

THE PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS STEREOTYPE OF TAIWANESE STUDENTS: THE EFFECTS OF SEX AND INDIVIDUAL TRADITIONALITY/MODERNITY

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The present study explores whether the robust phenomenon of physical attractiveness stereotyping found in the American cultural context would exist in a society with different cultural background such as Taiwan, and whether the dimensions of person perception and evaluation that have revealed the impact of physical attractiveness are identical. Besides these, the present study also examines the effects of subjects' sex, targets' sex, and subjects' standings on the scales of individual traditionality and modernity (Yang, Yu, & Yeh, 1991) on the strength of attractiveness stereotype. The results showed that among 11 measures of various evaluative dimensions of the target persons, only on three measures relevant to social morality and task competence did not obtain the significant effects of physical attractiveness. There were strong "*what is beautiful is good*" effects on the other measures. This result is consistent with the conclusion derived from the reviews of various American studies. Also, that subjects' sex and targets' sex had no interactive effects on the strength of attractiveness stereotype parallels the American research. Finally, the subjects' individual traditionality and modernity had no effects on the strength of stereotype. Based on these findings, the present study challenges Dion, Pak, and Dion's (1990) sociocultural explanation of attractiveness stereotyping who have argued that people in a collectivist cultural context like Taiwanese would be less prone to stereotyping on the basis of a personal cue such as physical attractiveness than those in an individualist cultural context.

Keywords: physical attractiveness stereotype, individual traditionality/modernity, person perception, sex.