

Worry About Stereotype Threat Scale

What does this SSW measure address?

Students' concern about having their behavior and performance at school being judged by others based on stereotypes about their racial group.

For use with:

Middle and High School
Students of Color

Stereotype Threat:

Stereotype threat has been defined by the developer of the term as “the threat of being viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype or the fear of doing something that would inadvertently confirm that stereotype” (Steele, 2003). It has also been called “collective threat” and “social-identify threat” by researchers.



Why is it important?

A substantial amount of research has demonstrated the negative effects of stereotype threat on students' performance in school. Much of the research has focused on African American students, but the effects of stereotype threat have also been seen among students from other stigmatized social groups, such as LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, and students from low income families. Awareness of stereotypes about their social group can also affect students' relationships with their teachers, producing self-fulfilling prophecies about academic performance and behavior. Understanding, measuring, and addressing stereotype threat can change the cycle of negative interactions and poor outcomes for students. A number of feasible, evidence-informed strategies can block the effects of stereotype threat with lasting effects on different facets of school success, such as behavior and academic performance.

Scoring:

The scale is negatively worded, so higher scores mean more worry about stereotypes at school. Add up the scores on the six items. Scores will range from 6 to 30. A score of 6 means no worry about stereotypes. Scores over 24 are clearly of concern. However, also look for individual items with scores of 4 or 5. Interventions at one or more tiers may be needed if many students have high scores.

What do researchers say about the quality of the scale?

Researchers have reported good reliability for the scale. It has performed well with Latinos, Whites, and African Americans.

Source: Source: Cohen, G. L., & Garcia, J. (2005). “I am us”: Negative stereotypes as collective threats. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 89, 566–582. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.89.4.566>

See also: Steele, C. (2003). Stereotype threat and African-American student achievement. In T. Perry, C. Steele, & A. Hilliard, III (Eds.), *Young, gifted, and Black* (pp. 109–130). Boston, MA: Beacon Press

If you have questions about how to use these scales, contact Natasha K. Bowen at bowen.355@osu.edu

MEASURES FOR PRACTICE

Worry About Stereotype Threat Scale

Circle the number that best describes you.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral/ Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. In school, I worry that people will judge my racial group, based on the behavior or performance of other people in my race.	1	2	3	4	5
2. In school, I worry that people will judge my racial group, based on my behavior or performance.	1	2	3	4	5
3. In school, other people sometimes use my race when judging my behavior.	1	2	3	4	5
4. In school, I worry that people will judge me based on what they think about my racial group.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I sometimes worry that other kids in my racial group will act in ways that make my race look unintelligent or not smart.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Sometimes, in school, other people draw negative conclusions about my race's intellectual ability (my race's smartness).	1	2	3	4	5