

## The Relationship between Chinese Dialectical Thinking and the Implicit Theory of Personality-Behavior Association

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We conducted two studies, exploring the relationship between Chinese dialectical thinking and the implicit theory of personality-behavior association which refers to the associative schema about a target person with certain kind of personality trait that would lead him to perform certain kinds of interpersonal behavior. Such as when a stranger is feared and his motive is doubted, the observer would predict this target person having certain specific kind of personality trait, and conclude that this stranger might perform some negative (or harmful) behaviors. However, when using dialectical thinking, people would wind up predicting that persons with positive personalities might behave in negative ways. Hsu (2003) presented a new theoretical conception, coined as the implicit theory of personality behavior association. The relationship between this implicit theory and interpersonal interaction was examined. It was considered that before interacting

with a stranger, people tend to predict that the target person will perform some kinds of interpersonal behaviors based on their knowledge about this target's personality information. Dialectical thinking was manipulated by a cognitive task in Study 1, and measured by the "middle way" scale in Study 2. On the whole, the results supported the predictions that people with high dialectical thinking had more negative predictions of targets' behaviors, especially targets with positive personality traits, and that these negative predictions of targets' behavior influenced subjects' interaction behaviors. The results are discussed in terms of the impact of dialectical thinking on personality perception and interpersonal interaction.

**Keywords:** *interpersonal behavior, implicit theory, Chinese personality perception, Chinese dialectical thinking*

