ENTITLED STUDENTS AND RULE UNFAIRNESS: PREDICTING RULE VIOLATION IN ACG

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INTRODUCTION

Why do some students break rules, while others follow them - even when the rules seem unfair?

The present study examines the relationship between two types of entitlement, rule violation, and perceived unfairness in students of the American College of Greece.

The two types of entitlement are: Exploitive Entitlement (EE) – self-serving behaviors and a belief of excessive deservingness; Non-exploitive Entitlement (NEE) – a belief of fair treatment and self-worth, not at the expense of others.

Hypothesis: Students characterized by exploitive entitlement will be more likely to engage in rule violation (RV) than their non-exploitively entitled counterparts.

Research question: does the students' perceived unfairness (PU) of the rules mediate the relationship between entitlement and rule breaking?

METHOD

Participants

- N = 100 ACG students
- Age: M = 21.41 (SD = 2.89)
- 61 females, 39 males
- Recruited via snowball + convenience sampling

Materials

- Exploitive - Non-Exploitive Entitlement Scale (Lessard et al., 2011)
- Rule Violation Scale – selection of items from the College's student guideline handbook
- Perceived unfairness – assessment of the perceived unfairness of the same rules

RESULTS

Bivariate Correlations

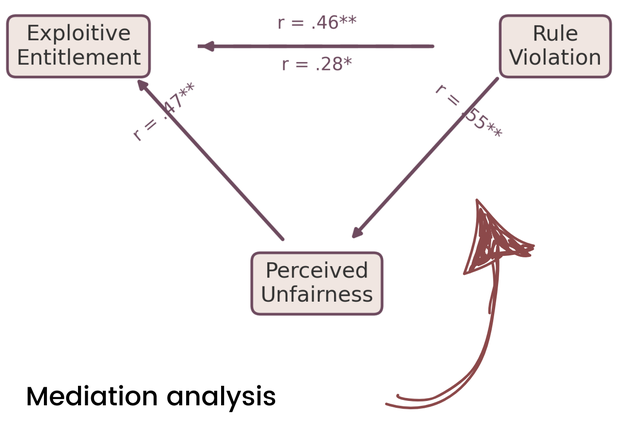
- EE significantly moderately associated with RV: r (98) = .46, p < .001
- NE significantly weakly associated with RV: r (98) = .29, p < .001
- PU significantly moderately correlated with RV: r (98) = .55, p < .001

Mediation Analysis

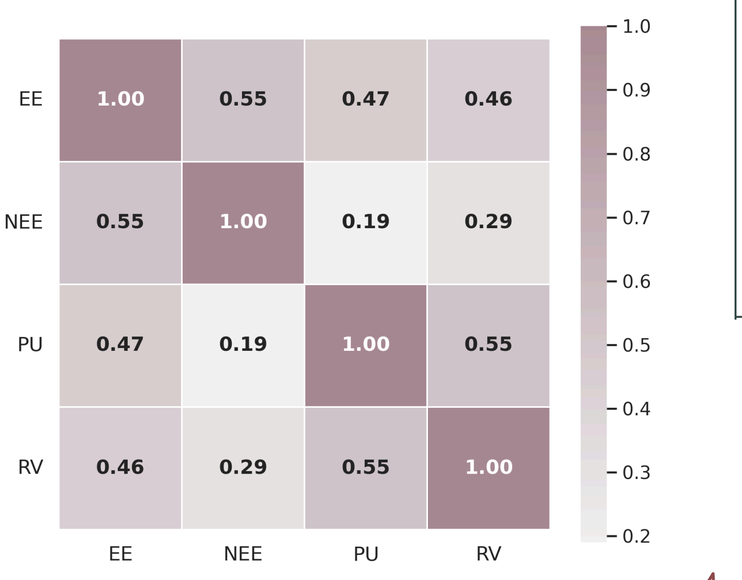
- When controlling for PU, the EE-RV correlation decreased while remaining significant, indicating a partial mediation r (97) = .28, p = .006
- When controlling for PU, the NEE-RV correlation remained weak while being significant; this lack in change of strength indicates a lack of a mediation of PU (r (97) =. 22, p= .028)

Regression Analysis

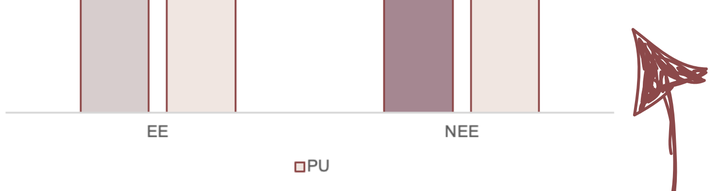
- EE, when combined with PU, managed to explain 35% of the variance in RV
- Both variables were significant predictors: EE (β = .26, p = .006); PU (β = .42, p < .001)



Mediation analysis



Inter-variable correlations



EE-RV and NEE-RV correlations when controlling vs. not controlling for PU

CONCLUSION

1. **Different forms of entitlement lead to different outcomes:** Exploitive Entitlement has a stronger relationship with rule violation than Non-exploitive Entitlement.

2. **Perceived unfairness** plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between Exploitive Entitlement and Rule Violation, shaping students' adherence to rules and obedience to authority.

3. **Limitations:**
   - Self-report measures employed, leading to social desirability bias
   - Uneven socioeconomic, age, and sex distributions may have lead to unwanted skewness

4. **Practical implications:** Educational institutions may benefit from:
   - Using different approaches for students with different entitlement profiles- reframing rule enforcement as middle-ground agreements
   - Considering the distinct behaviors of individuals through targeted interventions

5. **Theoretical contribution:** This study helps broaden the understanding behind how entitlement is manifested as different behaviors, bridging the gap in the literature pertaining to a Greek-specific, academic context.

Rule violation is examined not as a direct result of dispositional traits, but rather as an outcome of forces such as subjective interpretation.

REFERENCES

Lessard, J., Greenberger, E., Chen, C., & Farruggia, S. (2011). Are youths' feelings of entitlement always "bad"? Evidence for a distinction between exploitive and non-exploitive dimensions of entitlement. Journal of Adolescence, 34(3), 521-529. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2010.05.014

Scan to access all sources used for this project

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