
Reacting to Impending Discrimination: Compensation for Prejudice and Attributions to Discrimination

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This experiment tested the hypothesis that stigmatized people attempt to compensate for or overcome the effects of prejudice on social interactions. In an adaptation of Ruggiero and Taylor's minimization of discrimination design, the authors informed 134 women either prior to or after completing a task that there was some chance that a prejudiced man would evaluate them. The women who were forewarned about prejudice compensated for this threat by distancing themselves from traditional feminine stereotypes relative to the women who learned about prejudice only after the experimental task was completed. However, the overall impression created by the women who were forewarned about prejudice suffered in this process. In addition, the authors did not replicate the minimization of discrimination finding. Regardless of when the women learned about prejudice, those who faced certain and possible prejudice were equally likely to attribute failing feedback to discrimination.

When stigmatized people are threatened by prejudice, they may use different interaction strategies or different levels of skill and effort than they do when they are not threatened by prejudice (Deaux & Major, 1987; Miller & Myers, 1998; Miller, Rothblum, Felicio, & Brand, 1995). Stigmatized people do not necessarily internalize society's negatives expectations about them and fall victim to self-fulfilling prophecies (Crocker & Major, 1989), as previous theorists would suggest (e.g., Allport, 1954). In fact, some research suggests that stigmatized people can overcome or compensate for the effects of prejudice by creating impressions on others that are inconsistent with negative stereotypes about their group (Miller et al., 1995; Steckler & Rosenthal, 1985; Zebrowitz, Adreoletti, Collins, Lee, & Blumenthal, 1998).

Stigmatized people who have had the opportunity to engage in compensatory efforts when faced with impending prejudice may interpret experiences with discrimination differently than those who have not had the opportunity to do so. This insight may be important for understanding Ruggiero and Taylor's (1995, 1997) minimization of discrimination finding. In a series of experiments, Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997) demonstrated that stigmatized people (i.e., African Americans, Asians, and women) attribute negative performance evaluations to discrimination only when they are virtually certain that they have been discriminated against (because all the evaluators were said to discriminate). When the motivation behind negative feedback is even slightly ambiguous (i.e., 75% of the evaluators were said to discriminate), stigmatized people attribute their failure predominately to the quality of their work. Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997) use this evidence to argue that stigmatized people minimize attributions to discrimination.

One important feature of the typical minimization of discrimination experiment (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995, 1997) is that the participants find out about discrimination only after they complete the experimental task on which they will be evaluated. The participants have no

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opportunity to adopt behaviors that might mitigate the potential impact of prejudice on their evaluation. Consequently, participants may have been reluctant to attribute poor performance evaluations to discrimination because they would have used different and perhaps more effective strategies had they anticipated that their evaluators were prejudiced. In fact, in studies in which stigmatized people do know prior to the experimental task that the other person may be prejudiced, they attribute negative feedback from the other person to prejudice (Crocker, Cornwell, & Major, 1993; Crocker, Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991, Experiment 2).

The present experiment therefore had two main goals. The first was to see if stigmatized people, in this case women, would alter their behavior if they knew that evaluators might discriminate against them. The second was to see if forewarning women about prejudice would eliminate the minimization of prejudice effect. A negative evaluation should seem more unjustified if they did in fact change their behavior to overcome the effect of the evaluators' propensity to discriminate.

Our theorizing is similar to Deaux and Major's (1987) gender-in-context model. One important component of this model is that once gender has been made salient in a given situation, women's behavior can be influenced by self-presentational concerns. Women in these situations may adjust their behavior to make a good impression on more powerful others. If women anticipate that behaving more femininely will bring desired rewards and outcomes, then behavioral confirmation of traditionally feminine behavior is likely to occur. In contrast, if the situation implies that stereotypical female characteristics are undesirable, women are likely to behaviorally distance themselves from stereotypes about women and behavioral confirmation is unlikely to occur.

Several empirical demonstrations provide support for the gender-in-context model. For example, von Baeyer, Sherk, and Zanna (1981) had women engage in job interviews with a male interviewer who held either liberal or traditional views about women. Women who were interviewed by the sexist man displayed behaviors that were more stereotypically feminine, such as speaking less and placing greater importance on the role of marriage and family during the interview, relative to women who were interviewed by a man who they believed held liberal attitudes toward women. Likewise, Zanna and Pack (1975) found that women who interacted with socially desirable men who they believed endorsed traditional views of women made more stereotypic impressions than did women who believed the men held liberal views about women.

In these studies, the women may have been motivated to make a good impression and be liked by the men with whom they interacted. Thus, a primary goal may have

been to ensure a smooth interaction (M. Snyder & Haugen, 1995). If this was their goal, it may have behooved them to confirm their partner's traditional or liberal expectations about them. This likely was a shrewd strategy, because other people may dislike women who challenge their stereotypes (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Rudman, 1998; Yoder & Schleicher, 1996).

Although being liked and accepted is an important goal in many situations, there are other instances when being amicable is supplanted by different motivations. For instance, women in occupational settings oftentimes need to deal with sexist stereotypes that women are less capable and effective leaders than are men (Eagly et al., 1992; O'Leary, 1974). In these situations, behavior that demonstrates competency (a stereotypic male characteristic) may be more valued and subsequently more likely to be expressed than behavior that is stereotypically feminine (van Vianen & van Schie, 1995). In one study, Steckler and Rosenthal (1985) found that women in a high-powered MBA program spoke in a more competent manner when they imagined speaking with their former internship bosses than when they imagined speaking to peers. The opposite pattern of results was found for men. In this situation, the women's concern with appearing competent may have caused them to adjust their behavior by distancing themselves from behavior associated with traditional stereotypes about women.

At first glance, the notion that stigmatized people disconfirm or distance themselves from stereotypes when forewarned about potential prejudice is at odds with research showing that prejudice has serious detrimental effects on stigmatized people (e.g., Goldman & Lewis, 1975; Miller & Turnbull, 1986). Such findings are not necessarily incompatible with our position. Certain aspects of stereotypes may be more amenable to disconfirmation than others.

Research on stereotype threat demonstrates this point. When stereotypes about women's and African Americans' inferior academic abilities are made salient during challenging diagnostic tasks, these groups confirm these stereotypes by displaying impaired academic performance (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999; Steele & Aronson, 1995). However, even though they did this, they also seized on opportunities to disconfirm negative stereotypes in other domains. For instance, African Americans under stereotype threat claimed on an experimental survey to like rap music and basketball less than did African Americans who were not under stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995, Experiment 3). This finding suggests that when threatened by prejudice, stigmatized people may be able to disconfirm certain aspects of stereotypes, even if their emotional and cogni-

tive responses to threat might impair their ability to disconfirm other aspects of stereotypes.

Finally, stereotype disconfirmation is not a unilateral process. Because the stereotype is in the mind of the perceiver, behavior that contradicts the stereotype may not have the desired effect if the perceiver interprets the behavior in a biased manner. Consequently, efforts to disconfirm stereotypes can have counterproductive effects. Research suggests that women who distance themselves from feminine stereotypes, for example, are viewed as more competent relative to more traditional women, but this increase in perceived competence comes at a cost (Eagly et al., 1992; Fiske, 1998; Rudman, 1998). Women who behave in a less feminine manner are sometimes seen as overly assertive, difficult, and less likable (Fiske, 1998; Rudman, 1998). This "backlash effect" (Rudman, 1998) suggests that it may be difficult for stigmatized people to simultaneously disconfirm stereotypes and be favorably evaluated (Eagly et al., 1992; Yoder & Schleicher, 1996).

Overview of Experiment and Hypotheses

Faced with these complexities, what will women do when forewarned that prejudice may affect how other people react to them? We hypothesized that on a task in which women had some latitude on how to present themselves, they would distance themselves from traditional female gender stereotypes, and this might have some detrimental effects on overall impression favorability. To examine this question, we adapted Ruggiero and Taylor's (1995, 1997) minimization of discrimination design. Undergraduate women completed a purported test of future career success and were told that there was some chance (100%, 50%, or 0%) that a prejudiced man would evaluate their test. Half of the women heard about the chance of prejudice only after completing the test, as was the case in Ruggiero's experiments. The other half was informed about the chance of prejudice before completing the test and, consequently, had the opportunity to adjust their behavior and compensate for prejudice.

Hypothesis 1. We hypothesized that forewarning the women that they would face some amount of prejudice (100% or 50%) would set off a compensatory response. Specifically, we hypothesized that these women would create a less stereotypic impression relative to the participants who did not face prejudice or who heard about prejudice only after completing the test. However, a less feminine presentation could result in unfavorable evaluations because a woman who does not appear feminine may be perceived negatively (Eagly et al., 1992).

Hypothesis 2. This experiment is a replication of most of the features of Ruggiero and Taylor's (1995, 1997)

research. We hypothesized that minimization of discrimination would not occur when the women were forewarned about prejudice. In this situation, the women failed despite having had the opportunity to compensate for prejudice. This experience should diminish the women's perceptions that the quality of their answers was responsible for their failing grade. Of secondary interest, but still important, is whether we would replicate Ruggiero's minimization of discrimination finding. Thus far, the effect has been produced in only a single laboratory (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995, 1997). We expected to replicate the minimization of discrimination finding when the women heard about prejudice after completing the test; that is, when the women heard about prejudice after completing the test, we expected them to attribute failure to prejudice only in the 100% chance of prejudice condition.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Participants were 134 women from undergraduate psychology courses who participated individually in a 1½-hour session to partially fulfill a course requirement. A European American female experimenter greeted the participants and informed them that they would be taking a test that predicted how successful they would be in their future careers and that the test was developed so that it would not reflect differences in the type of training provided in different fields of study.¹ The test consisted of two parts; the first was a task in which participants generated novel uses for five different objects (the same task used by Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995, 1997), and the second was an essay in which participants wrote about what their lives would be like 10 years in the future. To encourage participants to take the test seriously, they were told that everyone who received a "C" or better on the test would be entered into a raffle for \$50. The participants next received the Future Career Success Test booklet and were asked to report their gender, major, and race on the cover page. The experimenter went over the instructions with the participants and left the room.

At this point in the session, the procedures diverged depending on the condition to which the participants were assigned. The participants were randomly assigned to receive the chance of prejudice manipulation either before they took the exam (compensation possible) or after they took the exam (compensation not possible). For participants in the compensation possible condition, the experimenter informed them that either all (certain prejudice), half (possible prejudice), or none (no prejudice) of the eight male judges who were being paid to evaluate the exams graded women harder than men. For participants in the compensation not possible

condition, this manipulation was delivered after the test was completed. The exact wording of the manipulation was as follows:

Look, my professor probably wouldn't want me to tell you this but I just wanted to let you know (or, "just to let you know" in the no prejudice condition), eight judges are being paid to grade these tests and one of them will grade your answers. Today we are paying eight graduate students to grade the tests and I know that all of those scheduled are male and/but that (all, half, or none) of these guys grade women harder than men.²

The experimenter left the room immediately after administering this manipulation.

The participants were not given an explicit test-taking time limit. If they were not done writing after 33 minutes, the experimenter knocked on the door and asked them to finish the test in the next 2 minutes.³ After the participants completed the test, the experimenter feigned a phone call to a research assistant and asked him to pick up the participant's test. A European American male research assistant arrived and knocked on the door and picked up the participant's test booklet. The participant was led to believe that he would deliver the test booklet to a judge in another room. The experimenter left the room and allowed 10 minutes to pass so that the participant would believe that the judge was grading her test. During this time period, the participant worked on a filler task that was described as a potential addition for the next version of the Future Career Success Test.⁴ The participant also filled out a ticket for the experimental lottery.

After 9 minutes, the experimenter returned to the room, and approximately 1 minute later, the research assistant returned and handed back the test booklet to the participant.⁵ Every participant received a red "D" on the cover page of her test. After receiving the failing feedback, each participant was given 5 minutes alone to absorb this information. The experimenter then returned and asked the participant to complete the self-report measures developed by Ruggiero and Taylor (1997) and measures of performance and social state self-esteem (Heatherton & Polivy, 1991). Ruggiero and Taylor's (1997) measures assessed causal attributions for the failing grade, expectations about future career success and future discrimination, and performance and social perceived control.⁶

After the participants completed these self-report measures, the experimenter returned and administered a manipulation check questionnaire. It asked, "Did the experimenter say anything to you about how the judges grade men and women?" This was followed by a question that asked the participants to circle the number of

judges (which ranged from 0 to 8) who graded women harder than men.

The experimenter then used Aronson, Brewer, and Carlsmith's (1985) debriefing procedure to probe the participants about any suspicion they might have had with the experiment. Procedures recommended by Ross, Lepper, and Hubbard (1975) also were used to ensure that the participants did not feel badly about their future career success and that they understood the deception. The participants were also informed that everybody who participated in the study would be eligible for the \$50 lottery.

Dependent Measures

Behavioral measures. Our strategy for discovering how the women may have altered their essays to cope with impending prejudice was to ascertain what sort of impressions their essays created in the eyes of experimentally naïve people who read them. We recruited 89 undergraduates to serve as naïve judges in exchange for extra credit in one of their psychology courses. The judges were predominately female (79.5%) and European American. The naïve judges reported to the laboratory in groups of approximately 15. The judges were greeted by a European American female experimenter who explained that they would be evaluating a number of essays that were written by female undergraduates at their university. The experimenter explained that she was interested in the types of impressions the women were trying to create in their essays. The experimenter told them nothing more about the purpose of the original study or the conditions under which the women wrote the essays. The purpose of the ratings made by these undergraduates, whom we will refer to as impression estimators, is to provide an estimate of the impression that would be created on others by the essay responses that the women wrote during the experiment.

Of the original 89 impression estimators, data from 1 woman were removed because she failed to follow instructions on the rating forms. Two other impression estimators skipped one to two essays in their folders and thus provided data for only some of the essays they had been assigned. Each essay was rated by an average of 11 impression estimators (68.9% of the essays), with a range from 12 estimators (12.6% of the essays) to 9 estimators (2.5% of the essays). Ratings made by the impression estimators were averaged for each essay, producing a single score on each measure for each of the original participants who took part in the laboratory experiment.

Essays were divided randomly into blocks of 14 to 15 essays with the constraint that at least two essays from each experimental condition were represented in each block. Thus, it required eight blocks to have each participant's essay rated once. We created four different ran-

domly selected sets of eight blocks to control for carry-over effects from one essay to the next. Each impression estimator rated one block of essays. After receiving their block of essays, the impression estimators read each essay and then completed a 27-item survey about it. All items on this survey were rated on a 5-point scale with endpoints of 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 5 (*strongly agree*).

Impression estimators completed eight theoretically based scales that assessed perceptions of various aspects of the participants' conformity with gender stereotypes and overall impressions. All stereotype-relevant scales were scored so that higher scores indicate greater conformity with feminine stereotypes and less conformity with masculine stereotypes. The first scale was a two-item measure assessing the extent to which the participants emphasized the role of family in their futures. The items were as follows: (a) she seems to place a high value on family and (b) she seems to value a career more than a family (reverse coded). The second scale comprised four traits (dependent, submissive, feminine, and sentimental) that are stereotypically associated with femininity (Williams & Best, 1982). The third scale consisted of the following four items, which are associated with masculinity (Williams & Best, 1982): (a) strong, (b) masculine, (c) competitive, and (d) independent. All three of these scales were internally consistent (α s = .83, .79, and .79, respectively).

The fourth scale was an adaptation of Rudman's (1998) measure that assesses the "niceness" component of the female gender stereotype. We used four of Rudman's (1998) niceness items (she seems sensitive to the needs of others, friendly, likable, and kind). These items were highly reliable (α = .90). Higher scores on this scale indicate more likable impressions. Rudman's (1998) work demonstrates that women are viewed as less nice when they make less feminine impressions on others. Thus, women who are compensating for prejudice may do so at the expense of being viewed as less likable by our impression estimators.

The fifth scale was a measure of overall performance on the essay. This scale comprised the following four items: (a) she used a lot of thought, (b) she spent a lot of time, (c) she deserves a good grade, and (d) she produced low-quality work (reverse coded). These items were internally consistent (α = .94). Higher scores on this scale indicate better essay performance evaluations.

The sixth scale consisted of four items selected from C. R. Snyder et al.'s (1996) State Hope Scale. Impression estimators evaluated the extent to which each woman (a) seems to think there are lots of ways around any problem she might face, (b) seems like she can think of many ways to reach her current goals, (c) seems to energetically pursue her goals, and (d) believes she can meet the goals she sets for herself. These items were internally

consistent (α = .90). Higher scores on this scale indicate increased levels of hope. We included these items because women who are compensating for prejudice may appear more hopeful and goal-oriented than women who are not compensating for prejudice.

We also had the impression estimators rate the women on a single item assessing the extent to which the women were overcompensating or were perceived as overcompensating for something (Miller & Myers, 1998). We did this because stigmatized people may overcompensate when trying to overcome prejudice. Higher scores on this item represent increased ratings of overcompensation.

The final scale was a measure of anger that consisted of the following four items adapted from Rusting and Nolen-Hoeksema's (1998) anger measure: she seems (a) hostile, (b) scornful, (c) irritable, and (d) angry. These items were highly reliable (α = .94). Higher scores on this scale indicated that the participants created a more angry impression. Anger is a common emotion experienced by people who are discriminated against (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2000), and expression of anger might be interpreted as counter to feminine stereotypes of being nice.⁷ The inclusion of this scale allows us to determine if women forewarned about prejudice expressed any anger in their essays.

Self-report measures. Participants completed the same measures used by Ruggiero and Taylor (1997). Causal attributions for the failing grade were assessed with a six-item measure that asked the participants to rate the extent to which each of the following attributions played a role in their grade: anxiety, previous academic training, ability and effort, answer quality, discrimination, and test type. These questions were rated on 11-point Likert-type scales ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 10 (*very much*).

Following Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997), we also asked participants to make a rating of how successful they thought they would be in their future careers, the extent to which they believed that their gender would prevent them from being successful in their future careers, and the extent to which they personally and their gender group as a whole were discriminated against. These ratings were made on the same 11-point scales described above.

RESULTS

Manipulation Check and Suspicion

All but 1 of the 134 participants indicated that the experimenter had told them something about the manner in which the judges graded men and women. A 2 (compensation: possible or not possible) \times 3 (chance of prejudice: all, half, or none) analysis of variance

TABLE 1: Means and Standard Deviations for the Behavioral Dependent Measures

Variable	Compensation Possible Chance of Prejudice			Compensation Not Possible Chance of Prejudice		
	100% (n = 16)	50% (n = 23)	0% (n = 16)	100% (n = 19)	50% (n = 26)	0% (n = 17)
Family importance ^a	2.90 (0.59)	3.03 (0.62)	3.24 (0.69)	3.39 (0.56)	3.23 (0.70)	3.43 (0.63)
Femininity ^a	2.68 (0.32)	2.68 (0.33)	2.81 (0.44)	2.91 (0.34)	2.81 (0.30)	2.84 (0.37)
Niceness ^a	3.36 (0.30)	3.39 (0.26)	3.61 (0.24)	3.56 (0.32)	3.59 (0.33)	3.58 (0.32)
Hope ^a	3.25 (0.38)	3.36 (0.44)	3.47 (0.33)	3.58 (0.32)	3.57 (0.42)	3.41 (0.47)
Essay performance ^a	3.15 (0.45)	3.17 (0.61)	3.47 (0.38)	3.41 (0.54)	3.52 (0.43)	3.47 (0.49)
Anger	2.18 (0.38)	2.08 (0.27)	2.12 (0.42)	2.04 (0.31)	2.02 (0.38)	2.05 (0.38)
Masculinity	2.98 (0.40)	2.91 (0.40)	2.94 (0.44)	2.94 (0.35)	2.90 (0.34)	2.96 (0.41)
Overcompensation	2.55 (0.32)	2.58 (0.34)	2.55 (0.33)	2.56 (0.35)	2.48 (0.32)	2.47 (0.28)

NOTE: Numbers in parentheses are standard deviations. All variables were rated on 5-point scales with endpoints of 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 5 (*strongly agree*).

a. The multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) produced a significant univariate effect ($p < .05$) for compensation on this variable.

(ANOVA) was conducted on participants' reports about the number of judges who grade women harder than men (ranging from 0 to 8). As expected, there was a significant main effect for chance of prejudice, $F(2, 93) = 275.59, p < .001$.⁸ Although there was a tendency for participants in the half condition to overestimate the number of judges who graded women harder than men, Bonferroni multiple comparison tests ($ps < .05$) revealed that all three conditions were significantly different from each other ($M_s = 7.79, 5.81, \text{ and } 0.00; SD_s = 0.56, 1.92, \text{ and } 0.00, \text{ respectively}$). The participants' opportunity to compensate did not interact with the chance of prejudice, $F(2, 93) = .08, p = .92$; that is, participants' recall of what they were told about how many judges graded women harder than men was not affected by when they received this information. During the debriefing, 13 participants expressed suspicion about the deceptions used in the study. These participants were excluded from all further analyses. Two other participants were also excluded from the analyses, 1 because she withdrew during the posttask questionnaires and 1 because she was the only ethnic minority (Latina) participant and she interpreted the discrimination questions as referring to ethnic discrimination. Two women were excluded from the behavioral analyses because their scores on at least one measure were outliers (more than 3 standard deviations from the mean).

Behavioral Measures

The impression estimators' ratings on family importance, femininity, masculinity, niceness, essay performance, hope, overcompensation, and anger on the essays the women wrote about their future lives were subjected to a 2 (compensation: possible or not possible) \times 3 (chance of prejudice: all, half, or none) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The MANOVA yielded

one significant effect, which was for compensation, $F(8, 104) = 2.14, p = .038$.

Examination of the univariate tests revealed that compensation had a significant effect on family importance, $F(1, 111) = 5.91, p = .017$, femininity, $F(1, 111) = 4.22, p = .042$, niceness, $F(1, 111) = 4.75, p = .031$, essay performance, $F(1, 111) = 4.87, p = .029$, and hope, $F(1, 111) = 4.21, p = .043$. Compensation did not affect ratings of masculinity, $F(1, 111) = 0.03, p = .863$, and overcompensation, $F(1, 111) = 0.83, p = .365$. Moreover, ratings of participant anger were unaffected by whether they learned about potential prejudice prior to or after completing the essay, $F(1, 111) = 1.73, p = .191$; that is, forewarning our participants about potential prejudice did not cause them to write harsher, more belligerent essays (see Table 1 for means and standard deviations).

The hypothesis that women will compensate when threatened with impending prejudice predicts that there should be a significant interaction between the participants' opportunity to compensate (whether they learned about prejudice before or after the task) and the chance of prejudice. The MANOVA did not produce this interaction, $F(16, 210) = 1.01, p = .451$; however, the omnibus MANOVA is relatively insensitive to the pattern of differences between means that we expected to find in this experiment (see Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1985). This is because the three conditions in which the women learned about the proportion of prejudiced graders after they completed the test were identical during the Future Career Success Test. Procedures in these conditions did not diverge until after the test was completed. Thus, we would not expect to see any differences between these conditions on any of the dependent variables.

For this reason, we conducted contrasts to compare the combined mean for the three groups who learned about the chance of prejudice after the test was com-

TABLE 2: Means and Inferential Statistics for Planned Contrasts

Variable	Mean Ratings by Group			Contrast Effects	
	Prejudice Anticipated Groups (100% and 50%)	Prejudice Not Anticipated Group (0%)	Combined Control Groups (100%, 50%, 0%)	Combined Control Group Versus Prejudice Anticipated, $t(111)$	Combined Control Group Versus Prejudice Not Anticipated, $t(111)$
	Family importance	2.98	3.24	3.35	-2.89**
Femininity	2.68	2.81	2.85	-2.46*	-0.48
Niceness	3.38	3.61	3.58	-3.26**	0.44
Hope	3.32	3.47	3.52	-2.52*	-0.40
Essay performance	3.16	3.47	3.47	-3.01**	0.02

NOTE: All variables were rated on 5-point scales with endpoints of 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 5 (*strongly agree*).

* $p < .025$. ** $p < .01$.

pleted (which will be referred to as the combined control group) with the combined mean of the two groups that we predicted would engage in compensation (the groups that were forewarned about certain or possible prejudice prior to completing the essay). We also examined the contrast of the combined mean of the groups that learned about prejudice after the test was completed (the combined control group) to the group that was forewarned that they would not face any prejudice. We predicted that this contrast would not be significant. In sum, we are predicting that only the women who were forewarned about certain or possible sexism prior to completing the test would engage in compensation. We conducted these contrasts on ratings of family importance, femininity, niceness, essay performance, and hope, which were the five variables that produced significant univariate effects for compensation. In addition, to reduce the family-wise error rate, all contrasts were evaluated against an alpha level of .025.

The contrast between the combined mean of the two groups that were forewarned about potential sexism and the combined mean of the three groups who learned about the judges' sexism after the essay task was significant for family importance, femininity, niceness, essay performance, and hope. Women who were forewarned about prejudice were rated as less family oriented, less feminine, less nice, less hopeful, and produced lower quality essays than the women in the conditions that were not forewarned about prejudice. The contrast between the group who had been told that none of the judges were prejudiced did not differ from the mean of the combined control group on any of these variables (see Table 2 for means and inferential statistics).

Self-Report Measures

Attributions for test performance. Participants rated the extent to which discrimination and the quality of their test answers explained their poor performance on the Future Career Success Test. Each of these was analyzed

with a 2 (opportunity for compensation) \times 3 (chance of prejudice) ANOVA.⁹ Table 3 gives the descriptive and inferential statistics for the main effects for opportunity to compensate and chance of prejudice. Previous research on minimization of discrimination (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995, 1997) indicates that attributions to discrimination should be made only when participants were certain that all of the judges discriminated against women. Although the predicted main effect for chance of prejudice was significant, Table 3 shows that attributions to discrimination were virtually identical in the certain and possible prejudice conditions and that attributions to discrimination in both of these conditions were considerably higher than in the 0% chance of prejudice condition. In the 100% and 50% conditions, attributions to prejudice were slightly above the scale midpoint, indicating *somewhat* responsible for the poor grade, and in the 0% condition, attributions to discrimination were slightly above the scale endpoint, indicating *not at all* responsible for the grade. Attributions to discrimination in the certain, possible, and no prejudice conditions were not affected by the timing of when participants learned about the chance of prejudice; that is, the interaction between opportunity for compensation and chance of prejudice was not significant, $F(2, 112) = .07$, $p = .93$.

Previous research on minimization of discrimination also indicates that the failure to attribute poor performance to discrimination co-occurs with increased attributions to answer quality (Ruggiero & Taylor, 1995, 1997). Table 3 shows that this was not the case in the present study. Neither chance of prejudice nor opportunity for compensation significantly affected attributions to answer quality. Overall, participants indicated that answer quality was in the range of *somewhat* responsible for their poor performance.

We also compared the difference between participants' ratings of attributions to discrimination and answer quality within each level of the chance of preju-

TABLE 3: Mean Attributions for Failure and Generalized Expectancies About Discrimination

Variable	Opportunity for Compensation			Chance of Prejudice			F ^b
	Possible	Not Possible	F ^a	100%	50%	0%	
Attributions for failure							
Discrimination ^c	4.45 (3.34)	4.02 (3.39)	0.85	5.46 ^a (3.12)	5.64 ^a (2.83)	0.76 ^b (1.23)	40.47***
Answer quality ^c	5.23 (2.74)	5.05 (2.83)	0.02	4.63 ^a (2.41)	5.12 ^a (2.99)	5.70 ^a (2.76)	1.38
Generalized expectancies							
Personal discrimination ^d	3.73 (2.35)	3.91 (2.70)	0.11	4.91 ^a (2.74)	4.14 ^a (2.34)	2.18 ^b (1.70)	12.27***
Group discrimination ^d	5.09 (2.33)	5.60 (2.10)	1.63	5.89 ^a (2.32)	5.71 ^a (2.11)	4.26 ^b (1.92)	6.30**
Gender will prevent future success ^d	3.02 (2.68)	2.83 (3.15)	0.06	3.33 ^a (3.22)	3.53 ^a (3.02)	1.55 ^b (1.92)	5.45**
Future career success ^d	7.91 (2.63)	8.53 (2.20)	1.89	8.76 (1.86)	8.08 (2.46)	7.94 (2.85)	1.02

NOTE: All variables were rated on 11-point scales with endpoints of 0 (*not at all*) and 10 (*very much*). Standard deviation in parentheses.

a. $df = (1, 112)$. Degrees of freedom differ slightly across measures due to missing data.

b. $df = (2, 112)$. Degrees of freedom differ slightly across measures due to missing data.

c. For these dependent measures (i.e., discrimination and answer quality), means for the effects of chance of prejudice and attribution type that share no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$).

d. For these dependent variables, means for the effects of chance of prejudice that share no common subscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$).

** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

dice manipulation. As can be seen in Table 3, attributions to answer quality were significantly higher than attributions to discrimination in the 0% chance of prejudice condition. There were no differences in the extent to which participants attributed the poor grade to discrimination and answer quality in either the 50% or 100% chance of prejudice conditions. Although potentially interesting, the remaining attribution items were not theoretically relevant to our hypotheses and will not be described further.

Generalized expectancies. The three questions relating to the participants' perceptions of the prevalence of prejudice in general were also analyzed by 2 (opportunity for compensation) \times 3 (chance for prejudice) ANOVAs. Table 3 shows that the chance of prejudice manipulation significantly affected responses to all three questions. Participants in the certain and possible prejudice conditions thought that their gender would be more of an obstacle to success and said that they personally and North American women in general experience more discrimination than did participants in the no prejudice condition. Thus, experiencing prejudice in the experimental setting (even if it was ambiguous as in the 50% condition) affected not only attributions for failure in this situation but also expectations about events outside of this situation. Opportunity for compensation had no significant effects on any of these questions. This is important because it indicates that the timing of the information about the chance for prejudice did not have any effects on how much prejudice participants perceived. Finally, participants' anticipated future career success ratings were not affected by the opportunity to compensate, $F(1, 113) = 1.89$, $p = .17$, the chance of prejudice, $F(2, 113) = 1.02$, $p = .36$, or the interaction between these variables, $F(2, 133) = .52$, $p = .60$.

DISCUSSION

The essay responses of participants who were forewarned about impending prejudice created less stereotypically feminine impressions on those who read them than did those of participants who did not learn about potential prejudice until it was too late to alter their essay content. Participants who anticipated certain and possible prejudice were judged as less family focused, less feminine, and less nice than participants in the three conditions that did not have the opportunity to engage in compensation, whereas participants who anticipated no prejudice were not different from the groups that did not have the chance to use compensatory strategies. The women who were forewarned about prejudice may have distanced themselves from traditional feminine stereotypes to mitigate the effect of the judge's sexism on his evaluation of their performance. If that were the case, creating a less feminine impression would be a compensatory response to prejudice; that is, the women may have modified their self-presentation style in an attempt to overcome prejudice.

This finding adds to the small, but growing, body of research showing that stigmatized people are proactive in their approach to situations in which prejudice is a threat. They do not simply wait for negative outcomes to occur and then try to repair or mitigate the psychological, social, and other consequences that follow. Instead, they may try to compensate for the effects that prejudice would otherwise have on their social interactions. In so doing, they may disconfirm the stereotypes that others have about them (Miller et al., 1995; Zebrowitz et al., 1998).

Although the women who were forewarned about prejudice successfully disconfirmed gender stereotypes, their essays about the future created negative overall

impressions and appeared less hopeful about the future. There are several possible explanations for why forewarning about prejudice had both compensatory and negative effects on the impression created by participants' essay responses.

It is possible that the women who were forewarned about potential prejudice did not think it was worth their effort to write good essays when the graders might be unfair in their evaluations. The fact that they were also less hopeful about the future suggests an element of giving up occurred in these women. Even though the participants may have felt that their performance was doomed to be evaluated poorly, they could at least prevent the graders from saying that it was a result of their behaving too femininely.¹⁰ In addition, a focus on distancing themselves from stereotypes may have prevented the women from focusing on other self-presentation skills that would have created a more favorable impression. It is also possible that the negative ratings may have occurred because behavior that seems appropriate for nonstigmatized people may be judged as inappropriate for stigmatized people (Eagly et al., 1992; Yoder & Schleicher, 1996). Perhaps the impression estimators formed negative impressions of the women precisely because they did disconfirm stereotypes.

In addition, the women may have overcompensated by trying too hard or coming on too strong, thereby creating a strident impression (Miller & Myers, 1998). Overcompensation can also occur in situations in which stigmatized people overestimate the level of prejudice they face (Miller & Kaiser, 2001). For example, the women who were forewarned about prejudice thought that the audience for their responses included judges who certainly or possibly graded women harder than men. In actuality, their audience was predominately female undergraduate raters who are not likely to be very sexist. Perhaps the women's test answers would have made a relatively positive impression on prejudiced people but seemed inappropriately emphatic, strong, or awkward to the people who actually evaluated them. The plausibility of an overcompensation explanation is weakened by the results of the impression estimators' ratings of whether the women seemed to be overcompensating for something. The overcompensation ratings were not affected by the manipulation of whether the women were forewarned about prejudice.

Anger is another possible explanation for our findings. Women who were forewarned about potential sexism may have become angry and wrote belligerent essays. If this were the case, the women's less feminine behavior may have reflected anger rather than an effort to distance themselves from stereotypes. Ratings made by our impression estimators do not support this alternative explanation. The women who were forewarned about

potential sexism did not produce essays that were judged as expressing more anger than those produced by the women that knew nothing about potential sexism.

It is also important to remember that making a relatively poor overall impression on the essay portion of the test does not necessarily represent a failure for our research participants. We do not know what their goals were. If their primary goal was to be perceived as less feminine, they were successful. However, if their primary goal was to create a good impression on their actual essays, they were not successful. It may be that the relatively negative performance evaluations were collateral damage that occurred as a consequence of achieving the objective of distancing themselves from stereotypes.

In sum, regardless of how or why the women who were forewarned about prejudice created the impressions they did, the warning affected their responses to the experimental situation. They answered differently when they knew that prejudice certainly or possibly would be a factor in how they were evaluated than when they did not know this.

The other major purpose of this experiment was to examine the effect of forewarning stigmatized people about the threat of prejudice on their attributions for failure. We predicted that minimization of discrimination would be limited to the condition in which the women learned about possible prejudice only after it was too late. The results revealed that the women who were forewarned about prejudice did attribute their failure to discrimination in both the certain and possible prejudice conditions. However, to our surprise, this same pattern of attributions occurred among the women who were not forewarned about prejudice. The women in the possible and certain prejudice conditions were equally likely to attribute their failure to discrimination. This is inconsistent with Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997), who found that participants in the possible prejudice condition minimized attributions to discrimination. In other words, we were unable to replicate the minimization of discrimination finding.

Why did our participants fail to minimize attributions to discrimination? Although we made every effort to keep our procedure consistent with Ruggiero's methodology, we included an additional essay task on the Future Career Success Test so that the women would have greater self-presentational flexibility and would have the chance to compensate for prejudice. However, failure on the essay task may have increased the self-relevance of and expanded the scope of rejection the women experienced, because it not only indicated that their performance on the novel uses task was poor but also that their personal future aspirations and expectations were deficient in some way. Failure in a highly self-relevant domain may be more likely to motivate self-protective

attribution processes (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998) than is failure in a less self-relevant domain.

Results of the generalized expectancy measures demonstrate that the participants' experience with discrimination in our experimental setting affected how they felt not just about discrimination in the laboratory but also about discrimination in the real world. The women in the certain and possible prejudice conditions reported that their gender would prevent them from being successful in their future careers and that both they personally and women in general experienced discrimination to a greater extent than did women in the no chance of prejudice condition. These expectations are not consistent with the view that stigmatized people minimize discrimination. Our participants seemed quite willing to recognize discrimination when it occurred in the laboratory and to generalize from that experience to expectations about future situations outside of the experimental setting.

In sum, regardless of the reason why our participants did not minimize prejudice, our failure to find this effect raises important questions about the robustness of the effects produced by Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997). Our data indicate that there are clear limitations to the minimization of prejudice effect. Moreover, these data suggest that there are important moderators that affect willingness to make attributions to prejudice and the identification of these moderators may provide insight into when stigmatized people do and do not minimize attributions to prejudice.

Conclusion

Because discrimination is prevalent in our society, stigmatized people frequently must decide how best to cope with the unfair situations they face. Our results suggest that women may compensate for prejudice by distancing themselves from traditional stereotypes but may incur some costs in doing this.

In addition, compensation requires acknowledging that discrimination may occur. The finding that women in our study who faced certain or possible prejudice created different impressions on the test when forewarned about prejudice, were willing to attribute performance evaluations to discrimination, and said that discrimination would be a barrier for them personally and for women in general indicates that they did acknowledge the effects of prejudice. Finally, our participants did more than acknowledge prejudice; they appeared to try, however effectively, to do something to counter it.

NOTES

1. With a few exceptions that will be described below, we tried to replicate as closely as possible the procedures used by Ruggiero and

Taylor (1995, 1997). To accomplish this, Karen Ruggiero met with one of us (CRK) and demonstrated the procedures involved in her experimental design and provided us with advice and feedback during the planning phases of this experiment.

2. The wording of this manipulation differs from Ruggiero and Taylor's (1995, 1997) experiments. Ruggiero tells her participants that the judges discriminate against women, whereas we informed our participants that the judges graded women harder than men. We did this because pilot work revealed that suspicion was very high without the introduction of this modification.

3. In Ruggiero and Taylor's (1995, 1997) experiments, the participants are given only 10 minutes to complete the test. We gave our participants more time because, in addition to the task used by Ruggiero, we asked our participants to write an essay about what their life would be like in 10 years.

4. This task was similar to the stereotype activation measure used in Steele and Aronson's (1995) stereotype threat research. We were interested in whether this measure would tap into the participants' thoughts about striving and achieving. Analyses revealed that the independent variables had no effect on participants' responses to this measure; therefore, it will not be discussed further.

5. During this minute, interaction between the experimenter and participant did not occur unless it was initiated by the participant.

6. Because Ruggiero and Taylor (1995, 1997) find that minimizing attributions to discrimination affects the performance and social state self-esteem and performance and social perceived control of stigmatized people, we had our participants complete these measures. We were unable to replicate any of Ruggiero and Taylor's (1995, 1997) state self-esteem and perceived control findings. In addition, the performance and social perceived control scales did not reach adequate levels of internal consistency ($\alpha = .57$ and $.42$, respectively). For these reasons, we will not discuss these results any further. Complete information about these results can be obtained from the first author.

7. We acknowledge an anonymous reviewer for bringing this idea to our attention.

8. There are fewer degrees of freedom for this analysis because this question was added after 35 women had participated.

9. The omnibus analysis of variance (ANOVA) is appropriate here because all participants knew what the risk of prejudice was by the time they completed the self-report measures.

10. We thank Janet Swim for offering this insightful explanation.

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