

Supplemental Materials

Study Materials

Study 1a Scenario

Sophia is a junior college student studying business management. She is currently applying for management consultant summer internships. After several months of searching, recently she received an offer from a leading consulting company. Depending on performance, being a successful intern at this company could possibly lead to a full-time job offer. Because this is a leading consulting company, Sophia would like to get the return offer from this company.

Before Sophia officially starts her internship, she has to decide which one of the two teams at this company to join. Team A consists of three employees – a male team leader and two other male team members. Team B also consists of three employees – a male team leader, another male team member and a female team member. Sophia had pleasant experiences interacting with both teams during the onsite interview as well as in follow-up communications, so she is hesitant now which one of the teams she would like to join.

Study 1a Comprehension Check Questions

1. Sophia's company is a/an
Technology company
Consulting company
Investment company
Law company

2. What is the current composition of Team A?
1 male leader, 2 male members
1 male leader, 1 female member, 1 male member
1 male leader, 2 female members
Not sure

3. What is the current composition of Team B?
1 male leader, 2 male members
1 male leader, 1 female member, 1 male member
1 male leader, 2 female members
Not sure

4. Which one of the following correctly describes the scenario you just read?
Sophia is an incoming summer intern and she is now considering whether to join Team A or Team B.
Sophia is an employee and she wanted to change team and is now considering whether to switch to Team A or Team B.
Sophia is a newly promoted manager and she is now considering whether to manage Team A or Team B.
None of the above is correct.

Study 1b Scenario

Michael is a junior college student studying business management. He is currently applying for management consultant summer internships. After several months of searching, recently he received an offer from a leading consulting company. Depending on performance, being a successful intern at this company could possibly lead to a full-time job offer. Because this is a leading consulting company, Michael would like to get the return offer from this company.

Before Michael officially starts his internship, he has to decide which one of the two teams at this company to join. Team A consists of three employees – a female team leader and two other female team members. Team B also consists of three employees – a female team leader, another female team member and a male team member. Michael had pleasant experiences interacting with both teams during the onsite interview as well as in follow-up communications, so he is hesitant now which one of the teams he would like to join.

Study 2 Scenario

Control (Low Benefits) Condition

Imagine you are an attorney with 7 years of work experience at a leading law firm. Your specialized area of law practice is litigation. Recently you have been contacted by two small law firms that are interested in hiring you as one of their partners.

Law firm A concentrates practices in corporate, and has an executive team currently consisting of three partners who all specialize in corporate. Law firm A needs to fill a position on the executive team with a specialization in litigation. You will be the only partner specializing in litigation on the executive team. (However, this position has little power compared to the other partners.)

In contrast, law firm B concentrates practices in litigation, and has an executive team currently consisting of three partners who all specialize in litigation. Law firm B needs to recruit a partner specializing in litigation to the executive team to further consolidate its market share. Both law firms offered you a similar compensation package. You are now deciding which one of the firms you would like to join.

Study 4 Scenario

Imagine you are an attorney with 7 years of work experience at a leading law firm. Your specialized area of law practice is litigation. Recently you were contacted by two small law firms that were interested in hiring you as one of their partners.

Law firm A concentrates practices in corporate, and three current partners all specialize in corporate. In contrast, Law firm B concentrates practices in litigation, and three current partners all specialize in litigation. Both law firms offered you a similar compensation package. You are now deciding which one of the firms you would like to join.

Additional Analyses

Studies 1a and 1b

Table S1 and S2 report the descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables. To account for gender and age differences in these two samples, we ran OLS regressions controlling for gender and age. The effects of culture (dummy variable: China =1, US = 0) remained significant after controlling for participants' age and gender (see Table S3, Model 2 and Table S4, Model 2).

Table S1

Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations in Study 1a

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Choice of uniqueness	0.30	0.46	—					
2. Choice of uniqueness speculation	0.31	0.46	0.92***	—				
3. Agreement to the uniqueness speculation	4.39	1.71	0.69***	0.69***	—			
4. Agreement to the inclusion speculation	5.30	1.49	-0.66***	-0.69***	-0.50***	—		
5. China (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.52	0.50	0.25***	0.23***	0.20***	-0.11*	—	
6. Woman (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.57	0.50	0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.04	0.07	—
7. Age	34.62	11.72	0.04	0.03	0.01	-0.07	-0.43***	-0.01

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table S2

Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations in Study 1b

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Choice of uniqueness	0.27	0.45	—					
2. Choice of uniqueness speculation	0.27	0.45	0.97***	—				
3. Agreement to the uniqueness speculation	4.17	1.72	0.68***	0.70***	—			
4. Agreement to the inclusion speculation	5.28	1.50	-0.73***	-0.75***	-0.61***	—		
5. China (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.50	0.50	0.14**	0.15**	0.13*	-0.09	—	
6. Woman (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.50	0.50	-0.06	-0.04	0.00	0.03	0.01	—
7. Age	35.05	11.94	0.04	0.03	0.00	-0.05	-0.49***	0.00

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table S3*Regression Results in Study 1a*

	Variable	b	se	t	p
Outcome variable: uniqueness choice					
Model 1	China	0.231	0.049	4.704	< 0.001
Model 2	China	0.303	0.054	5.605	< 0.001
	Age	0.007	0.002	3.045	0.003
	Woman	-0.010	0.049	-0.205	0.838
Outcome variable: uniqueness speculation					
Model 1	China	0.212	0.050	4.254	< 0.001
Model 2	China	0.278	0.055	5.053	< 0.001
	Age	0.006	0.002	2.718	0.007
	Woman	-0.017	0.050	-0.347	0.729
Outcome variable: agreement to the uniqueness speculation					
Model 1	China	0.669	0.186	3.603	< 0.001
Model 2	China	0.861	0.206	4.178	< 0.001
	Age	0.018	0.009	2.057	0.041
	Woman	-0.108	0.187	-0.574	0.566

Table S4*Regression Results in Study 1b*

	Variable	b	se	t	p
Outcome variable: uniqueness choice					
Model 1	China	0.122	0.051	2.383	0.018
Model 2	China	0.183	0.058	3.137	0.002
	Age	0.005	0.002	2.121	0.035
	Woman	-0.054	0.051	-1.054	0.293
Outcome variable: uniqueness speculation					
Model 1	China	0.136	0.051	2.650	0.008
Model 2	China	0.197	0.058	3.378	< 0.001
	Age	0.005	0.002	2.143	0.033
	Woman	-0.040	0.051	-0.795	0.427
Outcome variable: agreement to the uniqueness speculation					
Model 1	China	0.443	0.198	2.238	0.026
Model 2	China	0.585	0.227	2.578	0.010
	Age	0.012	0.010	1.283	0.201
	Woman	-0.005	0.198	-0.026	0.979

Study 1c

Table S5 reports the descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables. To account for gender and age differences in these two samples, we ran OLS regressions controlling for gender and age. The effects of culture (dummy variable: China =1, US = 0) remained significant after controlling for participants' age and gender (see Table S6, Model 2).

Table S5

Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations in Study 1c

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Choice of uniqueness	0.48	0.50	—					
2. Choice of uniqueness speculation	0.50	0.50	0.91***	—				
3. Agreement to the uniqueness speculation	4.64	1.77	0.55***	0.60***	—			
4. Agreement to the match speculation	4.95	1.76	-0.65***	-0.67***	-0.52***	—		
5. China (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.50	0.50	0.22**	0.26***	0.12	-0.28***	—	
6. Woman (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.42	0.50	0.06	0.06	0.07	0.01	0.20**	—
7. Age	30.03	4.00	0.16*	0.17*	-0.04	-0.17*	0.47***	-0.03

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Analyses excluded three Chinese participants who did not provide information on gender and age.

Table S6

Regression Results in Study 1c

	Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome variable: uniqueness choice					
Model 1	China	0.218	0.073	2.976	0.003
Model 2	China	0.178	0.086	2.069	0.040
	Age	0.009	0.011	0.893	0.373
	Woman	0.023	0.077	0.306	0.760
Outcome variable: uniqueness speculation					
Model 1	China	0.263	0.073	3.620	< 0.001
Model 2	China	0.230	0.085	2.696	0.008
	Age	0.008	0.010	0.739	0.461
	Woman	0.020	0.076	0.258	0.797
Outcome variable: agreement to the uniqueness speculation					
Model 1	China	0.418	0.263	1.588	0.114
Model 2	China	0.598	0.307	1.948	0.053
	Age	-0.054	0.038	-1.421	0.157
	Woman	0.108	0.274	0.396	0.693

Note. Analyses excluded three Chinese participants who did not provide information on gender and age.

Study 2

Table S7 reports the descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables. To account for age and gender differences in these two samples, we ran OLS regressions controlling for gender and age. The interaction effect between culture (China vs. US) and type of uniqueness (Control vs. Low Benefits) remained significant after controlling for participants' age and gender (see Table S8, Model 2).

Table S7

Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Correlations in Study 2

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Choice of uniqueness	0.44	0.50	—				
2. Control condition (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.49	0.50	0.36***	—			
3. China (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.49	0.50	0.10**	0.00	—		
4. Woman (yes = 1, no = 0)	0.55	0.50	-0.01	0.01	0.07*	—	
5. Age	35.69	12.36	-0.05	-0.01	-0.49***	-0.06	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table S8

Regression Results in Study 2

	Variable	<i>b</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome variable: uniqueness choice					
Model 1	China	0.003	0.046	0.070	0.944
	Control	0.263	0.046	5.711	< 0.001
	China*Control	0.189	0.066	2.872	0.004
Model 2	China	0.003	0.050	0.051	0.960
	Control	0.264	0.046	5.717	< 0.001
	China*Control	0.188	0.066	2.849	0.005
	Age	-0.000	0.002	-0.158	0.874
	Woman	-0.021	0.033	-0.631	0.528

Study 3

Table S9 reports two metrics of reliability (i.e., alpha if an item is dropped and corrected item-total correlation) for the measures assessing the general preference for uniqueness and the

strategic motive for uniqueness seeking. We also ran OLS regressions controlling for gender, age and SES (see Table S10, Model 2).

Table S9

Two metrics of reliability in Study 3

Item	α if an item is dropped	Corrected item-total correlation
General preference for uniqueness		
1. I like being different from other people	0.90	0.86
2. I have a strong preference for uniqueness	0.90	0.86
3. Being a unique individual is important to me	0.91	0.84
4. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways	0.90	0.88
Strategic motive for uniqueness seeking		
1. I like being different from other people because I am attracted to the benefits that uniqueness may confer	0.89	0.84
2. I have a strong preference for uniqueness because I want to reap the benefits of being unique	0.88	0.87
3. Being a unique individual is important to me because rewards are important to me	0.91	0.79
4. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many ways because I enjoy the benefits of being unique	0.88	0.89

Table S10

Regression Results in Study 3

	Variable	b	se	t	p
Outcome variable: general preference for uniqueness					
Model 1	China	-0.239	0.135	-1.769	0.078
Model 2	China	-0.171	0.157	-1.092	0.276
	Age	0.006	0.007	0.895	0.372
	Woman	0.060	0.139	0.435	0.664
	SES	0.102	0.043	2.400	0.017
Outcome variable: strategic motive for uniqueness seeking					
Model 1	China	0.669	0.146	4.574	< 0.001
Model 2	China	0.689	0.171	4.038	< 0.001
	Age	0.002	0.008	0.217	0.829
	Woman	0.021	0.151	0.137	0.892
	SES	0.087	0.046	1.885	0.060

Study 4

We conducted regression analysis to examine group differences in two outcome measures, controlling for gender, age and SES (see Table S11). We also conducted additional mediation analysis to examine the mediating effects of the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between group and uniqueness choice, controlling for gender, age, SES and the general preference for uniqueness (see Table S12). Results were generally robust with these controls. However, within-cultural group differences appeared to be smaller than cross-cultural group differences.

Table S11

Regression Results in Study 4

Cross-cultural comparison												
Variable	US general population vs. Chinese general population						US students at a selective university vs. Chinese students at a selective university					
	Uniqueness choice			Agreement to the uniqueness speculation			Uniqueness choice			Agreement to the uniqueness speculation		
	b	se	p	b	se	p	b	se	p	b	se	p
China	0.26	0.06	<.001	1.49	0.27	<.001	0.21	0.07	.002	1.13	0.26	<.001
Age	-0.00	0.00	.955	-0.00	0.01	.705	0.01	0.00	.018	0.01	0.02	.718
Woman	0.01	0.05	.824	-0.09	0.22	.691	-0.11	0.04	.012	-0.07	0.17	.673
SES	0.03	0.02	.105	0.02	0.07	.743	-0.01	0.01	.370	-0.09	0.06	.105
Within-cultural comparison												
Variable	US general population vs. US students at a selective university						Chinese general population vs. Chinese students at a selective university					
	Uniqueness choice			Agreement to the uniqueness speculation			Uniqueness choice			Agreement to the uniqueness speculation		
	b	se	p	b	se	p	b	se	p	b	se	p
Student	0.12	0.07	.103	0.79	0.30	.009	0.09	0.07	.177	0.44	0.26	.089
Age	0.00	0.00	.808	-0.00	0.01	.853	0.01	0.00	.027	0.01	0.02	.727
Woman	-0.08	0.04	.047	-0.18	0.17	.303	-0.03	0.06	.627	0.10	0.22	.663
SES	-0.00	0.01	.941	-0.04	0.05	.402	0.01	0.02	.713	-0.06	0.08	.464

Table S12

Indirect effects of the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between group and uniqueness choice in Study 4

Cross-cultural comparison	b	SE	95% CI
US general population (= 0) vs. Chinese general population (= 1)	0.18	0.09	[0.04, 0.39]

US students at a selective university (= 0) vs. Chinese students at a selective university (= 1)	0.13	0.06	[0.03, 0.28]
Within-cultural comparison	b	SE	95% CI
US general population (= 0) vs. US students at a selective university (= 1)	-0.06	0.05	[-0.18, 0.03]
Chinese general population (= 0) vs. Chinese students at a selective university (= 1)	0.11	0.09	[-0.04, 0.31]

Note. Indirect effects with confidence intervals that exclude zero are statistically significant.

Study 5

We conducted regression analysis to examine cultural differences in two outcome measures, controlling for gender and age (see Table S13).

Table S13

Regression Results in Study 5

Variable	US vs. China					
	Uniqueness choice			Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
China	0.36	0.05	<.001	1.05	0.18	<.001
Age	0.00	0.00	.784	-0.00	0.01	.688
Woman	-0.00	0.05	.884	-0.09	0.15	.541

We also examined whether individual differences in uniqueness seeking behavior in situations where being unique may confer material and social benefits can be explained by individual differences in the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking resulting in part from individual differences in the need for power, power distance orientation, trait competitiveness, upward social comparison and general zero-sum beliefs. To do so, we ran mediation analyses using Model 4 of Hayes' PROCESS macro, with each of the five potential antecedents as the independent variable, respectively, strategic motive for uniqueness seeking as the mediator, each of the two outcome measures as the dependent variable, respectively, and culture, gender and age as the control variables (see Figure S1 for a general theoretical model). Results revealed that individual differences in uniqueness seeking behavior in situations where being unique may confer material and social benefits can be driven in part by individual differences in the need for

power, power distance orientation, trait competitiveness and upward social comparison through the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking (see Table S14). However, as shown in Table 9 (in the main text), individuals' trait competitiveness was not found to be correlated with their uniqueness choice or likelihood of joining the firm consisting of dissimilar others for US participants even at the 10% significance level. Thus, the role of trait competitiveness as an individual antecedent of strategic uniqueness seeking was not confirmed.

Figure S1

Study 5 mediation model

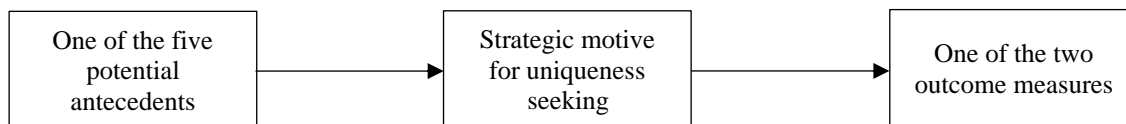


Table S14

Indirect effects of the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between five potential antecedents and two outcome measures in Study 5

Antecedent	Outcome measure	b	SE	95% CI
Need for power	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.41	0.10	[0.26, 0.62]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.16	0.03	[0.09, 0.23]
Power distance orientation	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.19	0.08	[0.04, 0.37]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.07	0.03	[0.01, 0.13]
Trait competitiveness	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.27	0.08	[0.13, 0.46]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.10	0.03	[0.05, 0.16]
Upward social comparison	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.29	0.08	[0.15, 0.47]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.11	0.03	[0.06, 0.17]
General zero-sum beliefs	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.06	0.09	[-0.10, 0.24]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.02	0.03	[-0.04, 0.09]

Note. Indirect effects with confidence intervals that exclude zero are statistically significant.

In addition, we conducted additional serial mediation analyses to examine the serial mediating effects of the five potential antecedents leading sequentially to the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between culture and two outcome measures, controlling for gender and age (see Table S15). Results were consistent with those without control variables.

Table S15

Indirect effects of five potential antecedents serially with the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between culture and two outcome measures in Study 5

Antecedent	Outcome measure	b	SE	95% CI
Need for power	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.29	0.10	[0.13, 0.54]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.11	0.04	[0.05, 0.19]
Power distance orientation	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.23	0.10	[0.05, 0.46]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.09	0.04	[0.02, 0.16]
Trait competitiveness	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.23	0.08	[0.10, 0.42]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.09	0.03	[0.04, 0.15]
Upward social comparison	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.12	0.06	[0.03, 0.26]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.05	0.02	[0.01, 0.09]
General zero-sum beliefs	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	-0.02	0.03	[-0.10, 0.03]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	-0.01	0.01	[-0.04, 0.01]

Note. Indirect effects with confidence intervals that exclude zero are statistically significant.

Finally, we tested for simultaneous serial mediating effects of the four antecedents leading sequentially to the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between culture and two outcome measures, controlling for gender and age (see Table S16). Results were also consistent with those without control variables.

Table S16

Indirect effects of four antecedents serially with the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between culture and two outcome measures in Study 5

Antecedent	Outcome measure	b	SE	95% CI
Need for power	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.23	0.10	[0.09, 0.46]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.09	0.03	[0.03, 0.16]
Trait competitiveness	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.06	0.07	[-0.07, 0.20]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.02	0.02	[-0.02, 0.07]
Power distance orientation	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.04	0.12	[-0.21, 0.24]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.01	0.04	[-0.08, 0.08]
Upward social comparison	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.05	0.04	[-0.02, 0.15]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.02	0.02	[-0.01, 0.05]

Note. Indirect effects with confidence intervals that exclude zero are statistically significant. Need for power, power distance orientation, trait competitiveness, and upward social comparison are entered as simultaneous mediators.

Study 6

We conducted regression analysis to examine group differences in two outcome measures (see Table S17). Results were consistent with those without control variables.

Table S17*Regression Results in Study 6*

Variable	Control vs. Strategic motive for uniqueness seeking					
	Uniqueness choice			Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
Condition – strategic motive for uniqueness seeking	0.13	0.03	<.001	0.26	0.11	.019
Age	-0.00	0.00	.793	-0.01	0.00	.051
Woman	-0.09	0.03	.007	-0.23	0.11	.044

Study 7

We conducted regression analysis to examine group differences in two outcome measures, controlling for gender and age (see Table S18), and additional mediation analyses to examine the mediating effects of the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between group and two outcome measures, controlling for gender and age (see Table S19).

Results were consistent with those without control variables.

Table S18*Regression Results in Study 7*

Control vs. High need for power						
Variable	Uniqueness choice			Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
Condition – High NFP	0.16	0.04	<.001	0.41	0.14	.005
Age	-0.00	0.00	.897	0.00	0.01	.852
Woman	0.06	0.04	.158	0.08	0.14	.573
Control vs. High power distance orientation						
Variable	Uniqueness choice			Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
Condition – High PDO	0.16	0.04	<.001	0.40	0.14	.004
Age	-0.00	0.00	.534	-0.00	0.01	.640
Woman	-0.02	0.04	.627	-0.16	0.14	.265
Control vs. High upward social comparison						
Variable	Uniqueness choice			Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
Condition – High USC	0.00	0.04	.927	0.11	0.14	.425
Age	-0.00	0.00	.048	-0.01	0.01	.259
Woman	0.02	0.04	.681	-0.06	0.14	.665

Table S19

Indirect effects of the strategic motive for uniqueness seeking on the relationship between condition and two outcome measures in Study 7

Comparison	Outcome measure	b	SE	95% CI
High need for power (1) vs. control (0)	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.28	0.09	[0.14, 0.47]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.15	0.05	[0.07, 0.25]
High power distance orientation (1) vs. control (0)	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.16	0.07	[0.03, 0.32]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.10	0.04	[0.02, 0.18]
High upward social comparison (1) vs. control (0)	Uniqueness choice (Dichotomous)	0.09	0.05	[0.01, 0.22]
	Likelihood of choosing uniqueness option	0.06	0.03	[0.00, 0.12]

Note. Indirect effects with confidence intervals that exclude zero are statistically significant.