

AI-00428 Illusory Correlation vs Shared Fate Bias

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What is the psychology term for "if it happens to another person, it will happen to me"?

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The psychology term that describes the belief or cognitive bias that if something happens to another person, it will also happen to oneself is called "illusory correlation."

Illusory correlation refers to the perception of a relationship between two variables when none actually exists, or when the relationship is much weaker than it appears. In the context you described, people may perceive a correlation between someone else experiencing a certain event or outcome and their own likelihood of experiencing the same event, even if there is no real connection between the two.

This cognitive bias can lead to unfounded beliefs or superstitions, where individuals think that if something good or bad happens to someone else, it will inevitably happen to them as well. It's important to recognize and address illusory correlations to avoid making decisions or judgments based on false assumptions.

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What is the name of the cognitive bias related to "illusory correlation"? Is it shared fate bias?

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The cognitive bias related to the belief that if something happens to another person, it will also happen to oneself is indeed related to the "illusory correlation" concept. However, the specific term for this bias is not "illusory correlation" itself but rather the "shared fate bias" or "shared vulnerability bias."

The shared fate bias refers to the tendency to overestimate the similarity or shared experiences between oneself and a group or individual, leading to the belief that if something affects that group or individual, it must also affect oneself. It is essentially a subtype of illusory correlation, as it involves perceiving a connection or correlation where none may exist.

So, you are correct in associating the shared fate bias with the idea of "if it happens to him, it will happen to me."

tell me more about shared fate bias. What are the components and variables? How does it come about and manage to influence some people?

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The shared fate bias is a cognitive bias that involves perceiving a greater similarity or shared experiences between oneself and a group or individual than actually exists. This bias leads people to believe that if something affects that group or individual, it must also affect them personally. Here are some components and variables associated with the shared fate bias:

1. **Perceived Similarity:** The bias is driven by the perception of similarity between oneself and the other person or group. People tend to overestimate how much they have in common with others, which contributes to the belief in shared fate.
2. **Emotional Connection:** Emotional factors can play a significant role in the shared fate bias. If an individual feels emotionally connected or empathetic toward someone else, they are more likely to believe that events or outcomes affecting that person will also impact them.
3. **Identification with a Group:** The shared fate bias can be especially pronounced when people identify strongly with a particular group, such as a cultural, social, or religious group. When a member of their identified group experiences something, they may feel a heightened sense of shared fate.
4. **Media and Information:** Exposure to media and information sources can influence the shared fate bias. If people see or hear about events happening to others, especially if those events are portrayed as relevant or relatable, they may develop a stronger belief in shared fate.
5. **Uncertainty and Anxiety:** When individuals are uncertain about their own future or anxious about potential threats, they may be more susceptible to the shared fate

bias. This bias can serve as a way to cope with uncertainty by seeking reassurance through perceived shared experiences.

6. **Cultural and Societal Factors:** Cultural norms and societal narratives can also contribute to the shared fate bias. Some cultures or societies may emphasize collective identity and shared experiences, making people more prone to this bias.

The shared fate bias can influence people by shaping their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors in various ways:

1. **Decision-Making:** Individuals may make decisions based on the belief that if something affects another person or group, it will affect them as well. This can lead to risk aversion or risk-taking behavior, depending on the perceived impact.
2. **Empathy and Compassion:** The bias can enhance empathy and compassion toward others, as people genuinely feel that the struggles or successes of others are their own.
3. **Stereotyping:** On the negative side, the shared fate bias can also contribute to stereotyping and prejudice. If individuals assume that they share a common fate with a particular group, they may apply negative or positive judgments to that group based on individual experiences.
4. **Fear and Anxiety:** The shared fate bias can increase anxiety and fear when people perceive threats or negative events happening to others. They may experience heightened stress due to this perceived shared vulnerability.

Understanding the shared fate bias is important because it can impact decision-making, relationships, and societal dynamics. By recognizing this bias, individuals can critically evaluate their beliefs and better understand how their perceptions of shared fate influence their thoughts and actions. Additionally, awareness of the shared fate bias can help reduce stereotyping and promote empathy and cooperation among diverse groups of people.

Does the concept of illusory correlation relate to get rich schemes, get smarter schemes, get healthy schemes, get fit schemes also on the other side of the spectrum? Delve on each subject.

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Yes, the concept of illusory correlation can be related to various schemes and beliefs in different domains, including schemes related to getting rich, getting smarter, getting healthy, and getting fit. Illusory correlation involves perceiving a connection or relationship between two variables when none or a much weaker one exists. Here's how it can relate to each of these subjects:

1. Get Rich Schemes:

- Illusory correlation can play a role in get-rich-quick schemes. People may believe that they've identified a pattern or method that leads to wealth, even if there is no real correlation between the scheme and financial success.
- For example, someone might invest in a particular stock or cryptocurrency because they heard a success story from someone who got rich with the same investment. They may mistakenly believe that the same outcome is guaranteed for them.

2. Get Smarter Schemes:

- Illusory correlation can also apply to schemes or products claiming to boost intelligence or cognitive abilities. People might be drawn to products, supplements, or methods promising increased intelligence or memory enhancement based on anecdotal evidence.
- This can lead individuals to believe that by following these schemes, they will inevitably become smarter, even if there's limited or no scientific evidence supporting such claims.

3. Get Healthy Schemes:

- In the realm of health and wellness, illusory correlation can manifest when people adopt specific diets, alternative therapies, or supplements based on testimonials or stories of miraculous recoveries.
- Individuals may believe that the same health benefits will apply to them, even if the effectiveness of the scheme is not scientifically validated.

4. Get Fit Schemes:

- Illusory correlation can also be seen in the fitness industry. People may be enticed by fitness programs, equipment, or dietary plans that promise rapid transformations based on before-and-after photos and anecdotes.

- They may assume that they will achieve similar results without considering factors like genetics, individual variation, or sustainable lifestyle changes.

In each of these cases, the illusory correlation bias can lead individuals to make decisions based on the perception of a connection between a particular method or scheme and the desired outcome (e.g., wealth, intelligence, health, fitness). Such schemes often capitalize on anecdotal evidence or the success stories of a few individuals to create the illusion that the same success is easily attainable for everyone.

To avoid falling victim to illusory correlation and making misguided decisions, it's essential for individuals to critically evaluate the evidence, consider scientific research and expert opinions, and be cautious of schemes that promise quick and guaranteed results without a solid foundation of empirical support.