

Mood Influence On The Fundamental Attribution Error



Dave Prisco

Diane Woyciechowski

La Salle University

Dr. Moon



Hypothesis

Our hypothesis is that **positive** mood induction will *increase* the fundamental attribution error, while **negative** mood induction will *decrease* the occurrence of the fundamental attribution error.

Literature Review

- **Mood Induction:** Could mood state affect risk-taking decisions? *Yuen, Kenneth & Lee, Tatia M. C.(2003)*
 - This article used happy, sad, and neutral movie clips to induce mood.
 - Each participant was then asked to take the *Choice Dilemmas Questionnaire*.
 - The results show that the mood induction technique was effective.
 - We will utilize the same measure only alter it slightly:
 - We will induce a positive and negative mood as opposed to a happy and sad mood.
 - We will use different video clips:
 - For the positive mood we will use a clip from *Seinfeld*
 - For the negative mood we will use a clip from *City of Angels*



Lit Review Cont.

■ Possible Confounding variables:

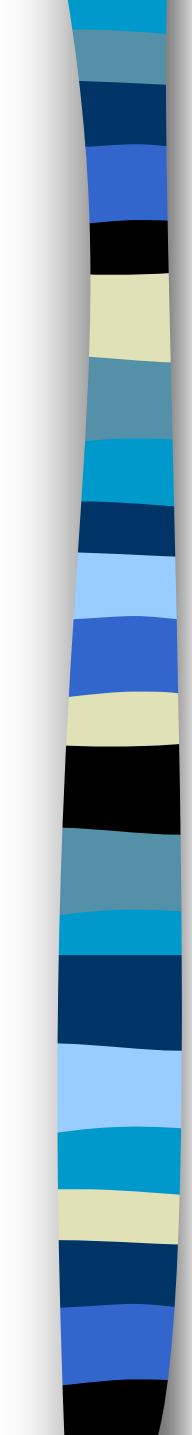
Attributions and Emotions: The Impact of Situation and Person Factors, Gomez-Lopez (2001)

- Found that in higher controlled settings, participants reported higher internal and lower external attributions.
 - We must keep in mind that in our controlled setting, participants naturally report higher internal attributions.
 - Therefore, we should have a baseline to determine natural attribution style prior to our mood induction
- Found that females report less external and a trend for more internal attributions than males.
 - Therefore, when researching the influence of mood on attributions, an equal number of males and females should be randomly assigned to each condition.

Lit Review Cont.

- **Target Article:** On Being Happy and Mistaken: Mood Effects on the Fundamental Attribution Error. *Forgas (1998)*
 - Study: Mood's (positive & negative) effect on the fundamental attribution error
 - Conclusions: Mood induction was successful. Negative moods decrease and positive moods increase the occurrence of the fundamental attribution error.
 - Limitation: No baseline for determining natural attribution style
- *Our experimental design allows us to test both the success of our mood induction, as well as a change in attribution style.

Procedure

- 
- Pre-Exposure Tasks:
 - Consent Form
 - Demographic Form
 - Fundamental Attribution Error (FAE) Measure 1
 - Stimulus:
 - Video Clips (Mood Induction)
 - Positive: *Seinfeld*
 - Negative: *City of Angels*
 - **Groups will be randomly assigned***
 - Post-Exposure Tasks:
 - FAE Measure 2
 - Differential Emotional Scale (DES)
 - Debriefing



In Conclusion...

- We have added a baseline to our experiment in order to observe a change in attribution style due to mood.
- We have two mood conditions (positive and negative)
- We are using the terms “positive” and “negative” instead of “happy” and “sad”
- Participants will be randomly assigned between the two conditions.
- An equal number of males and females will be placed in each group to eliminate gender as a possible confounding variable.