From Close to Ghost: The Effects of Ghosting and Need for Closure on Psychological Need Satisfaction

Christina M. Leckfor,[1] Natasha R. Wood,[2] Andrew H. Hales,[2] & Richard B. Slatcher [1]

[1] University of Georgia, [2] University of Mississippi

INTRO & OBJECTIVE

- Ghosting is a type of ostracism used to end a relationship, often mediated by technology (e.g., ignoring texts) (Freedman et al., 2019)
- Ostracism threatens basic psychological needs for belonging, control, meaningful existence, and self-esteem (Williams, 2009)
- People with high need for closure dislike uncertainty (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996), which may worsen the effects of being ghosted
- **Objective: Examine if being ghosted lowers psychological need satisfaction, and if high need for closure amplifies this effect**

HYPOTHESES

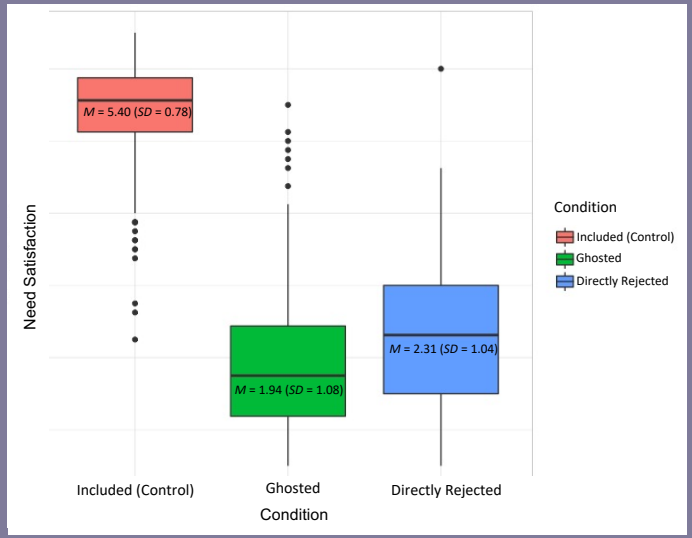
- Being ghosted will lead to lower need satisfaction than being included (H1) or directly rejected (H2)
- When ghosted, higher need for closure will be associated with lower need satisfaction (H3)

METHODS

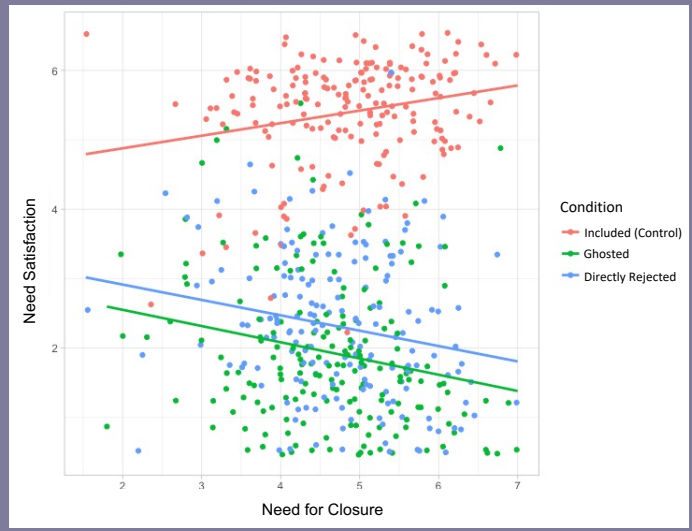
- 545 U.S. emerging adults (18-29 years old) recruited via Prolific
  - Emerging adults are more likely to ghost / be ghosted (LeFebvre et al., 2019)
- M_{age} = 24.7, 63% White, 51% Women, 70% Straight/Heterosexual
- Procedure:
  - Measured dispositional need for closure (Roets & Van Hiel, 2011)
  - Randomly assigned (between-subjects) to write about a time when they were ghosted, included (control), or directly rejected (Hales et al., 2018)
    - Could write about romantic relationships, dating, or friendships
  - Measured psychological need satisfaction (Hales et al., 2015)

MAIN FINDINGS

Ghosted participants reported lower need satisfaction than included (H1) or rejected (H2) participants



Need for closure amplified the effects of ghosting (H3), direct rejection, and inclusion on need satisfaction



RESULTS

- Analyzed using multiple regression with condition variable dummy-coded (ghosted as reference group)
- Ghosted participants reported lower need satisfaction than included participants, b = 3.46, $t(542)$ = 34.35, p < .001, d = 1.47, and rejected participants, b = 0.37, $t(542)$ = 3.59, p < .001, d = 0.15
- Need for closure (M = 4.75, SD = 0.96) moderated the ghosted vs. included comparison, b = 0.42, $t(539)$ = 4.50, p < .001, 95% CI [0.21, 0.62], but not the ghosted vs. rejected comparison, b = 0.01, $t(539)$ = 0.12, p = .907, 95% CI [-0.20, 0.22]
- Higher need for closure was associated with *lower* need satisfaction when ghosted, $t(539)$ = -3.29, p = .001, 95% CI [-0.37, -0.09], and rejected, $t(539)$ = -2.82, p = .005, 95% CI [-0.38, -0.07], and with *greater* need satisfaction when included, $t(539)$ = 2.45, p = .015, 95% CI [0.04, 0.33]

SUMMARY & IMPACT

- Provides initial evidence that being ghosted may lead to worse outcomes than being directly rejected
- Results suggest that need for closure—which is rarely examined in close relationships—may exacerbate the effects of positive and negative relationship processes
- Generalizability is limited to U.S. emerging adults
- Future research should test immediate responses to being ghosted, including behavioral responses

CONTACT

Christina M. Leckfor, cmleckfor@uga.edu, @cmleckfor

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Gender Differences in Psychological Distress During the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Paradoxical Roles of Compassion for Self and Others

H. Annie Vu, PhD Student: h.annie.vu@rutgers.edu
Luis M. Rivera, Associate Professor: luis@psychology.rutgers.edu

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Introduction

- **Self-compassion** and **compassion for others** play paradoxical roles in buffering **psychological distress** (i.e., stress and anxiety) during the COVID-19 pandemic: self-compassion *helps* (Gutiérrez-Hernández et al., 2021), while compassion for others *hurts* (Cordaro et al., 2020).
- Women, relative to men, report lower **self-compassion** and higher **compassion for others** (e.g., Pommier et al., 2020). Such gender differences in compassion towards self and others are reflections of a rigid system of gender roles that socialize women to be compassionate toward others but not themselves.
- The present research explored whether young women college students' higher **psychological distress** than the men counterparts during the COVID-19 pandemic could be explained by their ***low*** **self-compassion** (Study 1 & 2) and ***high*** **compassion for others** (Study 2).

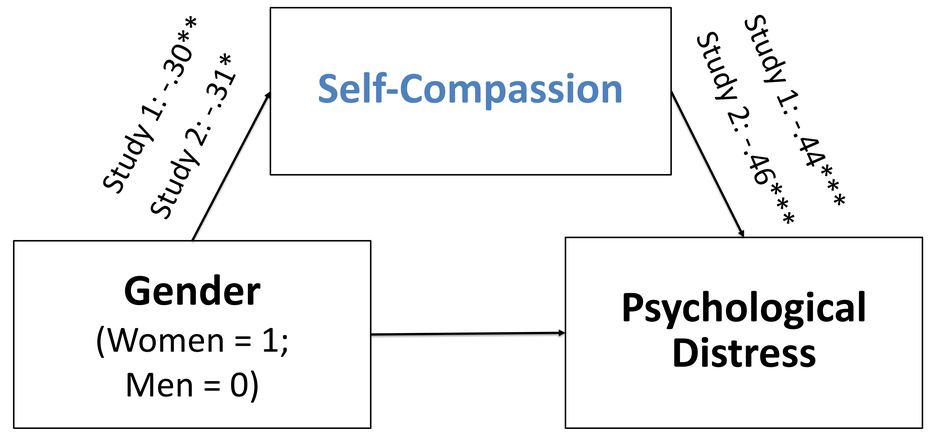
Research Questions

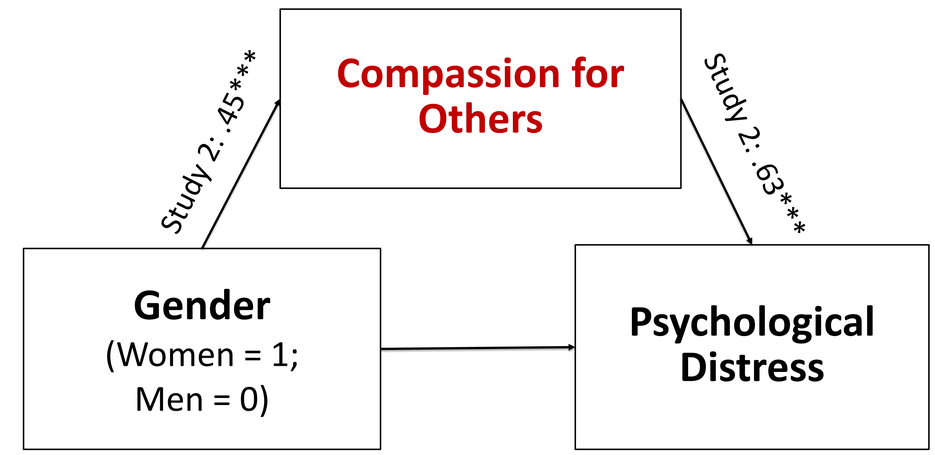
Can gender differences in **self-compassion** and **compassion for others** explain gender differences in psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Methods

	Study 1	Study 2
Participants	N = 281 college students (M_{age} = 21.19, *SD* = 4.80; 75.30% female)	N = 163 college students (M_{age} = 22.36, *SD* = 6.13; 76.70% female)
Measures	**Self-compassion** (Raes et al., 2011; α = .86),	**Self-compassion** (Neff, 2003; α = .93)
		Compassion for others (Pommier et al., 2019; α = .85)
	Psychological distress during the COVID-19 pandemic (adapted from Young et al., 2015; *r* = .78, p < .001)	**Psychological distress** during the COVID-19 pandemic (adapted from Young et al., 2015; *r* = .66, *p* < .001)

Results





Note. *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$., *** $p \leq .001$

Conclusion and Implication

- Our studies show how **gender** differences in **self-compassion** and **compassion for others**, which are rooted in a strong cultural system of gender roles, contribute to the **psychological distress** gap between women and men during a highly distressing context such as the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The current research calls once again for revisiting the gender roles imposed on women at the interpersonal and institutional levels.
- Future studies should experimentally manipulate **self-compassion** and **compassion for others** to test their direct effects on the gender psychological distress gap .

Lay Perceptions of Scientific Findings: Swayed by the Crowd?

Shilaan Alzahawi[1], Benoît Monin[1]

[1] Stanford University, Graduate School of Business

Introduction

Every day, important scientific findings are rejected at large. From man-made climate change to the safety and efficacy of Covid-19 vaccinations, **science skepticism** has run rampant among lay consumers in modern society (Hornsey & Fielding, 2017). To **increase public faith in science**, some have proposed the use of **crowd science** (Silberzahn et al., 2018; Uhlmann et al., 2019).

We explore the effects of scientific findings emerging from a **crowd** of researchers (vs. a typical research collaboration) on **lay perceptions of scientific findings**. In line with **social norm theory** (Miller & Prentice, 2016), we expect that observing **consensus** among a crowd (the **consistent crowd** condition) will – compared to the conclusion of a single scientist (the **single estimate** condition) – increase conformity in opinion. Drawing from work on **intuitive statistics** (Gigerenzer & Murray, 2015), we also expect laypeople to intuitively accord to the logic of the **wisdom of crowds**: the ability of an **aggregate of multiple estimates** (rather than a single estimate) to **reduce noise** stemming from individual bias or error (Schweinsberg et al., 2021).

In contrast, when crowd estimates show low consensus and high variance (the **inconsistent crowd** condition), we predict that observers will be less swayed and more likely to **attribute** the findings to **bias** and **error**. In addition, due to the difficulty of lay reasoning about variation (Ben-Zvi & Garfield, 1999), we predict an **aversion to variability**: i.e., we expect that observing variable estimates will decrease lay **confidence** in the precise average parameter estimate in both crowd conditions.

Hypotheses

Table 1: *Predicted differences with the single estimate condition*

Measure	Consistent crowd	Inconsistent crowd
1. Posterior beliefs in the phenomenon	↑	↓
2. Credibility of the results	↑	↓
3. Confidence in the precise estimate	↓	↓
4. Scientific bias	↓	↑
5. Scientific error	↓	↑
6. Scientific discretion	No prediction	No prediction

Note. We regress each outcome on **prior beliefs** and **condition** (with the **single estimate condition** as the **reference category**). When laypeople observe multiple consistent (inconsistent) estimates from a crowd, we expect – compared to a single estimate and controlling for prior beliefs – higher (lower) **posterior beliefs** and **credibility** of the results, lower **confidence** in the precise average parameter estimate, and lower (higher) ratings of **bias** and **error**.

Open Science: Preregistration, survey, data, and code available at

github.com/shilaan/many-analysts

osf.io/vedb4

Methods

We ran an experiment (N = 1,498; UK/US Prolific) with **three conditions**

Single estimate

A single parameter estimate (5%)

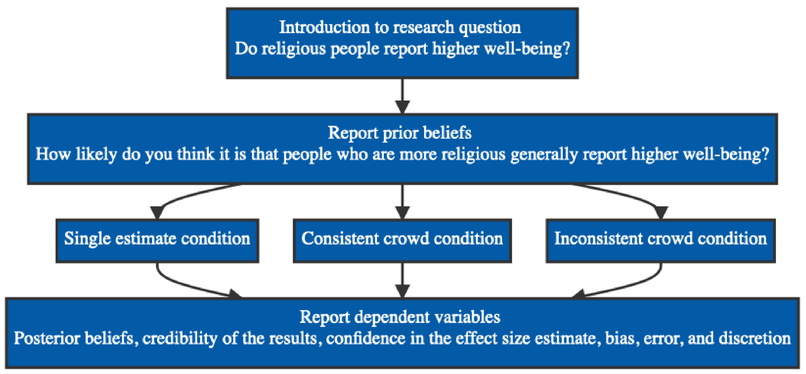
Consistent crowd

Multiple crowd estimates: low variance, high consensus (M = 5%)

Inconsistent crowd

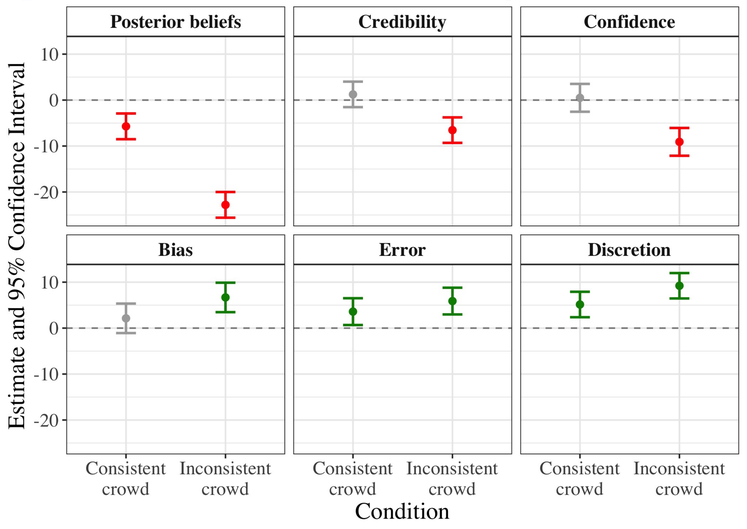
Multiple crowd estimates: high variance, low consensus (M = 5%)

Experimental Design



Results

Figure 1: *Estimates of differences with the single estimate condition*



In line with our hypotheses, lay consumers of **inconsistent crowd estimates** (vs. a single estimate)...

- ↓ Have lower posterior beliefs about the reported phenomenon
- ↓ Find the results less credible
- ↓ Have less confidence in the average estimate of 5%
- ↑ Are more likely to attribute the average estimate (5%) to bias
- ↑ Are more likely to attribute the average estimate (5%) to error

Contrary to our hypotheses, lay consumers of **consistent crowd estimates** (vs. a single estimate)...

- ↓ Have lower posterior beliefs about the reported phenomenon
- ↑ Are more likely to attribute the average estimate (5%) to error

We found **no significant effects** for lay consumers of **consistent crowd estimates** (vs. a single estimate) on...

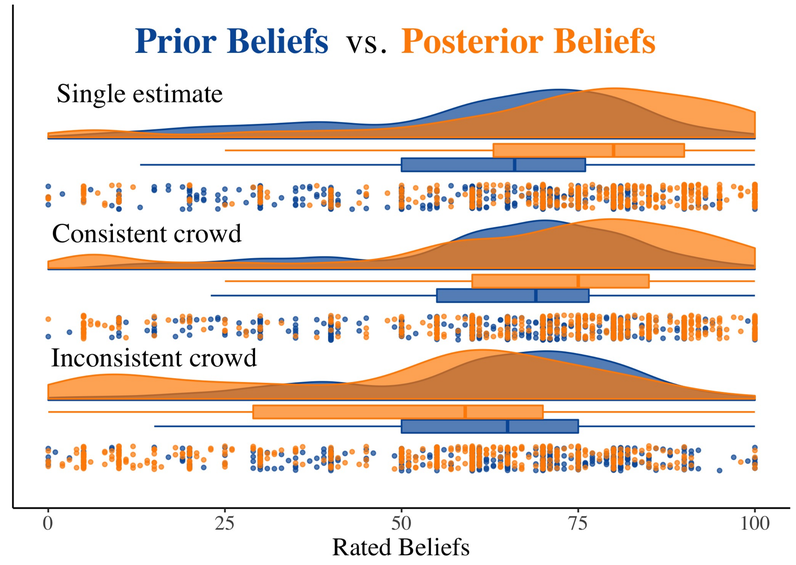
- ? Credibility of the results
- ? Confidence in the average estimate
- ? Ratings of bias

Exploratory results

For the additional **exploratory measure**, lay consumers of consistent and inconsistent **crowd estimates**...

- ↑ Perceive greater discretion (i.e., idiosyncratic choices)

Figure 2: *Distribution of prior and posterior beliefs by condition*



In terms of **belief updating**, Figure 2 shows a positive difference within the consistent crowd condition (pre vs. post M_d = 4.75 [2.55,6.95]), but less so than for the single estimate condition (M_d = 11.66 [9.66,13.66]). As expected, we find negative belief updating in the inconsistent crowd condition (M_d = -11.45 [-13.75,-9.16]).

Conclusion

Compared to providing a single estimate, we find no evidence that crowd estimates improve lay perceptions of scientific findings

Future directions

- ? Does **variability aversion** explain the findings?
- Perceptions of **scientists**
- **Science communication** and **communicating uncertainty**

Cues About a Student's Social Class Matter When Pandemic Meets School Discipline

Sierra R. Semko; Jason A. Okonofua, Ph.D.

1 INTRODUCTION

Student socioeconomic status (SES) influences teachers' decisions in the classroom. Low-SES students experience lesser expectations for their academic abilities, are judged to be less motivated and less able to concentrate, and experience disproportionate **discipline**.[1, 2, 3] Low-income students experienced unprecedented difficulties during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, when classrooms across the country transitioned to virtual "distance learning".[4]

The current work explores how cues about a student's SES inform teachers' responses to classroom misbehavior.

We hypothesize that (1) teachers will endorse more severe discipline for student misbehavior in the virtual classroom, as compared to the in-person classroom; (2) a misbehaving low-SES student will be prescribed more severe discipline, as compared to a mid-SES student, and particularly in the distance learning context. The two hypotheses were pre-registered at https://aspredicted.org/89h3u.pdf.

2 METHOD

N K-12 teachers = 396.

Gender				
Female	Male	Unknown		
71%	26%	3%		
Race				
White	Black	Latinx	Asian	Other
85%	6%	3%	2%	3%
School Level				
Elementary	Middle / Junior High	High		
23%	31%	46%		
Number of Years Teaching				
Mean	Range			
14.8	2 - 42			

The demographics of our sample are similar to the national demographics of K-12 teachers.[5]

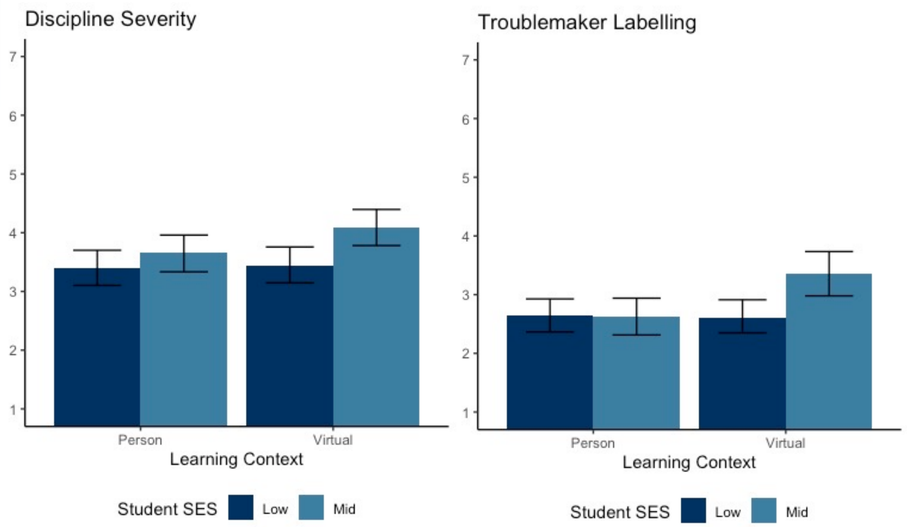
PROCEDURE

Teachers were shown either a picture of the in-person or virtual classroom context and asked to imagine themselves a teacher there. They then read and responded to one of four school records for a student named Greg:

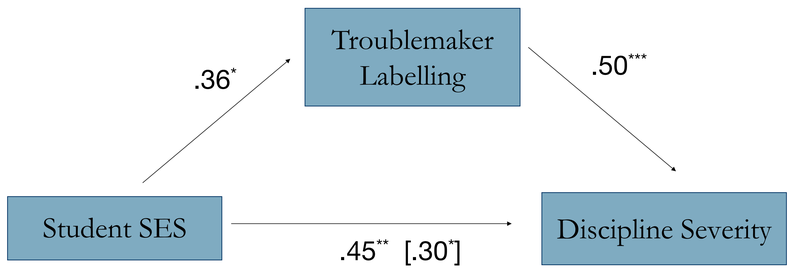
Study Conditions	
Low-SES Student in the Virtual Classroom	Low-SES Student in the In-Person Classroom
Mid-SES Student in the Virtual Classroom	Mid-SES Student in the In-Person Classroom

5 KEY TAKEAWAYS

While previous research based on in-person contexts suggests bias against low-SES students may explain their risk of more severe discipline, **this research demonstrates that teachers in a distance learning context endorse more severe discipline for a student with mid-SES, as compared to low-SES.**



This study is the first to investigate how student SES and the COVID-19 pandemic affect discipline decisions which can affect access to education.



Note. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Troublemaker-labelling mediates the effect of student SES on discipline severity. Student SES predicts troublemaker-labelling which in turn predicts the severity of discipline ascribed for the student's misbehavior.

Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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✉ sierra_semko@berkeley.edu

3 PRIMARY OUTCOMES

On a scale from 1 – Not at all to 7 – Extremely

Discipline Severity: "How severely should this student be disciplined?"

Troublemaker Labelling: "How likely is it that you would say that this student is a troublemaker?"

4 RESULTS

Discipline Severity A linear regression revealed a main effect of SES, [b = 0.647, SE = 0.226, t(3, 391) = 2.860, p = 0.004, 95% CI (0.202, 1.092), d = 0.28] such that mid-SES students experienced more severe discipline.

Troublemaker Labelling A linear regression revealed a main effect of SES, [b = 0.750, SE = 0.225, t(3, 388 = 3.340, p = 0.0009, 95% CI (0.309, 1.192), d = .227] and a significant interaction of student SES and classroom environment such that teachers were more likely to label the mid-SES student in the virtual classroom as a troublemaker, [b = -0.769, SE = 0.318, t(3, 388) = -2.386, p = 0.018, 95% CI (-1.385, -0.135)]

Mediation Post hoc analyses indicate that student SES on discipline severity (indirect path through labeling the student as a troublemaker) was significant.

6 DISCUSSION

Why might K-12 teachers behave more punitively toward mid-SES students than low-SES students in the distance learning classroom? One possibility is that observing a poorer child's life circumstances firsthand, in a manner that in-person learning does not typically allow, may incite **empathy** to buffer against punitiveness. **Attributions** for a low-SES student's misbehavior may seem indicative of the child's circumstances and environment beyond their control. This process may, however, backfire for mid-SES students. With essential resources provided, the distance learning context for a mid-SES student may incite frustration – perhaps this student has **enduring internal characteristics** to which the misbehavior should be attributed.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Because some of the findings were unexpected, future research should seek to confirm the direction of this effect and explore the mechanisms by which these findings occur.

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