Interaction Between Domain Relevance and Self-monitoring on Pride Inhibition:

A Cross-cultural Exploration

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Abstract

Although pride is universal, pride expression and its inhibition has been found to be context-dependent, affected by social norms and interpersonal relationship dynamics. In this study, we aim to replicate a recent finding on the effect of a relationship-specific motive on inhibiting pride expression in outperformance situations, specifically the effect of how the extent of relevance of an achievement to the audience can influence pride expression, on a non-Western sample. Furthermore, we contribute to the body of work on pride inhibition by investigating an often-neglected factor, interpersonal disposition on self-monitoring, and its moderating effect on pride expression. Our findings show that the more relevant an achievement is to the audience, the more pride is inhibited by the outperformers, similar to the original study, suggesting that the effect of domain relevance is cross-cultural. Moreover, our result also shows a significant effect of self-monitoring on pride expression, with high self-monitors consistently showing more pride than low self-monitors in both relevant and nonrelevant conditions, consistent with the conceptualization of self-monitoring as rooted within a status-enhancement motive.

Keywords: pride expression, pride inhibition, self-monitoring, achievement

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Research on emotion expression and regulation has shown that positive emotions are often expressed while negative emotions are inhibited (Schall et al., 2016). Expressing positive affects has been linked not only to greater personal health benefits (Steptoe et al., 2008), but also to social-relational benefits as individuals expressing more positive emotions are viewed as more likeable, sociable and approachable (Reysen, 2005). Pride, a positive emotion often observed in individuals in connection to achieving success (Lange & Crusius, 2015; Tracy & Matsumoto, 2008), and pride expression is believed to serve the function of drawing others' attention to one's accomplishment, communicate superior abilities, and gain social status amongst the group (Niedenthal & Brauer, 2012; Tracy & Robins, 2007). Research into pride has found evidence to support this hypothesis with findings suggesting pride expression is automatically perceived as a status-signal by observers (Tracy et al., 2013). Contradictory to the view of pride as a deadly sin, emotion researchers have argued in favor of pride being an adaptive and important social emotion in gaining prestige and leadership within a group, and individuals exhibiting pride in response to well-deserved achievement are perceived as more likeable (Williams & DeSteno, 2009).

Universality with Cultural Variances.

Pride is characterized by an expanded posture of the body with the head tilt back and sitting or standing up straight (Lewis, 1995; Tracy & Matsumoto, 2008; Tracy & Robins, 2007). Although earlier research into emotions has deemed only 6 basic emotions as having universal expressions (Ekman, 1999; Ekman & Keltner, 1997), in recent decades, studies into the expressions of pride has revealed evidence to the contrary, showing that pride expression is

cross-cultural and biologically innate, expressed by both sighted, blind and congenitally blind athletes after a victory (Tracy & Matsumoto, 2008; Tracy & Robins, 2007), consisting of a core universal pattern of display, with some cultural variations (Cordaro et al., 2018). Research into cultural differences on pride and its display has also uncovered interesting findings along the division between Western and Eastern Asia cultures, with a focus on the individualism – collectivism (I-C) dimension popularized by Hofstede (Hofstede, 1983). Keeping with the I-C dimension, Markus & Kitayama (1991) adopted a different categorization of emotions, separating between ego-focused and other-focused emotions, shifting the focus from positive and negative affect to the extent to which the emotions stem from and reinforce an independent or interdependent self. Ego-focused emotions such as pride highlight an individual's attributes, further strengthen one's independent identity from the group. As a result, it is theorized that in more interdependent cultures, such as those in Asia that emphasize collectivism values and group cohesion, individuals hold more interdependence self-concepts and would experience and express ego-focused emotion to a lesser extent as this is viewed as disruptive to the group and threaten the interdependent self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). A study comparing between Japan and the United State found that good feelings are connected to other-focused emotions in Japan (friendly feeling), but with ego-focused emotions in the US (pride), providing some evidence to this assertion (Kitayama et al., 2000).

However, even though the general literature on positive emotion expression claims that in-group encourages more emotional expressions from its members than out-group, and although cross-cultural work on pride expressions proposes that pride display is more inhibited in collectivistic cultures, other studies have shown that differences in pride expression appears to be context-dependent, and that only under specific situations would pride expression be suppressed

(van Osch et al., 2016). Van Osch et al. (2016) found that for Chinese athletes, pride is inhibited only with in-group members, and there are small to no differences between Chinese versus the US athletes in pride display toward out-group members. This suggest that there is an interaction between culture and in-group/out-group dynamic in pride expression, with pride inhibition serving the function of preserving group cohesion when a show of dominance is disruptive, especially in collectivistic cultures.

Envy and Domain Relevance.

Pride often unintentionally elicits negative responses from observers of the display. These negative reactions can range from perceiving the outperformer as boastful and arrogant to feelings of benign and malicious envy, which can lead to other social costs such as hostility and resentment toward the envied person (Salovey & Rodin, 1984; Smith et al., 1994) and undermining the envied person in social situations (Duffy et al., 2012). Most noticeably, envy occurs most often in scenarios in which the domain of achievement is of personal relevance and importance to the outperformed individual (DelPriore et al., 2012; Salovey & Rodin, 1984). Interestingly, outperformers seem to anticipate this reaction from their audiences and will often inhibit their positive emotion expression after a victory to avoid backlash (Friedman & Miller-Herringer, 1991; Mosquera et al., 2010; Schall et al., 2016), especially when the domain of achievement is of relevance to their audience. In parallel, pride inhibition has also been found to be moderated by the relevance of the achievement domain to the observers of the pride display (domain relevance for short) (van Osch et al., 2019). Using a Dutch university student sample, Van Osch et al. (2019) found that pride expression is significant inhibited by outperformers when their achievement is of more relevance to their peers (getting the best score on an exam) compare to when their achievement is of less relevance (winning a squash tournament that their

peers did not participate). Importantly, since the audience of pride expression for both conditions were fellow students, this suggests that the effect of domain relevance is independent of the in-group/out-group effect on pride inhibition. This effect was also found to be robust when controlling for pride experienced, with a medium-large effect size (van Osch et al., 2019).

In the current research, we aim to replicate this effect of domain relevance in a Vietnamese student sample to further investigate the robustness of van Osch et al. (2019) finding. As there are conflicting predictions from the extant literature on pride expression and inhibition between different cultures (Western vs. non-Western), during specific situational contexts (in-group vs. out-group), replicating this in a non-Western, non-WEIRD sample would add to our confidence that the effect of domain relevance is a significant predictor of pride inhibition, independent of cultural differences and in-group/out-group dynamic.

Self-monitoring

Interdependence theory proposes that all interpersonal interactions are a function of the given situation and the behaviors and characteristics of the individuals, and encountering similar situations will give rise to habitual responses of adaptation. The authors posits 3 stable patterns of adaptation, arising from an individual's social norms, their relationship-specific motives, or their interpersonal dispositions, to ensure (on average) positive outcomes (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). Existing literature on pride display fit nicely into this framework, with the majority of the focus being on adaptation by social norms (I-C dimension), and relationship-specific motives (in-group vs. out-group, domain relevance vs. non-relevance). However, there has been very little said on individual differences and its potential interaction with different social contexts. Since all 3 factors could regulate pride, this study aims to contribute to the current body of

knowledge by investigating interpersonal disposition effect on pride inhibition through exploring the connection between pride and self-monitoring.

Self-monitoring was first conceptualized by Snyder in 1974 which proposes that there are significant individual differences in the extent to which one is willing and able to create and maintain a public image through expressive behaviors (Snyder, 1974, 1979). High self-monitors are more attuned and responsive to social and interpersonal cues, and able to adapt and exert more control over their behaviors and self-presentation, whereas low self-monitors tend to behave and express themselves in a more consistent manner, guided more by their internal attitude, emotions, beliefs and values (Gangestad & Snyder, 2000; Snyder & Gangestad, 1986). Early works on self-monitoring have explored many different connections between self-monitoring, ranging from the field of marketing and consumer behaviors to personality and social psychology (for summary, Gangestad & Snyder, 2000). More recently, self-monitoring has received more interest from the field of organization study, linking it to leadership emergence, work performance, social network structures, and impression management (Kudret et al., 2019). Under the assumption that emotions are expressed as they are experienced, the connection between self-monitoring and expressive control serves as a natural starting point to investigate individual differences in all expression inhibition, of which pride inhibition is of our main interest.

Expressive Control.

At its core, self-monitoring is a theory about one's willingness and ability to exert control over their behaviors to cultivate a specific appearance. Unsurprisingly, high self-monitors have been found to be better at expressive control (Riggio et al., 1987; Snyder, 1974), which often result in a larger variation in behaviors compare to low self-monitors whose behaviors tend to be

more consistent (Scott et al., 2012). High self-monitors individuals are also found to be more adept at recognizing social cues (Costanzo & Archer, 1989), which provide them with the necessary input to evaluate and determine their desired course of action. As outperformance situations often come with mixed and conflicting signal on the appropriateness of pride display, we expect high self-monitors to be better able to construe these social and interpersonal cues and adapt their behaviors to avoid negative social evaluations. Therefore, we predict high self-monitors will express less pride in outperformance situations compare to low self-monitors.

Status.

Gangestad and Snyder (2000) have reiterated that self-monitoring is characterized by its connection individuals' desire to improve their status within their social network. A wide array of research into self-monitoring has come up with some interesting findings to support this assertion. Studies into consumer attitudes and behaviors have found that high self-monitors react more positively to advertisements and are more likely to choose products that are associated with status (DeBono, 1987; DeBono & Rubin, 1995). High self-monitors have also been found to prefer romantic partners with attractive physical appearance (Snyder et al., 1985), which serves to enhance their own status in the eyes of others. More directly, self-monitoring has been shown to correlate with the need for social status (Flynn et al., 2006; Highhouse et al., 2016). Therefore, status serves as a natural connection point between self-monitoring and pride expression. As the function of pride expression is to communicate success and enhance social status, we hence expect high self-monitors to show more pride expressions than low self-monitors when there is no threat of social costs to expressing pride (domain nonrelevant condition).

Research questions and hypotheses

Firstly, this research aims to replicate the effect of domain relevance on pride expression and answer the question of whether this effect is cross-cultural and can be found in a non-Western sample. Due to the robust nature and medium-large effect size reported in the original study, we expect the same effect to be found in a Vietnamese sample.

Hypothesis 1: Participants in the domain relevant condition will show less pride expression compared to the domain nonrelevant condition.

Secondly, this research aims to expand the current literature on pride inhibition by investigating the effect and interaction between self-monitoring and domain relevance.

Hypothesis 2: There is an interaction effect between self-monitoring and domain relevance on pride expression. We expect the following simple effects:

H2a: In the domain relevant condition, participants scoring higher on self-monitoring will exhibit less pride expressions than those scoring lower on self-monitoring.

H2b: In domain nonrelevant condition, participants scoring higher on self-monitoring will exhibit more pride expression than those scoring lower on self-monitoring.

Method

This study was pre-registered prior to any data collection on AsPredicted.org on June 5th, 2020.[1] A power analysis was performed using G*Power to determine the minimum sample size needed to detect a small interaction effect size with $\alpha = 0.025$ (Bonferroni corrected), power = 0.8 and with a total number of 3 predictors (main effect of domain relevance, main effect of self-

[1] For review: https://aspredicted.org/blind.php?x=jc2yh7

monitoring, and interaction effect of domain relevance and self-monitoring) yielded a target sample size of 478.

Participants

The study was approved by Tilburg University Ethics Review Board on June 2nd, 2020. A total of 1912 Vietnamese university students took part in the survey with the help of 4 contacts who assisted in emailing university students in Ho Chi Minh City in a period of 3 weeks, from June 8th to June 29th, 2020.

Responses in which participants 1) spent less than 10 seconds reading the vignette, 2) completed the entire survey in less than 60 seconds, 3) failed the attention check, 4) were younger than 16 years old (2 cases), 5) did not answer all items for the dependent variables, and 6) did not complete the survey within the data collection period were excluded from our final sample.

After exclusion, our final sample consisted of 914 respondents (19.4% males, 80.2% females, 0.4% other), with an age range of 17 to 29 (M = 20.26, SD = 1.75).

Measurements

The vignettes and pride measurements were originally in Dutch, which were translated into English by the original author. All English measurements (vignettes, pride measurements, self-monitoring) were translated into Vietnamese and back into English by 2 independent translators. The original English measurements and the translate-back-translate English versions were then compared and inconsistencies were resolved through discussion.

Domain relevance manipulation.

To manipulate domain relevance for our sample of university students, 2 vignettes were adapted from van Osch et al. (2019). In the original vignette, the domain non-relevant condition

is manipulated by asking participants to imagine winning a squash tournament. However, as squash is not an easily recognizable sport in Vietnam, to avoid confusion in participants, the sport tournament was changed into ping-pong instead. Ping-pong was chosen for its parallel with squash as it is not commonly played amongst young adult but is widely known and identifiable.

Domain relevance is manipulated by varying the field of achievement of the participants, while having the audience (classmates) remain the same in both conditions to control for any potential ingroup/outgroup effect. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions where they accomplished an outstanding achievement in either an exam of which their classmates also partook, or a ping-pong tournament of which their classmates did not take part in the activity (see Appendix A for the full vignettes). For the control condition (ping-pong), since their classmates did not take part in the tournament, the participant's achievement is not of personal relevant to their fellow students. In contrast, both the participant and their classmates took part in the exam in the experiment condition of which a high score on the exam would be of more personal relevance to their classmates.

Pride experienced.

Pride experienced is measured using a 3-item scale with Cronbach's alpha = 0.81. Factor analysis confirmed uni-dimensionality of the scale. Participants reported how much pride, satisfaction and joy they feel on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

Verbal pride expressed.

Verbal pride expressed is measured using a 3-item scale with Cronbach's alpha = 0.81. Factor analysis confirmed uni-dimensionality of the scale. Participants reported to what degree they would show share and tell their classmates about their achievement on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

Nonverbal pride expressed.

Nonverbal pride expressed is measured using a 6-point visual scale consisting of 6 pictures of a female expressing her pride ranging from neutral/no pride to very intense pride (Figure 1) (van Osch et al., 2019). Participants reported on how they would express themselves towards their fellow students by clicking on one of the pictures.

Manipulation check.

Participants answered to what extent they think their fellow students would also like to achieve the same thing they achieved on a 7-point scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

Self-monitoring.

Self-monitoring is measured using an 18-item scale, developed and shortened by Snyder & Gangestad (1986, 2000).[2] Participants answer True/False for each item. 10 out of 18 items were reverse coded (Snyder & Gangestad, 1986).

Procedures

Participants first read a vignette that describe them either winning a ping-pong tournament (nonrelevant to their fellow students) or having the highest score on an exam (relevant to their fellow students). They were then told that their fellow students have asked them about their performance in the tournament/exam. Participants then answer questions measuring pride experienced, verbal pride expressed and nonverbal pride expressed. After a manipulation check, participants then complete the self-monitoring scale and an attention check. Demographic information (age and sex) was collected at the end of the survey.

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[2] Example item: I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.

Results

Manipulation check

An independent sample t-test shows that there is a significant difference between control and experiment conditions, $t(912) = -10.568$, $p < 0.001$ with a 95% confidence interval (-1.453; -0.998), with participants in the exam condition reported on average 1.226 points higher than participants in the ping-pong condition when asked to what extent they think their classmates would also like to achieve the same accomplishment. This corresponds to a medium to large effect size, Cohen's $d = 0.703$.

Pride expressed and Pride experienced.

Separate ANOVAs with domain relevance as independent variable and verbal pride expressed and nonverbal pride expressed as dependent variables revealed significant effects on both measurements of pride expression. Participants reported verbally to express less pride in the domain relevant condition ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 1.22$) than in the domain non-relevant condition ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.4$), $F(1, 912) = 112.32$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta 2 = 0.11$. Participants also reported nonverbally to express less pride in the domain relevant condition ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 1.06$) than in the domain non-relevant condition ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.28$), $F(1, 912) = 27.2$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta 2 = 0.03$. Separate ANCOVAs found that experienced pride was a significant covariate, and that the effect of condition on verbal pride expressed and nonverbal pride expressed remained significant; $F(1, 911) = 99.34$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta 2 = 0.1$ and $F(1, 911) = 21.56$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta 2 = 0.02$, respectively (see Table 1).

Self-monitoring.

Hierarchical regressions were performed to investigate the main and interaction effects between self-monitoring and domain relevance as a predictor of verbal and nonverbal pride

expressed. In step 1, we found that domain relevant and self-monitoring explained a significant amount of variance in verbal pride expressed ($R^2 = 0.117$; $F = 60.2$, $p < .001$) and nonverbal pride expressed ($R^2 = 0.045$; $F = 21.521$, $p < .001$). For verbally expressed pride, both domain relevance ($b = -0.93$, $p < .001$) and self-monitoring ($b = 0.04$, $p = 0.007$) are significant predictors. The same main effects of domain relevance ($b = -0.415$, $p < .001$) and self-monitoring ($b = .053$, $p < 0.001$) were also found for nonverbally expressed pride. Adding the interaction term to did not add to the model for verbal pride expressed ($R^2 = 0.118$; $\Delta F = 1.43$, $p = 0.232$) or nonverbal pride expressed ($R^2 = 0.045$; $\Delta F = 0.199$, $p = 0.655$; see Table 2).

Discussion

This research aimed to replicate van Osch et al. (2019) finding of domain relevance as a moderator on pride expressed in a different culture and expand on the original study by investigating individual differences on pride inhibition. Overall, the results support the first hypothesis that people selectively suppress their verbal and nonverbal pride expression when the domain of their achievement is personally relevant to those observing their behaviors. This effect is robust and remains significant after controlling for the intensity of pride felt by participants. A main effect of self-monitoring was detected; people who score higher on the self-monitoring scale was found to exhibit more pride compare to those with lower scores, regardless of the social context. This does not support our second hypothesis, as no interaction effect between self-monitoring and domain relevance was found. In general, our research provides further support for the effect of domain relevance as an important social clue used by outperformers to regulate their pride expression cross-culturally. Interestingly, the effect size of domain relevance on verbal pride expressed is similar between the Dutch and Vietnamese samples (medium-large effect), while it is smaller for nonverbal pride expressed in the replication (small effect). This

suggests that there are more nuances in the cultural differences of verbal versus nonverbal display rules of emotions.

We also extend the line of work on pride inhibition beyond the investigation of social norms and relationship-specific motives, and into individual differences, namely self-monitoring. Contributing to the array of evidence on the status-driven motive of high self-monitors, our finding shows that high self-monitors exhibit more pride than low self-monitors regardless of social context. High self-monitors were found to express more pride than low self-monitors, even in the domain relevant condition where pride expression might incur significant social cost from their observers. This finding seems to contradict the conceptualization of self-monitoring and of extant evidence showing that high self-monitors not only are more willing but also more capable of regulating their behavioral expressions to avoid negative social evaluations.

There are two possible explanations to this finding. In outperformance situations, high self-monitors are faced with two directly opposing interests: the display of pride over an achievement in pursuit of social status, or the inhibition of pride expression to prevent negative social evaluations, both of which are proposed to be integral motives of high self-monitor. Our findings suggest that, when faced with a dilemma, high self-monitors are more motivated by status and therefore, still exhibit more pride compare to low self-monitors. However, as study into social status has shown, there are two distinct ways to achieve status, through either dominance or prestige (Cheng et al., 2013). Correspondingly, pride has also been shown to be consist of two facets: hubristic pride and authentic pride (Tracy & Robins, 2007). Conceptually, hubristic pride (pride when attributing success to one's attributes) can be judged by observers as a display of dominance, while authentic pride (pride when attributing success to one's effort) can be perceived as deserving of prestige. If aware and able to navigate this distinction between the

expression of hubristic or authentic pride, high self-monitors might be able to achieve the best of both worlds, gaining prestige while avoiding envy from their peers.

Another explanation for this result can also be drawn from the work impression management. Research into impression management has shown that there are multiple strategies one can utilize to craft and regulate their self-presentation (Jones & Pittman, 1982). It is conceivable that during situations of conflicting interest, high self-monitors are more capable of managing opposing objectives and therefore still expressing pride for self-promotion while simultaneously employing other impression management strategies in tandem such as ingratiation (flattery and performing favors) or supplication (showcasing their shortcomings) to mitigate the negative social consequences of appearing boastful and arrogant (Turnley & Bolino, 2001).

Limitations and Future Research

There are some limitations to our study. First, as we employed a self-report survey, our result might not accurately reflect how individuals will behave in real life situation, but more reflective of the expectation of culture norms. Adaptations can be made to replicate this finding in a more realistic setting, allowing for observation of actual behaviors. Second, as we employed a between-subject design, we could only draw conclusions on the motivations of self-monitoring and high self-monitors as a group. A within-subject design would allow us to investigate the difference (or lack thereof) in individual behaviors in different social contexts, providing more direct understanding into how self-monitoring can affect and predict one's behaviors. Future research can explore this aspect by looking into the variation in behaviors of high and low self-monitors in different social situations with varying degree of complexity in managing others' impressions of oneself. Moreover, research into the effectiveness and successfulness of high and

low self-monitors when employing different impression-management strategies will also shed more light onto the subject.

Conclusion

In conclusion, pride expression is sensitive not only to social clues, indicative of the social function of pride, but also to personal differences of individuals. University students reported to moderate their pride expression when their achievements were relevant to their classmates, and students who score higher on self-monitoring are more likely to express more pride regardless of social context. Overall, we can conclude that people are motivated to draw other's attention to their positive outcomes, especially high self-monitors. However, when this might lead to negative social costs, they can predict and suppress their expressions accordingly.

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Appendix A

Try to imagine yourself in the situation below. After reading the situation you will be asked several questions about your feelings and thoughts this situation brings about in you.

Domain relevance vignette

Lately, you studied very hard to pass a certain course. The students you hang out with all follow this particular course. During the semester you have been very motivated to focus on this course and several practice exams went well. Yesterday the grades for the exam were published. You were by far the best of the 50 students that follow the course. Today you are on campus again and your fellow students ask you how your exam went.

Domain nonrelevance vignette

You are a fanatic ping-pong player. Lately, you trained very hard for the student ping-pong tournament. The students you hang out with do not play ping-pong. During the semester you have been very motivated to focus on this tournament and several practice rounds went well. Yesterday you convincingly won the student ping-pong tournament. You were by far the best of the 50 students in the tournament. Today you are on campus again and your fellow students ask you how your tournament went.

Now we ask you several questions about how you would feel or behave in the situation described above. Please click on the answer of your choice.

Tables

Table 1

Dutch vs. Vietnamese sample.

Dependent variable	Covariate	Dutch sample	Vietnamese sample
Verbal pride expressed	None	$\eta^2 = 0.11$	$\eta^2 = 0.110$
	Pride experienced	$\eta^2 = 0.10$	$\eta^2 = 0.098$
Nonverbal pride expressed	None	$\eta^2 = 0.12$	$\eta^2 = 0.029$
	Pride experienced	$\eta^2 = 0.12$	$\eta^2 = 0.023$

Table 2.

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analyses.

		Verbal pride expressed	Nonverbal pride expressed
	Predictor	Beta	Beta
Step 1	Domain relevance	-.929***	-.415***
	Self-monitoring	.041**	.053***
Step 2	Domain relevance	-1.188***	-.329
	Self-monitoring	.023	.059**
	Interaction	.036	-.012

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Figures

Figure 1. Nonverbal pride expressed