on self-concept (i.e., self-

esteem, self-stereotype, community worth) and immediate positive affect. Analysis for H1

was carried out via PROCESS (Hayes 2018; Model 4). Results revealed that exposure to

unidimensional stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority was a marginally

significant predictor of depersonalization ($B = .315$, $t = 1.96$, 95% CI [.6310, .0001], model

$R^2 = .015$). However, results revealed that media exposure to the multidimensional ($B =$

$.001$, $t = .003$, $p > .05$) and the unidimensional non-stigmatized condition ($B = .239$, $t = 1.50$,

$p > .05$) are not significant predictors of depersonalization. Considering that Hayes (2018)

argues that you can have a significant indirect effect if only one of the paths (a or b) are

significant, given that significant indirect effects are a product of path a and b, it is necessary

to continue to examine path b, the effect of depersonalization on the outcome measures. To

avoid redundancy, reporting of the indirect effect of experimental condition in the next

section will only be focused on path *b* (the mediator on the dependent variables) and the

relative indirect effects.

Self-Concept

Self-Esteem. Results revealed that depersonalization was not a significant predictor

of performance esteem ($B = -.065$, $t = -1.66$, $p > .05$, model $R^2 = .045$). The relative indirect

effect of the experimental condition on performance esteem was not significant

(multidimensional, $B = -.001$, $SE = .025$, $p > .05$; unidimensional non-stigmatized, $B = -.037$, $SE = .030$, $p > .05$; unidimensional stigmatized, $B = -.050$, $SE = .031$, $p > .05$).

Similarly, results revealed that depersonalization was not a significant predictor of social esteem ($B = -.238$, $t = -4.31$, $p > .05$, model $R^2 = .054$). There was no significant effect of the experimental condition on social esteem, according to the relative indirect effect coefficient (multidimensional, $B = .000$, $SE = .017$, $p > .05$; unidimensional non-stigmatized, $B = -.021$, $SE = .025$, $p > .05$; unidimensional stigmatized, $B = -.0280$, $SE = .029$, $p > .05$).

Likewise, results revealed that depersonalization was not a significant predictor of self-worth ($B = -.169$, $t = -2.84$, $p > .05$, model $R^2 = .045$). There was no significant effect of the experimental condition on self-worth, according to the relative indirect effect coefficient (multidimensional, $B = -.001$, $SE = .027$, $p > .05$; unidimensional non-stigmatized, $B = -.0381$, $SE = .034$, $p > .05$; unidimensional stigmatized, $B = -.050$, $SE = .037$, $p > .05$). Therefore, results revealed no indirect effect of exposure to the experimental conditions on self-esteem.

Ingroup stereotyping. Results revealed that depersonalization was a significant predictor of ingroup stereotyping based on personality ($B = .213$, $t = 4.42$, 95% CI [.1184, .3075], model $R^2 = .087$). The relative indirect coefficient reveals a significant effect between exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized clip on levels of ingroup stereotyping, ($B = .067$, $SE = .038$, 95% CI [.1475, .0011]). Relative direct effect coefficient reveals a non-significant effect of media exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized depictions on ingroup stereotyping ($B = .075$, $t = .480$, $p > .05$), consistent with full mediation. Results did not reveal significant indirect effect of media exposure to the multidimensional ($B = .001$, $SE = .034$, $p > .05$) or unidimensional non-stigmatized clip ($B = .510$, SE $= .036$, $p > .05$) on ingroup stereotyping.

Results revealed that depersonalization was not a significant predictor of ingroup stereotyping based on professionalism ($B = .020$, $t = 5.43$, $p > .05$, model $R^2 = .037$). The relative indirect coefficient revealed a non-significant effect of the experimental condition on ingroup stereotyping based on professionalism (multidimensional, $B = .007$, $SE = .072$, $p > .05$; unidimensional non-stigmatized, $B = -.030$, $SE = .90$, $p > .05$; unidimensional stigmatized, $B = .029$, $SE = .008$, $p > .05$).

Thus, these results indicate that exposure to unidimensional stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority led to increased depersonalization, which, in turn, increased ingroup stereotyping, relative to the control condition.

Community Worth. Depersonalization was a significant predictor of community worth ($B = .364$, $t = 9.95$, 95% CI [.2925, .4365], model $R^2 = .206$). The relative indirect coefficient reveals a significant effect of media exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized clip on feelings of community worth, ($B = -.115$, $SE = .059$, 95% CI [-.2398, -.0036]). Analysis reveals a non-significant direct effect between media exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized depictions on community worth ($B = .070$, $t = .597$, $p > .05$), consistent with full mediation. Results did not reveal significant indirect effect of media exposure to the multidimensional ($B = -.002$, $SE = .056$, $p > .05$) or unidimensional non-stigmatized clip ($B = -.087$, $SE = .061$, $p > .05$). In sum, these results indicate that exposure to unidimensional stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority led to increased depersonalization, in turn, decreased feelings of community worth, relative to the control condition.

Altogether, these results reported for indirect effects of the experimental condition on self-esteem, self-stereotype, and community worth partially support H1$_A$ and H1$_B$.

Immediate Positive Affect. Results show that depersonalization was a significant predictor of immediate positive affect ($B = .205$, $t = 4.80$, 95% CI [.1217, .2901], model R^2 = .087). The relative indirect coefficient reveals a significant effect of exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized clip on immediate positive affect, ($B = -.065$, $SE = .036$, 95% CI [-.1451, -.0016]). Analysis also revealed a non-significant direct effect between media exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized depictions on immediate positive affect ($B = -.204$, $t = -1.47$, $p > .05$), consistent with full mediation. Results did not reveal significant indirect effect of media exposure to the multidimensional ($B = -.001$, $SE = .032$, $p > .05$) or unidimensional non-stigmatized clip ($B = -.049$, $SE = .0364$, $p > .05$). To this end, these results indicate that exposure to unidimensional stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority led to increased depersonalization, and in turn, decreased immediate positive affect, relative to the control condition.

These results partially supported $H1_A$ and $H1_C$. Media exposure to unidimensional stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority leads to an increase in depersonalization, in turn, increasing ingroup stereotyping and decreasing community worth and immediate positive affect among Asian Americans, relative to the control condition. No indirect effect was found for exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized depiction on self-esteem, through depersonalization. Likewise, no significant effects were found for exposure to multidimensional and unidimensional non-stigmatized characterizations on self-esteem, ingroup stereotyping, community worth, or immediate positive affect, through depersonalization, among Asian Americans.

Conditional Indirect Effects of Experimental Condition

H2 predicted that the indirect effect proposed in H1 would be moderated by ethnic identification. Specifically, H2 predicts that there would be a conditional indirect effect of

media exposure on self-concept (i.e., self-esteem, ingroup stereotyping, community worth) and immediate positive affect for those with increased ethnic identification. Analysis for H2 was carried out via PROCESS (Hayes, 2018; Model 7). Results revealed that media exposure was not a significant predictor of depersonalization when moderated by ethnic identification (F (7, 402) = 1.41, $p > .05$). Following typical practices, although exposure to the experimental condition on depersonalization (path a) is non-significant, it is appropriate to examine whether depersonalization influences participants' self-concept and emotions (path $b)$ for significance to fully rule out an existence of a conditional indirect effect, given that if either path a or b is significance, there is reasonable grounds to argue that a conditional indirect effect occurs (Hayes, 2018). Specifically, according to Hayes (2018), you can have a significant indirect effect if only one of the paths (a or b) are significant, given that significant indirect effects are a product of path a and b, it is necessary to continue to examine path b. However, to properly examine if a conditional indirect effect occurs, one must look at the index of moderated mediation, which directly tests the proposed moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015, 2018). That said, to avoid repetition, reporting of the conditional indirect effect of experimental condition in the next section will be focused on the path between the mediator on the dependent variable and the index of moderated mediation.

Self-Concept

Self-Esteem. Results revealed that depersonalization was a significant predictor of performance esteem ($B = .158$, $t = 3.77$, 95% CI [.0758, .2413]) and self-worth ($B = .159$, $t = 2.47$, 95% CI [.0327, .2855]), but depersonalization was not a significant predictor of social esteem ($B = .088$, $t = 1.49$, $p > .05$). However, results revealed no significant indirect effect of exposure to the experimental conditions on performance esteem, self-worth, and social esteem, via depersonalization when ethnic identification moderates path a (exposure to the

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experimental condition on depersonalization). Specifically, results revealed a non-significant conditional indirect effect of media exposure on performance esteem (multidimensional, B = .020, SE = .025, p > .05; unidimensional non-stigmatized, B = .017, SE = .026, p > .05; unidimensional stigmatized, B = -.006, SE = .028, p > .05). Also, results revealed a non-significant conditional indirect effect of media exposure on self-worth (multidimensional, B = .020, SE = .029, p > .05; unidimensional non-stigmatized, B = .017, SE = .028, p > .05; unidimensional stigmatized, B = -.006, SE = .029, p > .05). Lastly, results revealed a non-significant conditional indirect effect of experimental conditions on social esteem (multidimensional, B = .011, SE = .018, p > .05; unidimensional non-stigmatized, B = .009, SE = .018, p > .05; unidimensional stigmatized, B = -.003, SE = .018, p > .05). In sum, analysis revealed no significant conditional indirect effect of media exposure to Asians as a model minority on self-esteem.

Ingroup stereotyping. Results revealed that depersonalization was a significant predictor of ingroup stereotyping based on personality (B = .213, t = 4.42, 95% CI [.1184, .3075]). However, results revealed non-significant conditional indirect effect of experimental conditions on ingroup stereotyping (multidimensional, B = .027, SE = .033, p > .05; unidimensional non-stigmatized, B = .023, SE = .034, p > .05; unidimensional stigmatized, B = -.008, SE = .036, p > .05).

Results revealed that depersonalization was not a significant predictor of ingroup stereotyping based on professionalism (B = -.020, t = .037, p > .05). Results revealed non-significant conditional indirect effect of experimental conditions on ingroup stereotyping (multidimensional, B = .015, SE = .020, p > .05; unidimensional non-stigmatized, B = .013, SE = .019, p > .05; unidimensional stigmatized, B = -.005, SE = .022, p > .05). Thus,

analysis revealed no significant conditional indirect effect of media exposure to Asians as a model minority on ingroup stereotyping.

Community Worth. Results revealed that depersonalization was a significant predictor of community worth ($B = .364$, $t = 49.95$, 95% CI [.2925, .4365]). However, results revealed a non-significant conditional indirect effect of experimental conditions on community worth (multidimensional, $B = .027$, $SE = .033$, $p > .05$; unidimensional non-stigmatized, $B = .039$, $SE = .058$, $p > .05$; unidimensional stigmatized, $B = -.014$, $SE = .062$, $p > .05$). Analysis revealed no significant conditional indirect effect of media exposure to Asians as a model minority on community worth.

Together, these results reveal that exposure to the experimental conditions does not yield conditional indirect effects on self-concept, therefore, not supporting H2.

Immediate Positive Affect. Results revealed that depersonalization was a significant predictor of immediate positive affect ($B = .206$, $t = 4.81$, 95% CI [.1217, .2901]). However, results revealed non-significant conditional indirect effect of experimental conditions on immediate positive affect (multidimensional, $B = .026$, $SE = .032$, $p > .05$; unidimensional non-stigmatized, $B = .022$, $SE = .032$, $p > .05$; unidimensional stigmatized, $B = -.008$, $SE = .035$, $p > .05$. Analysis revealed no significant conditional indirect effect of media exposure to Asians as a model minority on immediate positive affect. Results do not support a conditional indirect effect between exposure to the experimental stimulus and immediate positive affect.

Considering that exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized clip is the only condition to yield indirect effect on the outcome measures and no experimental condition yielded conditional indirect effect on self-concept and emotions, H3 was not tested.

Discussion

The current study examined the underlying mechanisms of how media exposure to positive racial stereotypes influences ingroup audiences' self-concept and emotions. Specifically, this study investigated how media exposure to variations of the model minority stereotype (i.e., multidimensional, unidimensional non-stigmatized, unidimensional stigmatized) affects Asian Americans' self-concept and immediate positive affect, through depersonalization, while considering ethnic identification. Relying on the theoretical and empirical insights from social identity, media effects, and racial stereotypes, this study provides evidence that media exposure to unidimensional stigmatized portrayals of Asians as a model minority can lead to increased depersonalization, in turn, increasing ingroup stereotyping and decreasing immediate positive affect and community worth among Asian Americans. Results did not support an indirect effect of media exposure to multidimensional and unidimensional non-stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority on ingroup audiences' self-concept and emotions through depersonalization; results also revealed the indirect effects are not moderated by ethnic identification.

Some reasons can explain the failure to find an indirect effect of media exposure to the multidimensional and unidimensional non-stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority among ingroup audiences' self-concept and emotions. No evidence revealed that media exposure to multidimensional or the unidimensional non-stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority negatively harms ingroup audiences' self-concept and emotions through depersonalization, arguably due to desensitization. Given that Asians have been historically underrepresented and that critical and qualitative scholars have long argued that they are stereotypically represented in the media (Chin et al., 2017; Hunt et al., 2018; Tukachinsky et al., 2015; cf. Harwood & Anderson, 2002), choosing to select or avoid television to gratify one's ethnic identity has usually not been a viable option for Asian

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American audiences (Abrams, 2010). The media environment may not be seen by Asian Americans as an ethnically gratifying space. Indeed, Sun and her colleagues conducted two different focus groups, one in 2002 and 2011, to inquire from Asian Americans how they perceive the representation of their ingroup has shifted. Unfortunately, participants across both focus groups echoed a similar sentiment: Asian Americans are stereotypically depicted in the media and this is rarely a space for Asian Americans to turn to for accurate representation of their ingroup. Thus, Asian Americans may already expect to see their ingroup being depicted stereotypically and have learned to cognitively and emotionally deal with media exposure to stereotypical ingroup depictions. Specifically, Asian American audiences might deem the media depictions as "unreal" or alter perceptions of media depictions of their ingroup by introducing alternative comparative dimensions to accentuate positive distinctiveness of their ingroup (i.e., social creativity) to safeguard their self-concept and psychological well-being and proceed forward with consuming media for entertainment purposes (Abrams, 2010; Ortiz, 2019; Turner, 1999). Therefore, when Asian American participants were exposed to stereotypical depictions of their ingroup as a model minority, characterized multidimensionally and unidimensionally non-stigmatized, they were either expecting these kinds of portrayals from the media or were able to employ cognitive strategies to safeguard their self-concept and emotions, helping to explain the non-significant results.

It is not until the model minority stereotype depiction is characterized with unfavorable characteristics (e.g., nerdy, weak) that the stereotype threatens Asian American audiences' individuality, in turn, leading to harmful outcomes. Given that the negative characteristics (e.g., socially, romantically, and sexually inept) are more threatening than the favorable characteristics (e.g., smart, mathematically inclined), media exposure to

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unidimensional stigmatized depictions of Asians as a model minority elicit the same reaction as if Asian American audiences were exposed to stereotypically negative ingroup media depictions. Thus, the results of this study are consistent with the existing media effects and racial/ethnic stereotypes, finding that exposure to negative, ingroup racial/ethnic stereotypes can lead to harmful outcomes among ingroup audiences (e.g., Ward, 2004). However, it is important to note that certain cognitive strategies that may have been developed from previous media exposure to underrepresentation and misrepresentation of one's ingroup can potentially safeguard Asian Americans' self-concept and psychological well-being, possibly explaining the results yielding marginal significance between exposure to unidimensional stigmatized depictions and depersonalization.

In sum, Asian American audiences may expect, consciously or unconsciously, to see stereotypical depictions of their ingroup in the media. As a result, Asian Americans may have developed certain cognitive strategies that have assisted Asian Americans with safeguarding their self-concept and psychological well-being in this context. These developed cognitive and social strategies may also moderately safeguard Asian Americans' self-concept and psychological well-being when they are exposed to a unidimensional stigmatized characterization of the model minority stereotype. Such that, considering that the unidimensionally stigmatized depiction of the model minority heavily focuses on unfavorable (e.g., emasculating, socially, romantically and sexually inept), This helps explain

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Despite the small effect sizes reported in this study, there are several theoretical and practical implications of this study. Though the significant indirect effect of exposure to the unidimensional stigmatized clip was modest, considering the rates of media consumption

among Asian Americans (see Nielsen, 2018), Asian American audiences are increasingly exposed to a media environment that continues to underrepresented and, arguably, misrepresent their ingroup, which can potentially have long-term effects (Abelson, 1985). Also, this study investigated an understudied population in the existing literature of media effects and racial/ethnic stereotypes, revealing that Asian Americans who are exposed to unfavorable ingroup depictions in the media can have harmful outcomes to their identity and psychological well-being. This study also examined the underlying cognitive mechanisms of how media might affect audience of color's mental health and psychological well-being by investigating the role depersonalization plays when an audience of color is exposed to unfavorable or negative stereotype depictions of their ingroup.

Furthermore, this study reveals that the current conceptualization of the model minority archetype in research (e.g., Deo et al., 2008; Siy & Cheryan, 2013) may be too narrow to capture the nuanced depictions of the positive stereotype in the media. In other words, the model minority stereotype in the media is more multifaced in its depiction than previous research investigating this stereotype has conceptualized. Specifically, previous studies examining the effects of exposure to the stereotype in an interpersonal context, primarily in psychology, focus on how the model minority stereotype characterize Asian Americans as studious, intelligent, tech-savvy, and financially and professionally successful (e.g., Atkin et al., 2018; Gupta et al., 2011). Whereas some critical and qualitative studies argue that in addition to the favorable traits, the model minority stereotype in film and television also characterizes Asians as docile, nerdy, and weak (e.g., Eguchi, 2013; Lee et al., 2013). As one of the first studies examining the effects of media exposure to Asian stereotypes among ingroup audiences, this study suggests that when examining how the model minority stereotype in the media affects audiences, one must consider the different

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variations the archetype, from multidimensional to unidimensional stigmatized, is depicted in the media to understand how the archetype might affect audiences.

Moreover, considering that media depictions of the model minority stereotype characterized as unidimensional non-stigmatized are similar to understandings of the archetype in real-world settings, it was expected that mediated exposure to this archetype would elicit the same reaction (e.g., Siy & Cheryan, 2013). Specifically, it was expected that media exposure to unidimensional non-stigmatized portrayals of Asians as a model minority would threaten ingroup members' individuality, reducing them to their ingroup membership, and in turn, harming their self-concept and emotions. Given that this reaction was not found, it can be rationalized that media exposure to the unidimensional non-stigmatized version of the model minority stereotype is not as threatening as interpersonal context. When Asian Americans are exposed to the model minority stereotype in its traditional form (e.g., Asians are good at math) in interpersonal settings, this can be face-threatening relative to the mediated context, given that Asian Americans must employ facework strategies to save face (Rosenbloom & Way, 2004). In a mediated context, exposure to unidimensional non-stigmatized depictions may be seen as less threatening because Asian Americans may expect that the media will depict their ingroup as a model minority and have developed strategies to moderate the impact of stereotype exposure might have on their psychological well-being. Also, Asian Americans usually do not have to respond or address the unfavorable media portrayal to anyone immediately. That said, cognitive activation due to media exposure to unidimensional non-stigmatized portrayals of Asians as a model minority among Asian Americans might be more subtle, which studies reveal that subtle activation of the model minority stereotype among ingroup members do not elicit harmful outcomes among Asians (Cheryan & Bodenhausen, 2000; Shih et al., 1999).

Moreover, while it is comforting to find that multidimensional depictions of Asians as a model minority does not yield significantly harmful outcomes compared to Asian Americans who are not exposed to this classification of the archetype, it is essential to note that this characterization of the model minority does not yield prosocial outcomes (e.g., increase self-esteem, community worth, immediate positive affect) either. Critical and qualitative studies commonly describe multidimensional depictions of the model minority in the media as a somewhat adequate representation (e.g., Dr. Cristina Yang in ABC's *Grey's Anatomy*; Deo et al., 2008), but this study suggests that even multidimensional depictions of Asian characters as a model minority are not beneficial for ingroup audiences. This might also speak to the amount of disdain for the model minority stereotype (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997; Thompson et al., 2016); even when Asian characters in the media are characterized with traits beyond the model minority stereotype, Asian Americans may feel the representation is still conforming and inaccurate (Thompson et al., 2016).

Limitations and Future Directions

Similar to most research, there are several limitations of this study that should be acknowledged. First, a primary limitation of this study's findings is the inability to conclude if the results are generalizable beyond media exposure to clips chosen for the experimental conditions. Specifically, participants were exposed to one video clip, according to their assigned condition, and then asked to respond to a questionnaire regarding their feelings and emotions at the moment. Thus, it is difficult to conclude if the findings of this study offer support for the theoretical arguments or if the findings are specific to the single clip participants watched. To be able to determine the generalizability of the findings of this study, future research would be advised to include additional clips for each experimental condition to ensure the findings of this study hold true across a variety of different clip,

genres, and styles. Second, during the main study's data collection process, participants were most likely dealing with the drastic adjustments and challenges brought on by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Specifically, data collection began before the outbreak of COVID-19. While the virus was spreading, causing a public health concern and mandated shelter-in-place orders, participants were continuing to take part in the study; presumably while also adjusting to the numerous changes occurring in society (e.g., social distancing, increase in hate crimes targeting Asians). Given the increase in hate crimes targeting Asians as a result of COVID (Gover et al., 2020), Asian American participants may have been more sensitive to racial discrimination and prejudice, such as the perpetuation of stereotypes in the media. Therefore, any depiction that was even slightly stereotypical might have been perceived as problematic and offensive. Third, the questionnaire to assess depersonalization may not effectively tap into the concept. The depersonalization questionnaire used for this study was adapted from previous studies (i.e., Simon et al., 1997; Siy & Cheryan, 2013), which focused on assessing depersonalization in an interpersonal context, as opposed to a mediated context. In an attempt to amend the depersonalization scales to properly assess how media exposure to different variations of the model minority, a validity issue was presented. Specifically, considering that depersonalization is conceptualized in this study as the feeling or sense of being perceived or treated as an exchangeable member of one's ingroup, only one of the two items captures that. To better ensure that depersonalization measures accurately capture its role in the context of exposure to racial stereotypes in the media, survey items should be tested and validated to examine the cognitive activation or experience of depersonalization, specifically for a mediated context. Finally, although this study was interested in understanding Asian Americans, this study did not have enough participants to run analyses on how media exposure to variations of the model minority

effects different ethnic groups in the Asian American community. Considering that there are six origin groups with reasonably different cultural and historical experiences in the U.S. that make up the Asian American community (i.e., Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese; Pew Research Center, 2019), the findings of this study should be cautiously generalized about the Asian American community. Future research would greatly benefit from not treating Asian Americans monolithically by trying to acquire a sample size emblematic of the Asian American community to be able to comment on how media exposure impacts specific ethnic groups. Specifically, considering the wealth and economic inequality or gap and colorism among Asian American communities, media exposure to variations of the model minority may affect, for example, Japanese Americans differently, compared to Cambodian Americans.

Notwithstanding the limitations, the results from the present study help to bring attention to an area of media effects research that has been largely overlooked: examining the media effects of exposure to stereotypical depictions of Asians among ingroup audiences. This study encourages future research to continue work along this line of research by exploring other common Asian stereotypes that are perpetuated in the media, such as the perpetual foreigner and the Dragon Lady (Chin et al., 2018), and how this might impact Asian/Asian American audiences. Also, considering that some scholars argue that the online environment may provide Asian/Asian Americans with more favorable representation or more control over their media content (e.g., Abrams, 2010, Ono, 2017; Sun et al., 2016), continued research should focus how Asians are depicted on social media. Specifically, considering that the increased interactive features of social media allow Asian Americans to digitally customize content to their interests and exclude content that is considered unfavorable or problematic, exposure to stereotypes on social media might have different

effects than those in traditional media. In short, there is still a great deal of work remaining when it comes to understanding how media exposure to stereotypical depictions of Asians impact ingroup audiences.

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Appendix

Figure 1

Proposed Model
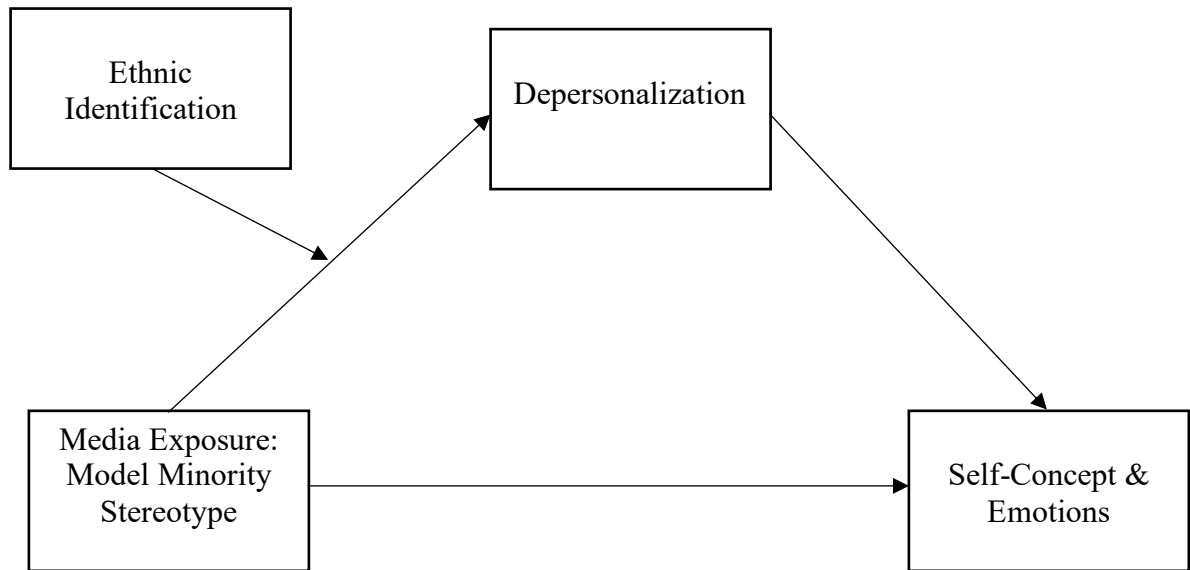
Pilot Survey

Clip Quality

Consider the clip you just watched when answering the following questions.							
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Somewhat Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The clip kept my attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The clip was typical of shows from the sitcom genre.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Model Minority Stereotype

Consider the portrayal of the Asian male in the clip you just watched when answering the following questions.							
General	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Somewhat Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The Asian man in the clip was intelligent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Asian man in the clip was portrayed as studious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Asian man in the clip was were portrayed as experts.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Multi-dimensional							
The depiction of the Asian man is favorable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Asian man in the clip was likeable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Asian man in the	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

clip was respected by others.							
Uni-dimensional Stigmatized							
The Asian man in the clip was nerdy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Asian man in the clip was weak.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Survey Measures

Depersonalization

Please respond to the statements regarding how you currently feel at the moment.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Currently, I feel similar to most people in my racial/ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Currently, I see myself as a typical member of my ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Ethnic Identification

Please respond to the statements regarding how you feel about your ethnic ingroup.							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am happy that I am a member of my ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In general,	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I'm glad to be a member of my racial/ethnic group.							
The racial/ethnic group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel good about the race/ethnicity I belong to.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In general, belonging to my race/ethnicity is an important part of my self-image.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Self-Esteem

Please respond to the statements regarding how you feel about yourself at the moment.							
Performance Esteem	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel confident about my abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that others respect and admire me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel as smart as others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel confident that I understand things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I currently feel I am able to do things as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I take a positive attitude toward myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Social Esteem							
I am worried about whether I am regarded as a success or failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel frustrated or rattled about my performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am worried about what other people think of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel concerned about the impression I am making.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am worried about looking foolish.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Self-Worth							

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Right now, I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I currently feel useless.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
At the moment, I am inclined to feel that I am failure.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Community Worth

Please respond to the statements regarding how you feel about your racial/ethnic community at the moment.							
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I respect people in my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People in my community have a number of good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am part of a strong community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I like the community that I am part of.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Ingroup Stereotyping

Please think of Asian Americans in the United States today. Check a space between each of the adjectives below to indicate how you would describe Asian Americans in general.

For example, if you thought GROUP X is "quite rich" in general, you would check the space between "rich" and "poor" as shown below:

Rich _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____Poor
        Very   Quite   Somewhat   Neither   Somewhat   Quite   Very
        Rich   Rich   Rich   Rich Nor   Poor   Poor   Poor
                                           Poor

Unathletic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Athletic
Aromantic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Romantic
Antisocial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Social
Lazy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Hard working
Unintelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Technologically Savvy
Prefer to live off welfare	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Prefer to be self-supporting
Poor at math	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good at math
Not likely to have strong family ties	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Likely to have strong family ties
Uneducated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Educated

Emotions

Please indicate how you feel at the moment. Use the following scale to record your answers.					
	Very Slightly or Not at All	**A Little**	**Moderately**	**Quite a Bit**	**Extremely**
Excited	1	2	3	4	5
Inspired	1	2	3	4	5
Strong	1	2	3	4	5
Determin	1	2	3	4	5
Enthusia	1	2	3	4	5
Proud	1	2	3	4	5

Manipulation and Quality Checks

Please respond to the statements regarding how you feel about yourself at the moment.							
Clip Quality	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Somewhat Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The story-line was easy to follow.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The clip was typical of shows from the sitcom genre.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Manipulation Checks							
The Asian man in the clip was depicted as intelligent.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Asian man in the	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

clip was depicted unfavorably.							

Table 1. *One-Way Analysis of Variance of Dependent Measures in Response to Media Exposure*

Source		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Positive Affect	Between Groups	14.219	3	4.740	4.605	.004*
	Within Groups	417.875	406	1.029		
	Total	432.094	409			
Performance Esteem	Between Groups	2.712	3	.904	.926	.428
	Within Groups	396.427	406	.976		
	Total	399.139	409			
Social Esteem	Between Groups	6.106	3	2.035	1.037	.376
	Within Groups	796.622	406	1.962		
	Total	802.728	409			
Self Worth	Between Groups	12.415	3	4.138	1.831	.141
	Within Groups	917.546	406	2.260		
	Total	929.961	409			
Community Worth	Between Groups	3.586	3	1.195	1.348	.258
	Within Groups	360.019	406	.887		
	Total	363.605	409			
Professionalism-Ingroup Stereotyping	Between Groups	5.547	3	1.849	2.078	.103
	Within Groups	361.282	406	.890		
	Total	366.829	409			
Personality-Ingroup Stereotyping	Between Groups	1.117	3	.372	.286	.835
	Within Groups	528.430	406	1.302		
	Total	529.547	409			

Table 2. *Means, Standard Deviations, and ANOVA comparisons of Self-Esteem in Response to Media Exposure*

Source	*n*	Performance Esteem		Social Esteem		Self Worth	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Control	103	5.11	.880	3.76	1.32	4.86	1.46
Multidimensional	100	5.25	1.09	3.73	1.43	5.05	1.58
Unidimensional Non-stigmatized	105	5.03	1.03	3.93	1.40	5.15	1.42
Unidimensional Stigmatized	102	5.14	.935	3.59	1.43	4.70	1.53

Shared subscripts represent statistically significant differences: a = $p < .05$, b = $p < .01$, c = $p < .001$

Table 3. *Means, Standard Deviations, and ANOVA comparisons of Ingroup Stereotyping in Response to Media Exposure*

Source	*n*	Community Worth		Positive Affect	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Control	103	5.58	.897	2.77	.940
Multidimensional	100	5.76	.894	2.97_a	1.04
Unidimensional Non-stigmatized	105	5.53	.986	2.55_a	1.06
Unidimensional Stigmatized	102	5.54	.981	2.50_a	1.00

Shared subscripts represent statistically significant differences: a = $p < .05$, b = $p < .01$, c = $p < .001$

Table 4. *Means, Standard Deviations, and ANOVA comparisons of Community Worth and Positive Affect in Response to Media Exposure*

Source	n	Personality		Professionalism	
		M	SD	M	SD
Control	103	4.36	1.04	5.68	1.00
Multidimensional	100	4.47	1.14	6.00	.831
Unidimensional Non-stigmatized	105	4.33	1.09	5.76	.912
Unidimensional Stigmatized	102	4.35	1.26	5.85	1.00

Shared subscripts represent statistically significant differences: a = $p < .05$, b = $p < .01$, c = $p < .000$