FLEXIBLE CORRECTION PROCESSES IN SOCIAL JUDGMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSUASION

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Two experiments were conducted to examine correction for perceived bias in persuasion situations. Study 1 showed that, although a manipulation of source likability had an impact on attitudes when no instruction to remove bias was present, when people were asked to remove any bias from their judgments, the effect of the source likability manipulation disappeared. The fact that the correction instruction did not increase the impact of an argument quality manipulation on attitudes suggested that effort aimed at correction is conceptually distinct from effort aimed at processing a message in general. Study 2 showed that a correction for source likability took place under low elaboration conditions—where a manipulation of source likability had an impact when no correction instructions were provided, and under high elaboration conditions—where a manipulation of source likability had no impact when no correction instructions were provided. In the high elaboration conditions, correcting for an impact that was not actually present led a dislikable source to be more influential than a likable source.

In society today, dealing with bias (both explicit and implicit) has become part of negotiating our social world. Much has been written about the nature of bias and prejudice, and research has addressed issues such as: What are the causes of prejudice? Who is most likely to show bias? Against whom is prejudice directed? Only recently have conceptual and empirical

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