

Effects of Attribution Style on Learned Helplessness Essay

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The reformulated learned helplessness model incorporates the attribution theory, to state an individual's perceived internal or external control of events affects the expectancy of future outcomes. Internal versus external control, refers to the degree to which a person expects a reinforcement or outcome of an event, is contingent upon their behavior or personal characterizes versus expecting the outcome to be a function of chance or fate, being under the control of others, or utterly unpredictable (Rotter, 1966). [Learned helplessness](#) occurs when an individual perceives the future outcome of a situation as uncontrollable, resulting in motivational, cognitive, and emotional deficits (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978).

According to the reformulated learned helplessness hypothesis, there are three dimensions of attribution: internal or external to the self, universal or specific, and stable or unstable across time (Abramson, et al., 1978; Roth, 1980; Weiner, Nierenberg, & Goldstein, 1976). These dimensions interact and are responsible for the different aspects of an individual's expectations for probable outcomes of future performances. A person who attributes causes to external factors perceives outcomes as being a result of factors within the environment such as fate, chance, or luck. Individuals who predominately

attribute external factors to outcomes possess an external attribution style (Rotter, 1966). A person who attributes causes to internal factors perceives outcomes are a result of their own actions, skills, or characteristics within themselves. Individuals who predominately attribute internal factors to outcomes possess an internal attribution style (Rotter, 1966). Attributing uncontrollability of future outcomes t...

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