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A Situation to a Way Out

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Abstract

Despite significant advances in psychological research on problem-solving and decision-making, limited attention has been given to situations in which individuals recognize effective solutions yet repeatedly fail to implement them. Existing literature has largely focused on explaining why people struggle to identify solutions, while comparatively little research has examined why known solutions may become psychologically inaccessible despite being readily available. This conceptual study introduces Solution Blindness, a proposed psychological construct describing a state in which individuals remain aware of a viable course of action but experience it as emotionally inaccessible. Drawing from existing literature on emotional avoidance, experiential avoidance, psychological inflexibility, cognitive dissonance, and loss aversion, this paper proposes that avoidance of emotional discomfort may contribute to a progressive reduction in the perceived accessibility of known solutions. To explain this process, the study presents the Invisible Exit Framework, a theoretical model consisting of six stages: recognition, emotional cost detection, protective avoidance, cognitive rationalization, Solution Blindness, and problem amplification. The framework suggests that perceived emotional costs and self-protective cognitive processes may interfere with the transition from awareness to action, leading individuals to remain in situations they recognize as harmful or ineffective. By shifting attention from solution discovery to solution accessibility, this research offers a novel perspective on the knowledge-action gap. The study concludes by proposing directions for future empirical validation and discussing potential implications for clinical psychology, education, organizations, and interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: Emotional Avoidance, Experiential Avoidance, Psychological Inflexibility, Decision-Making, Solution Blindness