

Quantitative measures of perceived inequality and causal attributions

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POLINEQUAL
The Politicisation of Economic Inequality

UGA
Université
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My research over the last 6 years (in variables)

Social
Representations

Prejudice
towards
people in
poverty

Social
Dominance
Orientation

Believe
in a Just
World

Solidarity
and helping
behaviour

System-
justification

Perception
of economic
inequality

Moral Outrage
and other
emotions

Poverty
Attributions

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Why don't we see more of a political response to high inequality?

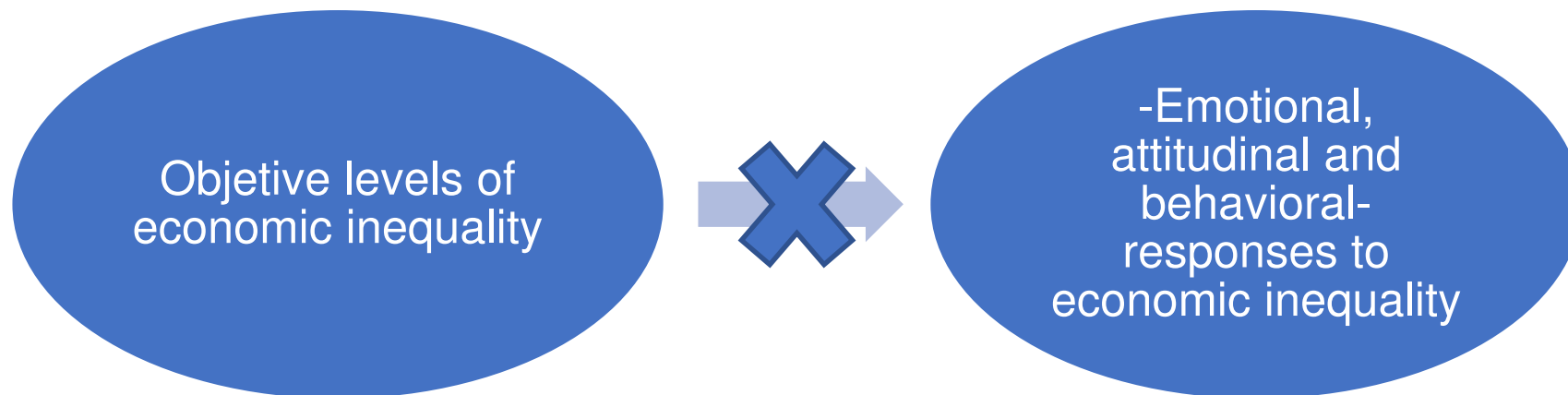
Why are redistributive policies often not widely supported?

Why are people not acting to reduce economic inequality?

How can the passivity, inaction or indifference of societies in the face of inequality be explained?

Understanding responses to economic inequality

Research has showed there is no direct relationship between economic inequality and pressures towards redistribution (Bellani et al., 2021; Castillo, 2012; Cruces & Tetaz, 2009; Gimpelson & Triesman, 2015; Hauser & Norton, 2017; Niehues, 2014)...



Understanding responses to economic inequality

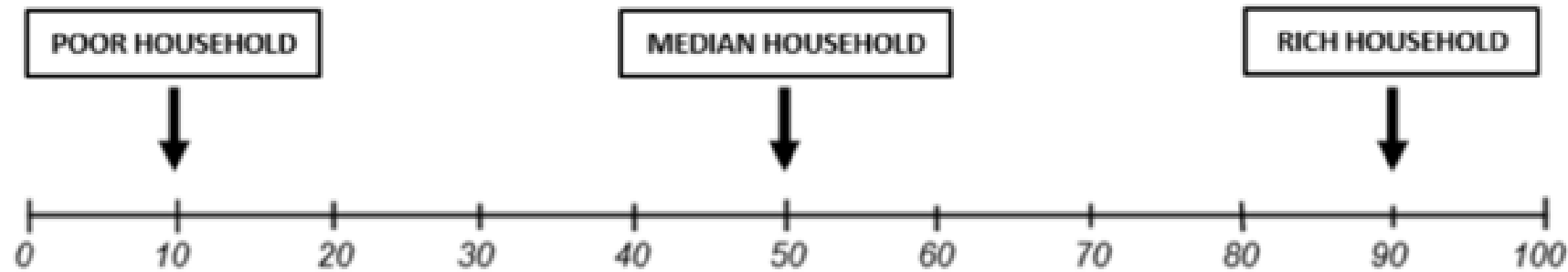
On perception of inequality, scholars proved that:

- People who perceive inequality being large will demand more redistribution than those who believe that economic differences are smaller (Arsenio, 2018; Bastias et al., 2019; Bobzien, 2020; Choi, 2019; García-Sánchez et al., 2018; Gimpelson and Treisman, 2018; Norton & Ariely, 2011).
- “More over, inequality perceptions are not the predictor of support for redistribution than perceptions, evaluations, expectations—in short, the psyche—of the individual” (Dahl, 1971, 95).
objective macro-economic conditions (Bellani et al., 2021; Cruces & Tetaz, 2009; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2015; Mauser & Norton, 2017; Niehues, 2014).



Imagine a ten-step scale with households ranked from the poorest (at the far left) to the richest (at the far right). Now, please give us your best estimations for the monthly income (after taxes) of the three households identified in this graph: Poor household (10%), Median household (50%), and Rich household (90%).

How can these



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er? What do

Wealthy	<input type="text" value="0"/>	people
Very wealthy	<input type="text" value="0"/>	people
Total	<input type="text" value="0"/>	people

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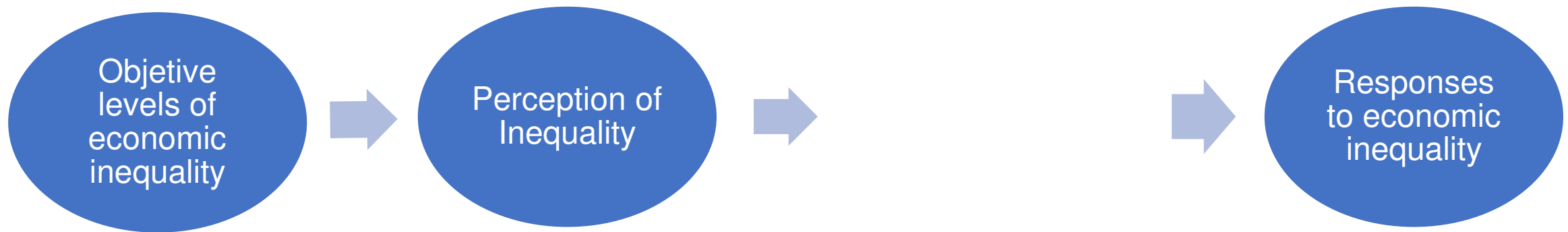
Imagine a ten-step scale with households ranked from the poorest (at the far left) to the richest (at the far right). Now, please give us your best estimations for the monthly income (after taxes) of the three households identified in this graph: Poor household (10%), Median household (50%), and Rich household (90%).

<p>Type A Argentina is a society with a small elite at the highest level, very few people in the middle and the great mass of people in the lowest level.</p>	<p>Type B Argentina is a society with a small elite at the highest level, more people in the middle and most people at the lowest level.</p>	<p>Type C Argentina is a society except that only a few people are at the bottom.</p>	<p>Type D Argentina is a society with most people in the middle.</p>	<p>Type E Argentina is a society with many people near the highest level and only a few near the lowest level.</p>
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(Sprong et al.,

Understanding responses to economic inequality

What other factors could mediate or moderate the relationship between objective inequality and social demands?



Mechanisms that justify/legitimize inequality

TABLE 1
System-Justifying Ideologies, Their Descriptive Contents, and Illustrative References

Ideology	Descriptive Content	Sample illustrative reference(s)
Protestant work ethic	People have a moral responsibility to work hard and avoid leisure activities; hard work is a virtue and is its own reward.	Jost & Hunyady (2002)
Meritocratic ideology	The system rewards individual ability and motivation, so success is an indicator of personal deservingness.	Jost, Pelham, et al. (2003)
Fair market ideology	Market-based procedures and outcomes are not only efficient but are inherently fair, legitimate, and just.	Jost, Blount, et al. (2003)
Economic system justification	Economic inequality is natural, inevitable, and legitimate; economic outcomes are fair and deserved.	Jost & Thompson (2000)
Belief in a just world	People typically get what they deserve and deserve what they get; with regard to outcomes, what “is” is what “ought” to be.	Jost & Burgess (2000); Lerner (1980)
Power distance	Inequality is a natural and desirable feature of the social order; large power differences are acceptable and legitimate.	Jost, Blount, et al. (2003)
Social dominance orientation	Some groups are superior to others; group-based hierarchy is a good thing.	Jost & Thompson (2000); Sidanius & Pratto (1999)
Opposition to equality	Increased social and economic equality is unattainable and undesirable; it would be detrimental for society.	Jost & Thompson (2000); Kluegel & Smith (1986)
Right-wing authoritarianism	People should follow conventional traditions and established authorities and stop getting rebellious ideas.	Altemeyer (1998); Jost, Glaser, et al. (2003)
Political conservatism	Traditional institutions in society should be preserved;	Jost, Glaser, et al. (2003)

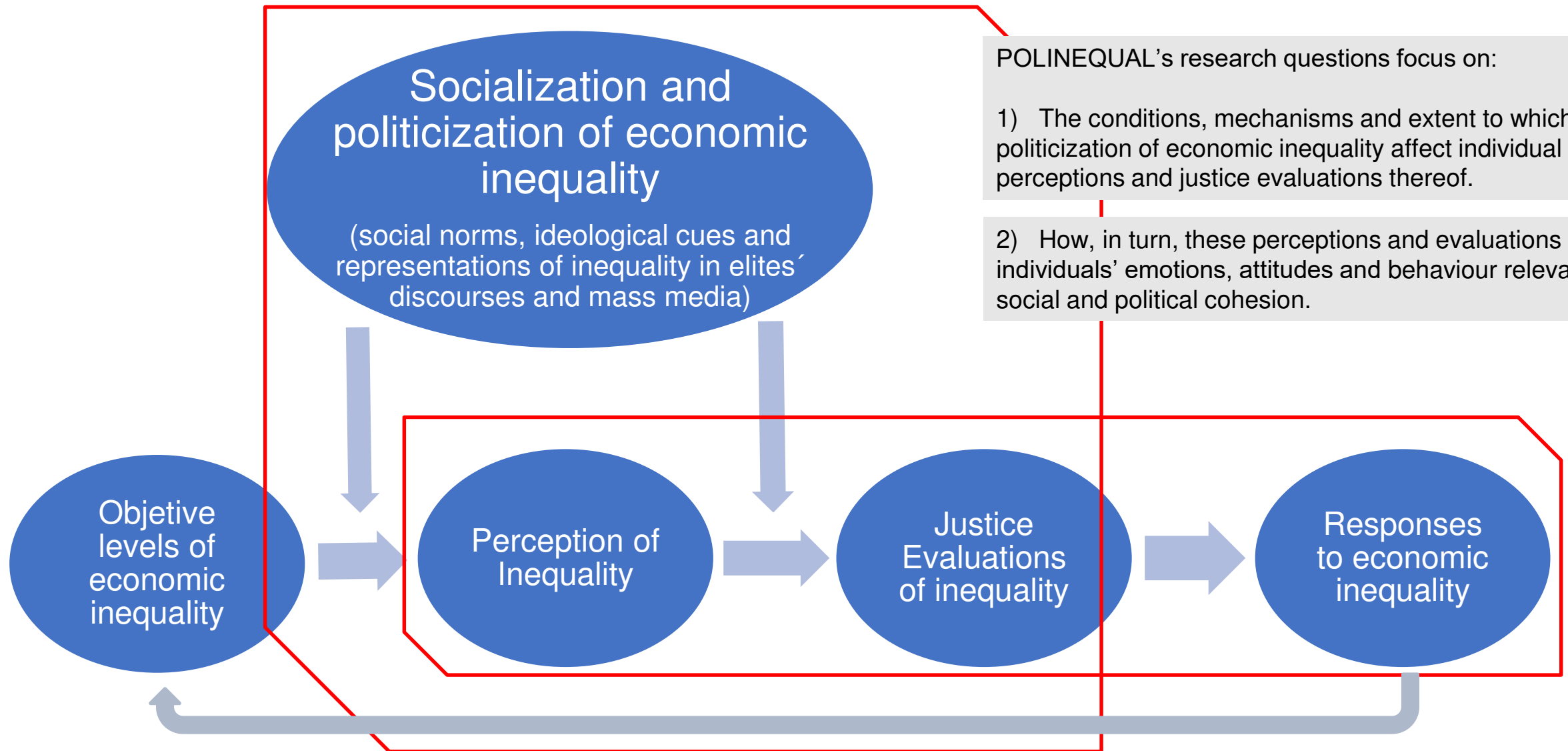
Believe in a

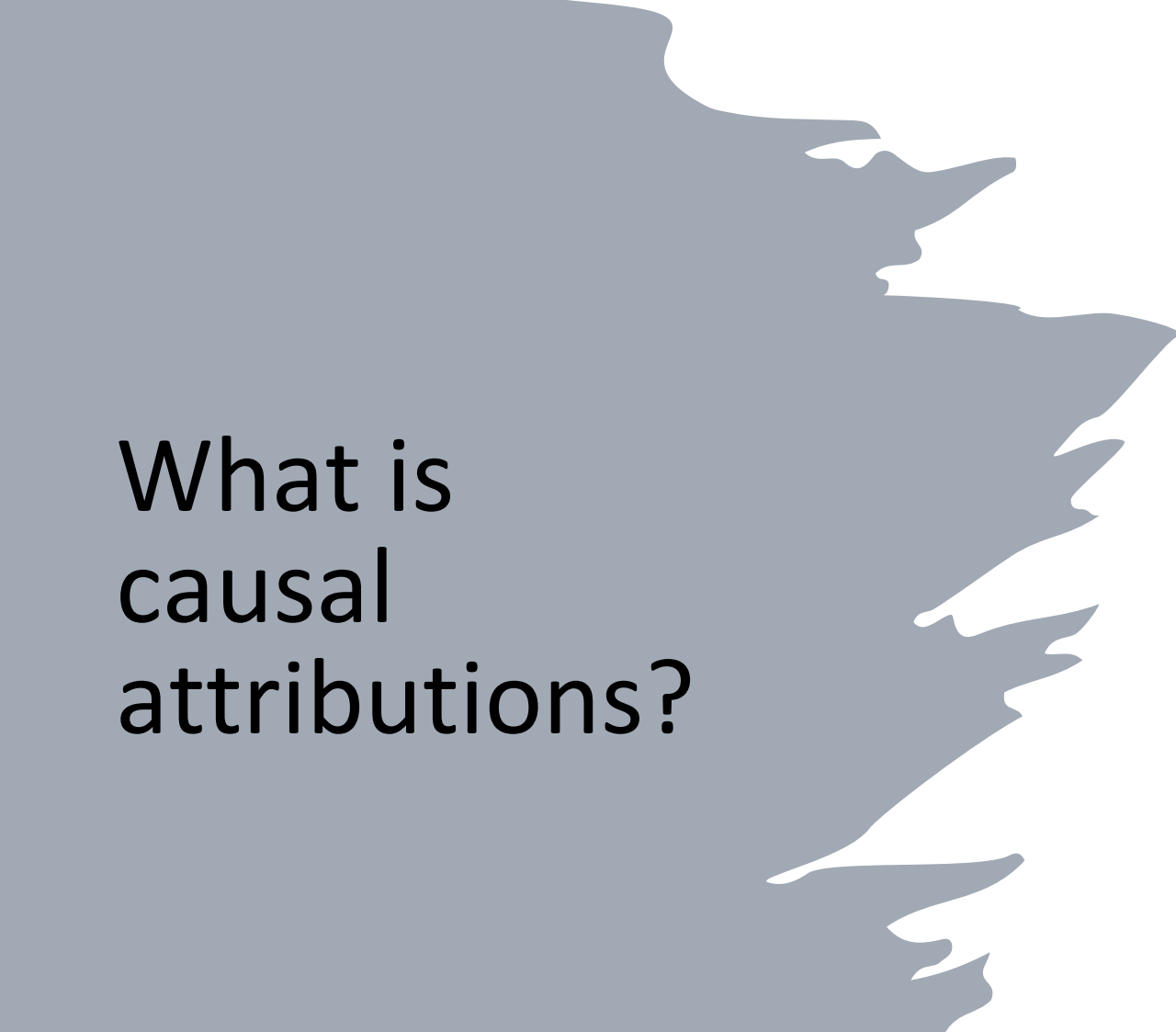
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Understanding responses to economic inequality





What is causal attributions?

Causal attribution is the process whereby people assign causes to events, situations or -own and others'-behavior.

Attribution Theory (Heider, 1958)

Attribution Theory on achievement (Weiner, 1972, 1980)

Poverty Attributions (Feagin, 1972)

The discourse that the wealth of millionaires is the result of talent, innovation and hard work dominates the world (Southwood, 2017), as well as the belief that poverty is a consequence of a lack of effort or will (Gonzalez & Lay, 2017).

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN ATTRIBUTIONS: How students from different academic training area explain poverty (Bastias et al., 2019).

RELATIONSHIP AMONG ATTRIBUTIONS-EMOTIONS-HELPING BEHAVIOUR/POLICIES SUPPORT: Analysis of correlations and causal relationships (Yúdica, Bastias & Etchezahar, 2021; Bastias et al., 2021).

POVERTY ATTRIBUTIONS AND SOLIDARITY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC (Bastias, Rothers, & Goldstein, in prep.)

QUALITATIVE STUDY OF GLOBAL INEQUALITY ATTRIBUTIONS
(Peter et al., in prep.)

QUANTITATIVE MEASURES OF POVERTY ATTRIBUTIONS

Studies on
attributions

Fifty years of poverty attributions: A review

A search of articles published in the period of 1970-2021 was carried out using different search engines

(APA PsycArticles, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, APA PsycInfo, PSYINDEX Literature with PSYINDEX Tests, Google Scholar).

Search date: June 2021.

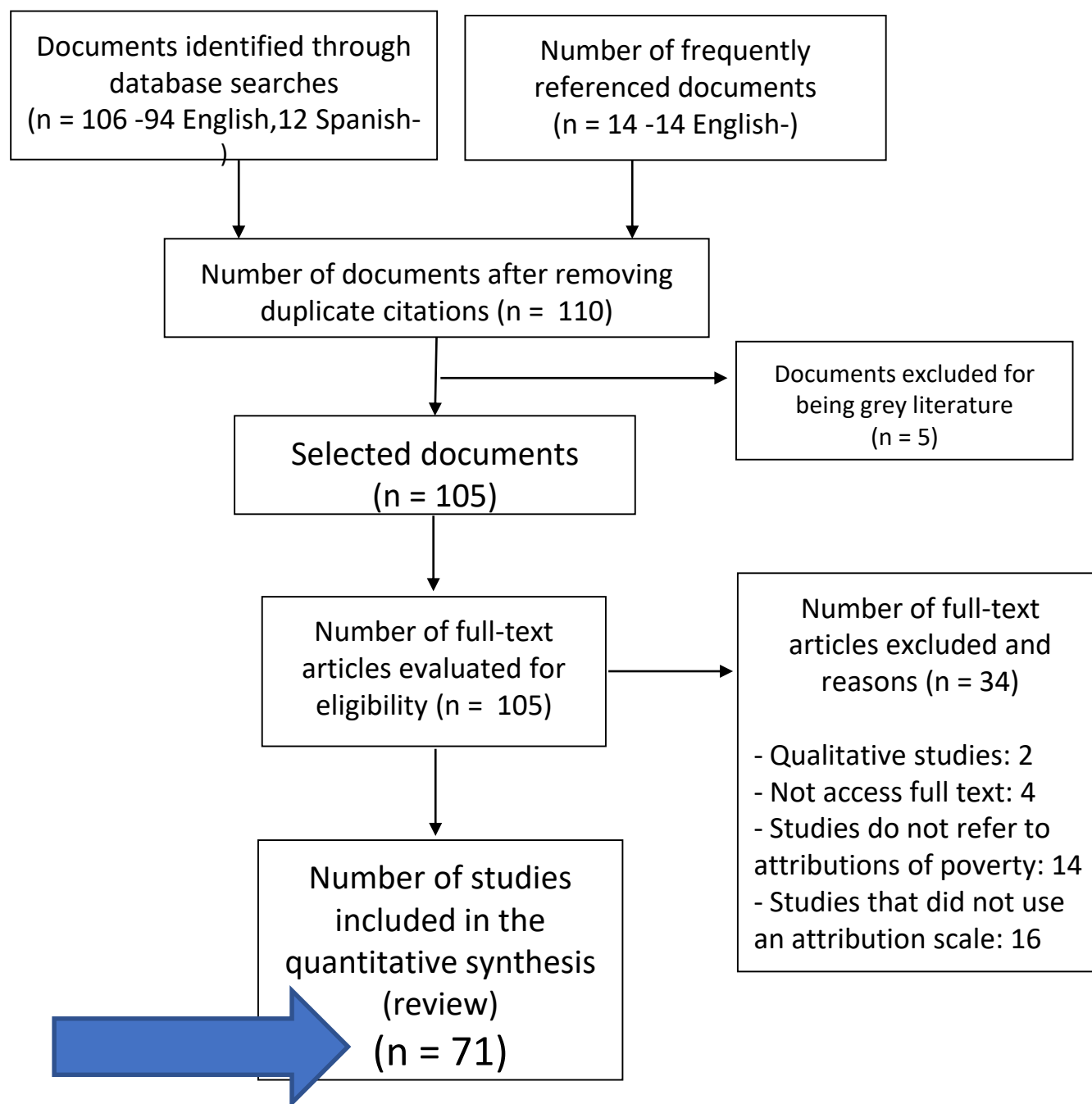
Filter: 1970-2021 / keywords in the article's title.

Keywords and combinations:

1. poor AND attributions;
2. poverty AND attributions;
3. pobres AND atribuciones;
4. pobreza AND atribuciones.

Flowchart (PRISMA Group, 2009)

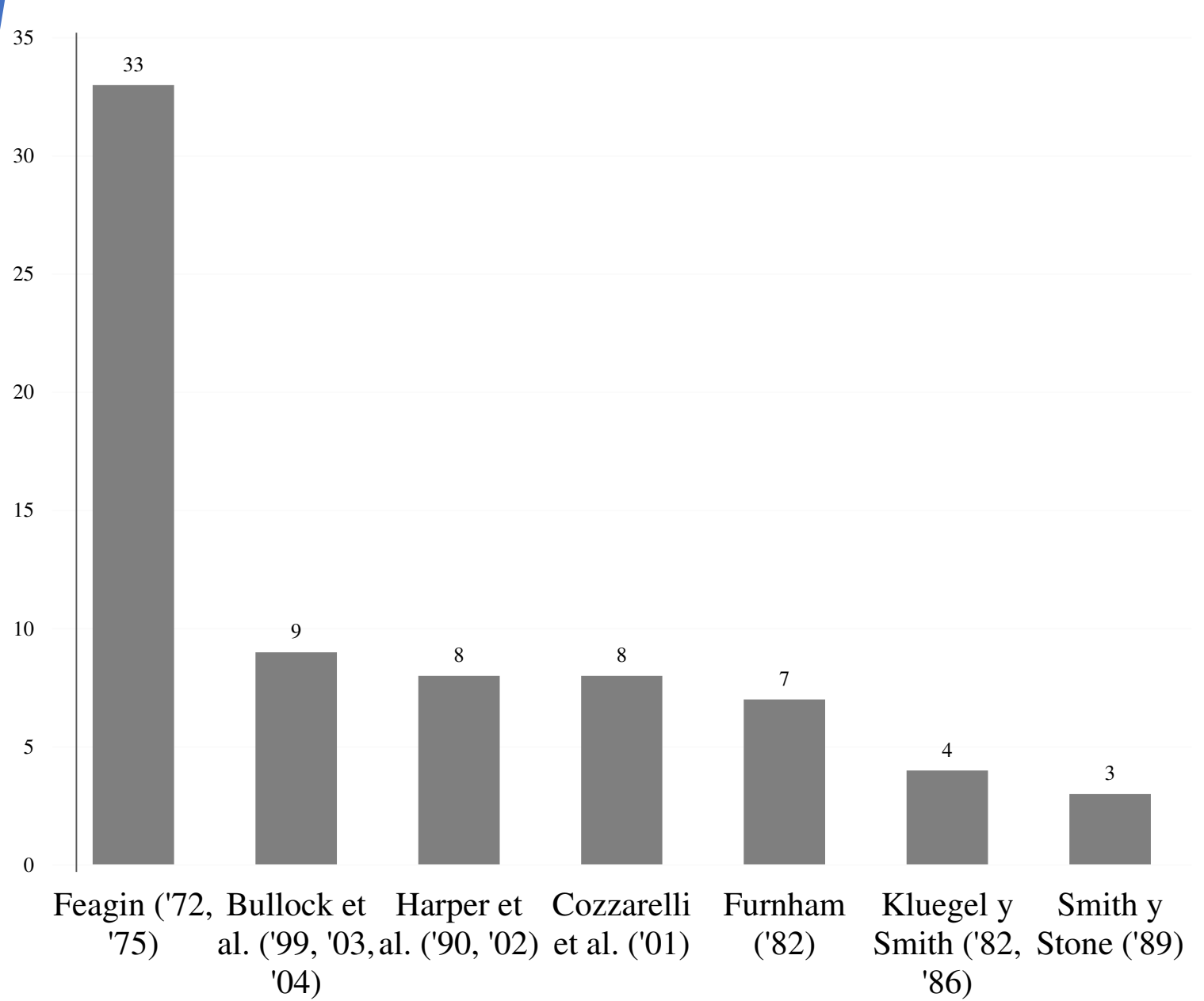
Identification
Selection
Suitability
Inclusion

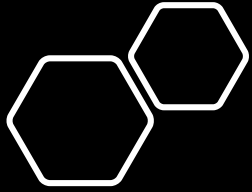


Nº	Authors	Participants from	Sample	Based on	Number of items	Scale dimensions
1	Abouchedid y Nasser (2001)	Lebanon	232 university students	Feagin (1972; 1975)	15 ítems, 1-5 (disagree - agree)	Structural ($\alpha=.68$), Individual ($\alpha=.64$), Fatalistic ($\alpha=.66$)
2	Abouchedid y Nasser (2002)	Lebanon and Portugal	372 university students	Feagin (1972; 1975)	15 ítems, 1-5 (disagree - agree)	Libano: Structural ($\alpha=.63$), Individual ($\alpha=.67$) y Fatalistic ($\alpha=.67$); Portugal: Structural ($\alpha=.54$), Individual ($\alpha=.70$) y Fatalistic ($\alpha=.77$)
3	Bennett, Raiz y Davis (2016)	USA	209 social workers	Bullock (2004), Bullock et al. (2003a) y Weiss-Gal (2007)	33 ítems, 1-6 (strongly agree - strongly disagree)	Individual ($\alpha = .942$), Structural ($\alpha = .880$), Cultural ($\alpha = .769$)
4	Bergmann y Todd (2019)	USA	189 (study 1); 646 (study 2) university students	Cozzarelli et al. (2001)	13 ítems, 1-5 (not important at all - extremely important)	Internal ($\alpha=0.83$), External ($\alpha=0.80$)
5	Bobbio, Canova y Manganeli (2010)	Italy	181 university students	Feagin (1972), Smith y Stone (1989)	12 ítems, 1-5 (not important at all - extremely important)	Individual/Internal ($\alpha=.82$), Structural/External ($\alpha=.74$)
6	Bradley y Cole (2002)	USA y Canada	714 participants de más de 18 años	Feagin (1975)	11 ítems, 1-3 (very important – not very important)	Interna ($\alpha=.60$), Externa ($\alpha=.62$)
7	Bolitho, Carr, Fletcher (2007)	Australia y Malawi	1141 participants	Harper et al. (1990), Hine y Montiel (1999)	16 ítems, 1-5 (strongly disagree - strongly agree)	Blame the poor ($\alpha=.75$), Blame nature ($\alpha=.59$), Blame conflict ($\alpha=.58$), Blame third world governments ($\alpha=.63$), Blame international exploitation ($\alpha=.50$)
9	Bullock (1999)	USA	236 participants	Furnham (1982)	16 ítems, 1-7 (strongly disagree - strongly agree)	Individualista, Structural, Structural-Fatalistic
8	Bullock (2004)	USA	80 participants	Furnham (1982)	24 ítems, 1-7 (strongly disagree - strongly agree)	Individualista ($\alpha=.82$), Structural/Económico ($\alpha=.75$), Fatalistic/Factores Familiares ($\alpha=.62$)
9	Bullock, Williams y Limbert (2003)	USA	131 university students	Bullock (1999), Cozzarelli et al. (2001), Furnham (1982).	45 ítems, 1-7 (disagree - agree)	Structural ($\alpha=.91$), Individualista/Cultura de la Pobreza ($\alpha=.91$), Fatalistic/Structural ($\alpha=.72$)
10	Bullock y Limbert (2003)	USA	69 madres	Bullock (1999), Cozzarelli et al. (2001), Furnham (1982).	45 ítems, 1-7 (disagree - agree)	Structural ($\alpha=.85$), Individual ($\alpha=.88$) y Fatalistic-Structural ($\alpha=.61$)
11	Bullock y Morales (2005)	USA	124 trabajadores del campo mexicanos que residen en USA	Bullock (1999), Cozzarelli et al. (2001), Furnham (1982).	45 ítems, 1-7 (disagree - agree)	Structural ($\alpha=.71$), Individual ($\alpha=.80$)
12	Campbell, Carr y MacLachlan (2001)	Australia y Malawi	198 participants	Harper et al. (1990)	18 ítems, 1-5 (poco importante - muy importante)	Culpa del pobre ($\alpha=.77$), Culpa de las guerras ($\alpha=.67$), Culpa de la naturaleza ($\alpha=.56$) Culpa de los gobiernos del tercer mundo ($\alpha=.66$)
13	Canto, Perles y San Martín (2012)	Spain	300 university students	Hine y Montiel (1999). Adaptada por Betancour, et al	22 ítems, 1-6 (totalmente en desacuerdo - totalmente de acuerdo)	Causas Structurales, Causas personales, Causas Fatalistics

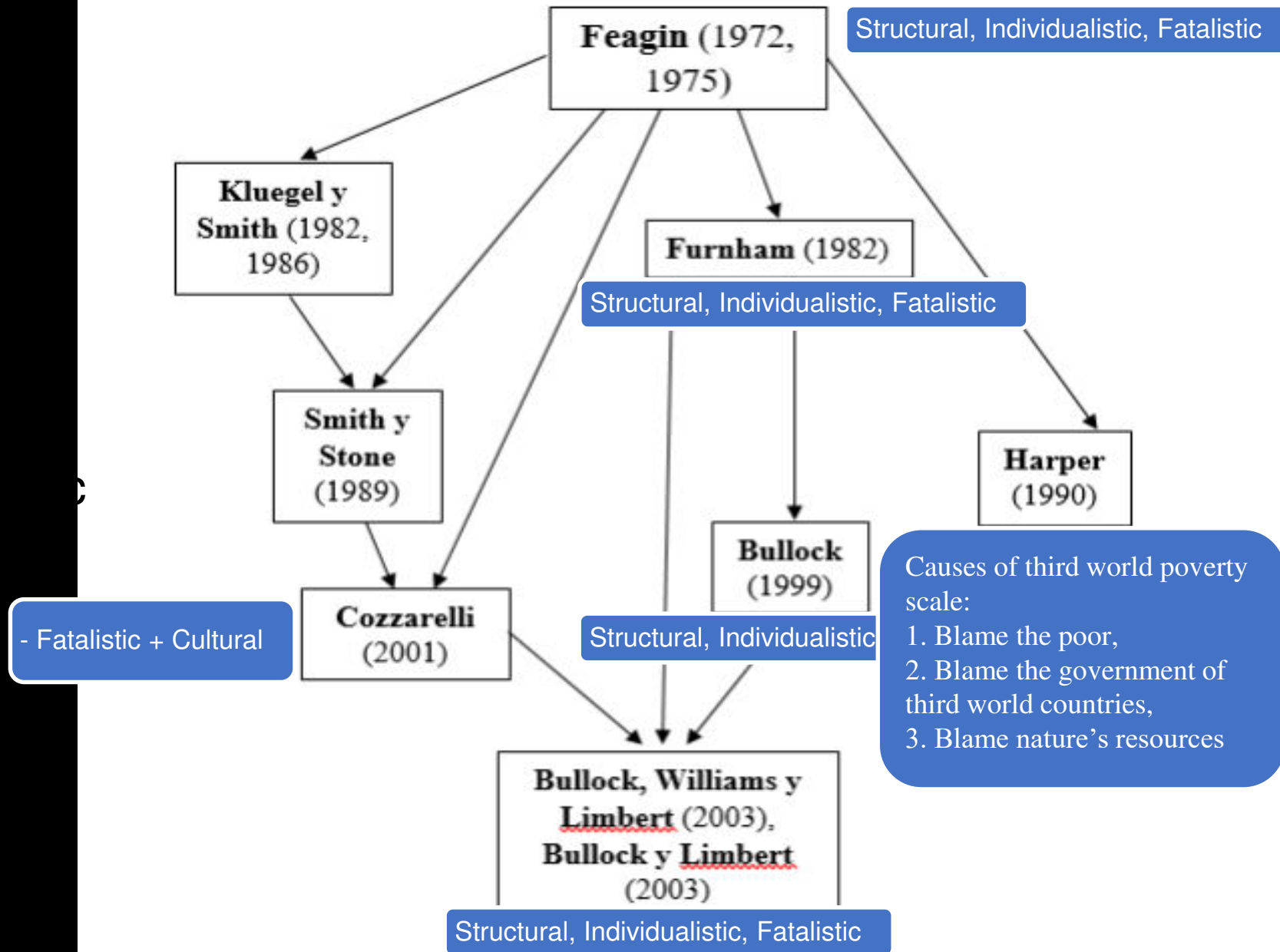
Results

What scales are used the most?





On what background was each scale based or inspired?



Wither attribution theory?

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KEYWORDS

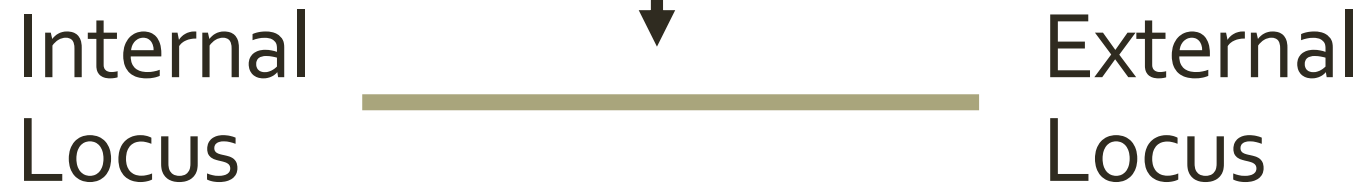
attribution, motivation, relational attribution

Attribution theory has been built upon the idea that causal beliefs reside within (internal to) or outside (external to) the person... (Weiner, 2019)

Something
missing...
From Locus to
Controllability

Confusion between consequences, correlations and causes of Poverty

Poverty not as something internal or external, but
as a relationship?



Would it be a more fruitful discussion to talk about responsibility or controllability of the causal agent instead of talking about the *locus* of poverty?

The focus on controllability would lead to talk about strategies and policies to reduce poverty.

From poverty attributions to inequality attributions

Poverty

- It is usually used as a qualifying adjective, which qualifies the person (poor person) or its context (poor society), rather than a person in its context, in relation to others. Thus, using the concept poverty does not always imply referring to a relationship with one other. e.g., absolute poverty.
- Poverty has different expressions, dimensions and correlational factors. Frequently, those are often confused with a cause of poverty.
- "Poverty" is a complex and a polysemic concept (monetary poverty, extreme poverty, multidimensional poverty, absolute poverty, relative poverty, as unsatisfied basic needs, as deficit of rights, etc.)

Inequality

- It is undoubtedly a *relational concept*: Inequality emerges when we compare two incomes, wealth, etc (Prentice & Shelton, 2012).

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Merci!

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