

Social Influence: Locus of Control

TASK 1: For each pair of statements, ring either A or B according to which statement you agree with the most:

1. a. Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.
b. The trouble with most children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.
 2. a. Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.
b. People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.
 3. a. One of the major reasons why we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.
b. There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.
 4. a. In the long run people get the respect they deserve in this world.
b. Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognized no matter how hard he tries.
 5. a. The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.
b. Most students don't realize the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.
 6. a. Without the right breaks, one cannot be an effective leader.
b. Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.
 7. a. No matter how hard you try, some people just don't like you.
b. People who can't get others to like them don't understand how to get along with others.
 8. a. Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality.
b. It is one's experiences in life which determine what they're like.
 9. a. I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.
b. Trusting fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.
 10. a. In the case of the well prepared student there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as an unfair test.
b. Many times, exam questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.
 11. a. Becoming a success is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.
b. Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.
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12. a. The average citizen can have an influence in government decisions.
b. This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.
 13. a. When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.
b. It is not always wise to plan too far ahead because many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.
 14. a. There are certain people who are just no good.
b. There is some good in everybody.
 15. a. In my case getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.
b. Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.
 16. a. Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place first.
b. Getting people to do the right thing depends upon ability - luck has little or nothing to do with it.

17. a. As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand, nor control.
b. By taking an active part in political and social affairs the people can control world events.
18. a. Most people don't realize the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings.
b. There really is no such thing as "luck."
19. a. One should always be willing to admit mistakes.
b. It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.
20. a. It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.
b. How many friends you have depends upon how nice a person you are.
21. a. In the long run the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.
b. Most misfortunes are the result of lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.
22. a. With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.
b. It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.
23. a. Sometimes I can't understand how teachers arrive at the grades they give.
b. There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the grades I get.
24. a. A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.
b. A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.
25. a. Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.
b. It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.
26. a. People are lonely because they don't try to be friendly.
b. There's not much use in trying too hard to please people, if they like you, they like you.
27. a. There is too much emphasis on athletics in high school.
b. Team sports are an excellent way to build character.
28. a. What happens to me is my own doing.
b. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough control over the direction my life is taking.
29. a. Most of the time I can't understand why politicians behave the way they do.
b. In the long run the people are responsible for bad government on a national as well as on a local level.

Locus of control questionnaire - Score one point for each of the following:

2.a, 3.b, 4.b, 5.b, 6.a, 7.a, 9.a, 10.b, 11.b, 12.b, 13.b, 15.b, 16.a, 17.a, 18.a, 20.a, 21.a, 22.b, 23.a, 25.a, 26.b, 28.b, 29.a.

A high score = External Locus of Control

A low score = Internal Locus of Control

(maximum score: 23)

My score is: _____ This means that I have a _____ locus of control

TASK 2: Answer the questions as honestly as you can:

1. You have arranged to see a film with three of your friends. They all want to go and see a film you are not really interested in. Do you:

- a) Go along anyway without protesting
- b) Protest and try to get them to change their minds, but go along if they refuse
- c) Go home and leave them to it

2. You buy a pre-packed salad from the supermarket. When you get it home, you realise it has passed its 'use by' date. Do you:

- a) Take it back to the store and demand a refund
- b) Eat it anyway – it looks ok
- c) Throw it away and eat something else

3. You are on your own at a friend's party. You get talking to a group of people you have never met before. One of the people in the group starts to talk about an issue that you have strong feelings about. They are expressing a view that is at odds with how you feel. The other people in the group are all agreeing with them. Do you:

- a) Stay with the group and keep quiet, occasionally nodding and smiling
- b) Leave the group and go and stand on your own
- c) Express how you really feel about the issue

4. You go for an evening out with your friends, it is raining hard and you are tired. It has been an effort to come out. While you are on the bus, you realise you have forgotten to bring your purse. Do you:

- a) Stay on the bus and ask your friends to lend you some money when you get there
- b) Get off the bus at the next stop and go home to retrieve your purse.
- c) Get off the bus, go home and don't bother going out again.

5. You are walking down the street and a woman is collecting money for a charity you have never heard of. As you approach her, you notice that nearly everyone is putting money in the tin. The smallest change you have is a £1 coin. Do you.

- a) Turn back down the street and go another way.
- b) Give the £1 even though you don't want to
- c) Walk past and don't give any money

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6. You have borrowed a book from the library and you realise that you have left it on the bus and are liable for being charged for it. Do you:

- a) Tell the librarian the truth and offer to pay for the book
- b) Never go to that library again
- c) Tell the librarian that your house was burgled and the book was taken

7. You are in a clothes shop with two of your friends. You see a jacket you really like. Your friends don't like it. They tell you that they think you look better in a different jacket that you don't like as much. Do you:

- a) Buy the jacket you really like
- b) Buy the jacket they really like
- c) Don't buy either jacket

8. You have lots of revision to do for your exam tomorrow. Your friend calls you and asks you to go out for the evening. Do you:

- a) Go out and revise through the night when you get back
- b) Stay home and revise and get an early night
- c) Go out and don't revise

9. Your friend invites you to a fancy dress party. You decide to come as a character from Star Wars. You spend a lot of time getting your outfit together. When you arrive at the party, you realise no one else has bothered with the fancy dress. Do you:

- a) Stay for a short while, but leave early
- b) Stay and have a laugh about it
- c) Go home and change into ordinary clothes and come back

Scoring Guide for TASK 3:

Q1: a) 2 b) 1 c) 0

Q3: a) 2 b) 1 c) 0

Q5: a) 1 b) 2 c) 0

Q7: a) 0 b) 2 c) 1

Q9) a) 1 b) 0 c) 2

Bring the completed and scored questionnaires to the class. We will be discussing the results and using them for statistical analysis