

Elements of Attribution

Part A.

Read the following information carefully. Use this information to complete part B.

Leyla had an accident on the way to school. She hit the car in front of her when approaching a traffic signal. The road was slippery because of a light rain falling. Although no one was hurt, the accident caused hundreds of dollars worth of damage to her car and the car in front of her.

Antecedent—Leyla obtained her license only three weeks before. This was her second accident. It was a rainy day.

Attribution—Leyla's inexperience led her to misjudge the distance between her car and the one in front of her.

Consequences—Leyla's insurance rates will most likely climb. Her parents will restrict her driving privileges, and her friends will make sarcastic remarks about her driving.

Person attribution—Leyla was at fault because she is not a very good driver.

Situation attribution—The weather conditions caused Leyla's car to hit the car in front of hers.

Fundamental attribution error—Leyla believed the weather was responsible for her accident, while others believed her poor driving and inattention were to blame.

Part B.

Define each of the following terms.

1. Antecedent - Information about the person or situation prior to the current circumstance
2. Attribution - The cause of the action
3. Consequences - The response to the person based upon the attribution made
4. Person attribution - blaming the person's character for the action
5. Situation attribution - blaming external factor ^{or} ~~for~~ unforeseen ~~or~~ circumstances for the action
6. Fundamental attribution error - The person involved in the matter blames external factors while others blame the person involved

Application of the Attribution Theory

Read the situation, and answer the questions that follow.

Lucinda and her friends planned to go to the movies. Lucinda offered to drive her two friends to the theater, which was in the next town. The movie started at 8:05 P.M. Her friends lived a few miles apart from each other, and the movie theater was about five miles from their town. They arrived at the theater at 8:15 P.M. The road to the other town was under construction.

1. What are the possible antecedents?
2. What attribution could be ascribed?
3. What are the possible consequences of the sequence of actions?
4. What is the person attribution?
5. What is the situation attribution?
6. How could the fundamental attribution error operate in this situation?