

Examining identity shifting due to “double stigmatization”

 **Quang-Loc Nguyen**

SP Jain School of Global Management (New South Wales, Australia)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0495-5990>

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Systematically reinforced negative attitudes toward certain conceptions or social groups have been one of the earlier applications of the mindsponge theory in psychology. Particularly, the issues of mental health stigmatization affecting help-seeking behavior against suicidal ideation [1] and discrimination affecting radicalization and hostility [2] have been discussed in relation to information filtering mechanisms based on subjective cost-benefit judgments.

In a [recent study published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*](#) (IF 4.232; CiteScore 4.0) Jin & Wang (2022) apply the mindsponge theory to investigate the psychological process of transnational identity shifting due to stigmatization [3].

During the early stage of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese international students studying in the United States of America (US) faced stigmatization from not only Americans [4] but also from Chinese nationals upon returning to China [5]. The “double stigmatization” was further fueled by political rhetoric, extremism, and misinformation.

By interviewing 15 Chinese international students across three rounds, Jin and Wang (2022) found that due to the double stigmatization, students of all three identity clusters (homestayors, wayfarers, and navigators) embraced more individualistic values while filtering out traditional Chinese values such as nationalism, collectivism, and obedience to authority. The mindset-shifting process is explained using [the mindsponge mechanism](#) of

value filtering, incorporating subjective cost-benefit evaluation and trust functioning as information channels' gatekeepers.

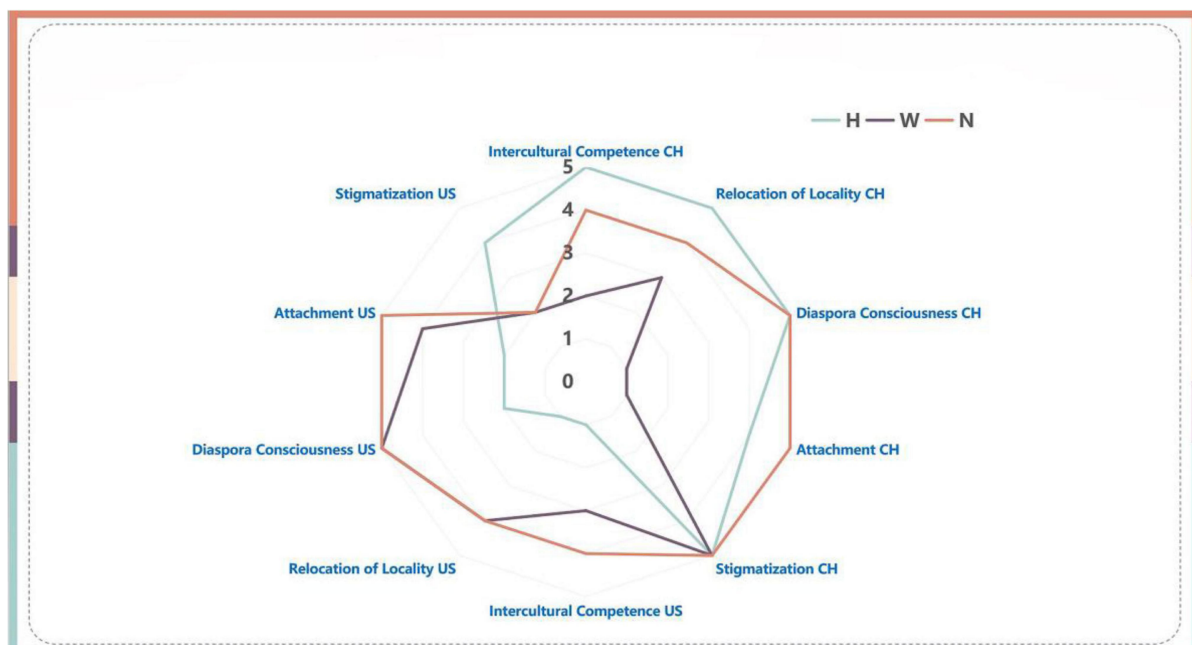


Figure: Identity shifts of the three identity clusters after the double stigmatizations (Jin & Wang, 2022) [3] (CC BY 4.0); https://www.frontiersin.org/files/Articles/1018843/fpsyg-13-1018843-HTML-r1/image_m/fpsyg-13-1018843-g004.jpg

This study is an expanded application of the mindsponge theory for studying cultural adaptations in alignment with the original conceptualization [6]. Furthermore, the study's main author – Ruining Jin – expressed that she wants to explore new ways of applying the Bayesian-Mindsponge Framework (BMF) [7] to investigate many other socio-psychological phenomena of her interest. For this purpose, Jin has recently started a collaboration with the core BMF team and is looking forward to new exciting projects in the near future.

References

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