

Self-other differences in mundane social rejections

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Abstract

Despite the importance of social connections for well-being, mundane social rejections through plan cancellations are common. With four pre-registered experiments (total $N = 1864$), we investigated the discrepancy between individuals' perceptions of their own reactions to social rejection and their beliefs about others' reactions in the context of canceled plans. We found that people perceive themselves to have higher acceptability when canceled by others than the level of acceptability they perceive others will have when they cancel on others. This overestimation is partially driven by people thinking they are more forgiving and less affected than others by cancellations. Interestingly, people also indicated that they would spend more on buying a gift as compensation when they cancel on others compared to the amount they expect others to spend on buying a gift for them when others cancel. Understanding these perceptions can provide insights into social beliefs, relationship expectations, and marketplace impacts of mundane social rejections we all face in everyday life.

Keywords: self-other differences; social rejection; compensation gifts

Track: Consumer Behavior