

Abstract

The present study investigated the effects of gender, outcome (positive and negative outcome) and friend type (close friend and peer) on the attributional styles (trait, effort, and external) of Chinese adolescents towards friendship. 496 Hong Kong Chinese participants (mean age was 13.21, 276 boys and 220 girls) rated four hypothetical scenarios, generated by 2 levels of outcome and friend type. Overall, effort attributions were most heavily relied upon except in a failure scenario between close friend. Appeal to personality traits was the most important attributional style in reasoning about the failure of an interaction with a close friend. External attributional styles were used least across the four scenarios. Boys were more certain when making attribution and found not more internal than girls. Cultural characteristics and the special features of Chinese friendships are discussed to explain the present study's findings.