

Poverty Attribution as Additional Pathway in Predicting the Reaction of Disadvantaged Groups and Persons to Inequality and Injustice

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ABSTRACT The literature on collective action focuses on instrumental and affective antecedents. However, recent studies showed that these contribute insignificant variance to action, indicating that there are other factors meriting attention. Using an integrated Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT), Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Five Stage Model framework (FSM), this study showed how disadvantaged group members' responses to deprivation proceeded as predicted by the FSM from acceptance to collective action mediated by their poverty attributions. In a survey with a sample of 383 research subjects, the study showed that respondents' patterns of poverty attribution shaped their 'predisposition to act' and the type of action taken. When respondents attributed poverty to individual or fatalistic factors they adopted individual action, whereas when attributions were structural, responses were collective. Paucity of action when structural attribution predominated was due to dual consciousness. It was recommended that attribution analysis be extended to enhancing micro-mobilization against hegemonic forces.