Attribution of Discrimination to the Self in Racial Minorities and Adolescent Females

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Background

Discrimination among marginalized groups has been shown to affect individuals' view of themselves.

- Black athletes demonstrated lower self-esteem than their majority counterparts (Strehlow et al., 2021).
- Minoritized individuals in the classroom have shown lower feelings of self-efficacy than majority classmates (Rivera, 2021).
- Women tend to have lower achievement-motivation and feelings of self-efficacy than their male counterparts, as shown by inclusion in STEM fields (Yang & Gao, 2019).

Objective: this study seeks to observe self-attribution rates in minoritized groups, specifically in people of color and adolescent females.
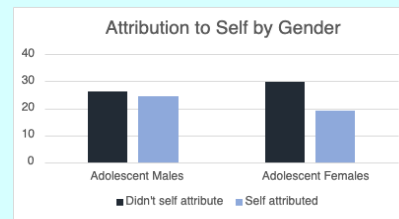
Sample

Subsample consisted of respondents who chose the "other" option when elaborating on discrimination. There were 167 other attributions and 74 cases of self-attribution. The subsample consisted of 82 females, 85 males, 77 white participants, 30 Latinx participants, 38 Black Participants, 11 biracial participants, and 11 participants who identified as another racial/ethnic identity (ex: Alaska Native or Pacific Islander).
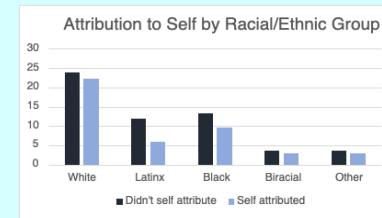
Methods

Procedures:

- Survey data from the larger study asked adolescents (grades 9 to 12) if they had experienced discrimination.
- Respondents were able to rate discrimination on a scale of 1 (never) to 4 (often).
- Those who experienced discrimination had the opportunity to select from 6 options, as sources of the experienced discrimination.
- One option was to select an "other response" in which respondents wrote why they experienced discrimination.
- Two researchers analyzed "other responses" independently and agreed on 9 emerging themes.
- Themes included: none, not sure, attribution to self, disability, attribution to other, physical appearance, past/background, social status, and normalize.
- The researchers independently recoded the data with the agreed themes and reached 93.5% agreement. Disagreements were discussed until 100% agreement was reached.
- The researchers decided to focus on the other response of "attribution to the self" for this study because the largest number of respondents (44%) fell under this category.
- Attribution to self includes the individuals' classification of discrimination as a result of their own character.

Results and Discussion

Pictured above: a word cloud of individuals' self-attributed responses to the "other" response option.

Attribution to Self by Gender

- White respondents were found to attribute to the self somewhat more than any other racial/ethnic group, X^2 (4, 167) = 1.970, p = 0.74.
- Adolescent males were found to attribute to the self somewhat more frequently than adolescent females, X^2 (1, 167) = 1.439, p = 0.23.

Attribution to Self by Racial/Ethnic Group

- Adolescent males were significantly more likely to attribute to the self than adolescent females. See table for results.
- However, no ethnic/racial group was significantly more likely to attribute to the self than another.
- Given past research, this was unexpected.

Logistic Regression

Parameter	DF	Estimate	Standard Error	Wald Chi Square	PR>ChiSq
Intercept	1	0.4857	0.4357	1.2426	0.265
Race/Ethnicity	1	-0.2693	0.1844	2.1339	0.1441
Gender 0	**1**	**-1.3133**	**0.6274**	**4.3821**	**0.0363**
Depression Index 0	1	0.4478	0.258	3.0127	0.0826

Discussion:

- Because this study only focused on the "other" responses in the survey, the sample was limited to 167 cases rather than the 395 participants included in the full study.
- This study was underpowered due to sample size limitations, meaning it could only detect large difference effects. This may be why unexpected findings were observed.
- In addition, the population included in the study was disproportionately white which could affect the power to detect differences.