CHAPTER TEN

3. Relation between Different Measures of Prejudice

So far we have seen that prejudice can be assessed with explicit attitude measures such as self-report questionnaires, and implicit measures such as a semantic priming task. Perhaps you are wondering how these various measures of prejudice are related. Explicit attitudes and implicit attitudes tend to be correlated, but the relationship between them is rarely strong (Dovidio et al., 1997; Fazio et al., 1995; Greenwald et al., 1998; McConnell & Leibold, 2001; von Hippel, Sekaquaptewa, & Vargas, 1997; Wittenbrink et al., 1997, 2001).

The lack of a strong correlation between these two measures suggests that they capture somewhat different aspects of prejudicial attitudes. The question, then, is: Which measure provides the better predictor of behavior—explicit attitudes or implicit attitudes? Interestingly, the answer seems to be “It depends” (see Figure 10.5). Explicit measures predict behaviors that are deliberate, conscious, or easily controlled, such as verbal behaviors, evaluations, and thoughtful judgments. In contrast, implicit measures predict behaviors that are spontaneous, unconscious, or less easily controlled, such as nonverbal behavior or snap judgments (Fazio et al., 1995; T. D. Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler, 2000).

An investigation by Dovidio and colleagues (1997, Experiment 3) illustrates these relations. In this experiment European American participants’ attitudes toward African Americans were assessed using both explicit and implicit measures. Afterward, the participants interacted with a European American and an African American interviewer. Later, the participants evaluated the interviewers and the two interviewers provided information about how the participants had behaved during the interview.

An interesting pattern of results emerged. Scores on the explicit, self-report measure predicted how the participants evaluated the two interviewers. Participants who scored high on an explicit measure of prejudice were especially apt to evaluate the African American interviewer less favorably than the European American interviewer. The implicit measure of prejudice did not predict these conscious evaluations. It did, however, predict the participants’ nonverbal behavior during the interview. Participants who scored high on implicit measures of prejudice avoided making eye

FIGURE 10.5
Relation between Different Measures of Prejudice and Different Types of Behavior

Explicit measures of racial prejudice

Deliberate, conscious, easy-to-control behaviors (e.g., verbal behavior, evaluations, and judgments)

Implicit measures of racial prejudice

Spontaneous, unconscious, difficult-to-control behaviors (e.g., snap judgments, eye contact, nonverbal behavior)