

DIFFERENTIAL USES OF INFORMATIONAL CUES IN THE
ATTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY AS A FUNCTION OF
INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

by

RICHARD V. PEACH

B. Soc. Sc., University of Waikato, 1972
M. Soc. Sc., University of Waikato, 1973

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Major Professor

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Human beings are constantly being faced with decisions. Many of these decisions concern judgments regarding other individuals: "Is this person friendly? trustworthy? competent?" These types of judgments affect not only the day to day progress of a person's life, but on occasion its whole direction. Both the person judging and the person being judged are profoundly involved. While the consequences of a decision are very important, the process of decision making itself is just as salient, particularly from a behavioral science standpoint. How do an individual's values, beliefs and expectations about life affect his or her judgments about others? How do individuals process the information placed before them when they are required to make a decision? Do personal beliefs about the world affect these processes also? This study has its origins in such questions.

Many different types of judgments can be made about another individual, but it is usually practical to study only one type of judgment at a time. It also seems preferable to examine a psychological process in terms of some theoretical framework rather than use the less heuristic strategy of "barefoot empiricism." A theoretical framework for research enables greater generalizability for what might otherwise be a study with restricted relevance. Past research of a related theoretical nature often adds credence to the findings of a new study. Since some research has already been conducted on the attribution of responsibility process by researchers who have worked under the rubric of social learning theory, that framework seems quite

suitable for the present study. Because an individual's own needs and expectations about the world might be expected to affect his or her decisions these individual difference variables need to be taken into account.

Social learning theory researchers have examined the relationship between the individual difference variable of internal versus external locus of control of reinforcement (I-E) and the attribution of responsibility process. In the following paragraphs this I-E variable and research findings related to it will be described and reviewed. This review will include: (1) a discussion of the notion of I-E and its measurement, (2) an examination of evidence for "assimilative projection," the process by which people assume their personal values and expectations characterize others as well, (3) the research evidence which considers the relationship between I-E and attribution of responsibility, and (4) a review of the recent I-E literature which construes the external beliefs of some individuals as a means of coping with personal inadequacies (this latter notion of defensive externality has relevance to attributions of responsibility).

This review will be followed by a statement of the rationale for the present study. Finally, the hypotheses of this study will be stated.

Internal-external locus of control

The notion of I-E was developed by Julian Rotter and his colleagues in the late 1950's and was articulated by Rotter in 1966 as follows:

When a reinforcement is perceived by the subject as following some action of his own but not being entirely contingent upon his action, then, in our culture, it is typically perceived as the result of luck, chance, fate, as under the control of powerful others, or as unpredictable because of the great complexity of the forces surrounding him. When the event is interpreted in this way by an individual we have labeled this a belief in external control. If the person perceives that the event is contingent upon his own behavior or his own relatively permanent characteristics, we have termed this a belief in internal control (p. 1).

The concept of I-E was derived from Rotter's social learning theory (Rotter, 1954; Rotter, Chance and Phares, 1972). Social learning theory examines two basic determinants of behavior: goals of varying value which the individual wishes to attain, and the expectation of achieving those goals. If individuals want to achieve a goal which has a high value for them and they also feel that a given behavior will attain it (high expectation of success), then it is probable that the behavior in question will occur (assuming the behavior is in their repertory). But, if their expectations are low that such a behavior will be successful, and the goal value is also low, it is doubtful that the behavior will take place.

I-E is a generalized expectancy regarding the manner in which people categorize situations so as to better help them cope with various problems presented by those situations.

The I-E Scale published by Rotter in 1966 purports to measure an individual's status on the internal-external locus of control dimension. The scale is a 29 item forced-choice test which includes six filler items designed to help prevent detection of the real purpose of the test. A typical item reads:

- 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 useless.

While I-E is a continuous dimension, convenience has led researchers to divide subjects into internal and external groups. This is usually done by splitting scores at the median or taking scores in the upper and lower quartiles. Most researchers score the scale in the external direction so that 23 is the most external score possible and zero is the most internal score possible.

Rotter (1966) has reported a considerable amount of favorable reliability and validity data concerning the test, and hundreds of studies which present expected results also point to its widespread construct validity. As Rotter (1975) has pointed out, the volume of research writings which concerns the concept of I-E is nothing short of phenomenal. Many aspects of the concept and its relationship to a myriad of human behaviors has been examined at one time or another. Joe (1971), Lefcourt (1966, 1972), Phares (1973, 1974a, & 1974b), Rotter (1966) and Throop and McDonald (1971) have presented reviews of this material.

Assimilative projection

The present study deals with the process of making attributions of responsibility and whether personal I-E beliefs or expectations about the nature of the world affect that process. For this reason, those publications which deal with the relationship of I-E to the

judgments that people make about others are of especial interest.

I-E is an individual difference variable of demonstrated importance in this area. That is, subjects' positions on the I-E dimension are predictors of how they will expect others to behave, given certain circumstances. In a study by deCharms, Carpenter, and Kuperman (1965), subjects were asked to read stories in which the principle characters either acted autonomously or were externally coerced to varying degrees. As coercion increased, the subjects perceived the character as being less internally motivated. Internal subjects viewed the characters in the stories as being more internal than did external subjects. In a review paper, Maselli and Altrocchi (1969) proposed that "the internal person who expects his own intentions to have effective relevance to the world around him may assume that this is true of others' intentions as well; and that a more external individual who expects that his intentions will not necessarily influence the situation may make a similar assumption about others' intentions" (p. 450). This phenomenon of attribution of one's own locus of control beliefs to others has often been called "assimilative projection." Studies which use I-E as a predictor variable for the attribution of responsibility regarding others' behavior, whether they state it or not, seem to have assumed that a process of "assimilative projection" is operative.

Attribution of Responsibility

In 1971 Phares, Wilson and Klyver, working with male subjects, studied the relationship between I-E and the attribution of blame

under neutral and distractive conditions. Subjects were failed on a task under both conditions and it was found that externals were more "blaming" of environmental factors for failure than internals in non-distractive conditions. Under distractive conditions there were no I-E differences. Externals, then, did not vary attribution of blame for failure over situation, whereas internals were less blaming in nondistractive than distractive situations.

Davis and Davis (1972) replicated the I-E and attribution of blame results and they also added a success condition. They found that the two groups (externals and internals) did not differ in taking personal credit for success but externals were less prone to accept responsibility for failure.

Phares and Wilson (1972) asked male subjects to read descriptions of auto accidents and then judge the degree to which the drivers were responsible for the outcomes of their accidents. Greater responsibility was attributed when descriptions of accidents were clear rather than ambiguous. Severe outcomes were also associated with greater responsibility attribution, except in cases when the story was ambiguous. With regard to locus of control, Phares and Wilson found that internals attributed more responsibility than did externals, but they failed to obtain the predicted interaction between ambiguity and I-E. I-E had been expected to be particularly operative under ambiguous conditions. Sosis (1974) duplicated Phares and Wilson's (1972) main findings with both males and females and concluded that

subjects projected their own internality or externality onto the drivers involved in accidents.

Some conflicting findings have been presented in a study by Schiavo (1973). Unlike Phares and Wilson's (1972) study, no relationship between attribution of responsibility and severity of accident outcome was found. Consistent with Phares and Wilson's results and the defensive externality literature, internals reported that they were less like the accident perpetrator than did externals but, surprisingly, internals did not hold the perpetrator more accountable. No real explanations are apparent for the inconsistent results. Possibly the story presented was such that the heroine was perceived as not being at ease in the situation. It was a "required chemistry course" and the heroine was in a hurry "so she could leave for an early Christmas vacation." One can conjecture that subjects may have felt that this was sufficient cause for a mistake and, so, the internal subjects did not rate her as more responsible. Schiavo's (1973) subjects were all female. It should be noted that Hochreich (1974) was not able to reproduce her attribution of responsibility results with women. Hochreich compared her results with those of Davis (1972) who found similar I-E differences in attribution behavior for subjects of both sexes. Hochreich felt that Davis and Davis, who presented their study as a "social sensitivity" test, may have had a more involving task than she did. Her stories concerned competitive themes. Schiavo's story, which was concerned with an accident in a chemistry lab, may not have been sufficiently involving for his female subjects.

Phares and Lamiell (1975) argue that this result has to be seen in the light of the contrast between attributions of blame for personal failure (Phares, Wilson, and Klyver, 1971; Davis and Davis, 1972) and attribution of blame for the failures of others. In the former situation the I-E differences are observed when the situation is ambiguous and in the second, the study by Phares and Wilson (1972), the I-E x Structure interaction occurred, but only when the outcome was severe. In addition, internals actually attributed more responsibility when the situation was both clearcut and severe.

Phares and Wilson (1972) were concerned with the notion that judgments of others would be affected by the subject's mental set. Was the decision quasi-legal or personal opinion? They felt that in judging legal responsibility subjects might be influenced by the doctrine of "innocent until proven guilty" which would mean ambiguous situations would produce no I-E differences. A highly structured, severe outcome situation would allow for assimilative projection.

Defensiveness

When an individual strives for a goal, but fails to attain it, there is the potential for the occurrence of at least two alternative defensive processes: 1) the person can change his/her expectancies of success in that situation, or 2) devalue the goal.

In the first alternative people maintain their high value for the goal and change their expectations of attaining it. The second alternative, the process of devaluing the goal after failure, is

perhaps a more credible and serviceable strategy for defensive individuals to adopt. To devalue a goal previously striven for provides an individual with a rationale for the cessation of previously fruitless effort. It does not require him to find an alternative method of obtaining the goal, and it also allows him to maintain a self perception of competence.

Social learning theory would expect that some individuals who greatly desire a goal and are unsure of their chances of attaining it will present themselves to others as externally oriented individuals. If a "front" of externality is presented, failure to achieve the goal can be "shrugged" off and "explained" in nonthreatening terms. Both devaluing goals and using an external orientation as a front to disguise one's real beliefs can be regarded as defensive behaviors.

A large body of research has accumulated which directs itself towards the use of external beliefs as a way of coping with personal inadequacies. The fundamental logic behind this research is that there are individuals who have quite strong needs to achieve certain goals but who justify failure or the chance of failure saying, in effect, "I'm not really responsible. I can't know what will happen next because it's really only luck whether I am successful or not."

It was Efran (1963) who found that among high school students internals had a stronger tendency than externals to forget failure after experiencing it. Lipp, Kolstoe, James, and Randall (1968), working with disabled subjects, found that external subjects were less

denying of their disability than were internals. Phares (1974) interprets these results as demonstrating that "an external belief system would seem to allow a greater willingness to admit threatening stimuli to awareness (or else to report such awareness). Stated otherwise, the greater anxiety level which ordinarily characterizes externals is dealt with by the simple expedient of denying the significance of the threat." Based on this interpretation, Phares, Ritchie, and Davis (1968) provided subjects with positive and negative information about their personalities. They found, as expected, that externals were more accepting of unfavorable personal information and recalled more of it than did internals.

Phares (1971), in another study, tested the notion that as a defense against failure, externals, more than internals, would tend to deny the value of a goal they fail to attain. In an experiment which allowed subjects to rate the value of tests of intelligence prior to and after failure, Phares demonstrated that externals did in fact devalue the failed tests more than did internals.

This finding was expanded by Phares and Lamiell (1974) who argued that externals may not only devalue tasks after failure but that the experience of failure itself may teach them to utilize defensive tactics which anticipate and justify failure before it happens. In their study, four tasks were described to the subjects. Two of the tasks had built-in rationalizations which provided subjects with a possible future explanation as to why they might have failed. For

example, on one task (symbol substitution) subjects were told that poor printing of the sheets might affect their performance. As predicted, more externals than internals chose to perform on the tasks with potential rationalizations.

Davis (1970) labelled individuals who verbalize external expectancies, but who in other respects behave like internals, "defensive externals." These persons use their "externality" as a way of protecting themselves from possible future failure. Davis found that defensive externals placed a high value on academic goals, but that their expectations for actually obtaining these goals were not congruent with this value. This and earlier work (Rotter, 1966) suggests that defensive externals are similar to internals in regard to their behavior in competitive, achievement oriented situations.

Hamsher, Geller, and Rotter (1968) found that, in male subjects, lack of trust is significantly correlated with externality. They further argue that low trust externality presents an attitudinal pattern consistent with "defensive externality" as described by Rotter in 1966. That is, such subjects feel manipulated by others, at the mercy of chance factors and other people, yet are also highly competitive and achievement oriented; the former feelings being a "projection onto others of responsibility for failure."

Using Rotter's (1966, 1971) Interpersonal Trust Scale, Hochreich (1974) found that defensive externals attributed less responsibility to story heroes who had failed in some achievement task than did

"congruent" or other externals and internals. Overall, externals attributed less responsibility than did internals. Hochreich's findings were qualified in that they were true for her male subjects but not for her female subjects.

This last study points to the close connection between defensiveness and the important new area in I-E research, attribution of responsibility.

The foregoing research can be summarized very briefly as follows:

- 1) A working assumption is that both internals and externals project their locus of control onto others, a process that has been labelled "assimilative projection."

- 2) It has been further assumed that some individuals adopt an external orientation as a defense against possible future failure. These people have been called defensive externals.

- 3) Under certain circumstances, externals attribute less responsibility to a victim than do internals. Among these externals it has been found that male defensive externals (as opposed to male congruent externals) are the least blaming.

- 4) These results have been more consistent for males than for females but this may be due to the nature of the task; whether or not it was involving to women, its competitive nature, etc.

- 5) Phares and Lamiell (1974) have pointed out the need to distinguish between situations that demand responsibility attribution

for one's own behavior as opposed to the behavior of others. In the latter situation internals are less likely to attribute responsibility than in the former, perhaps because in the latter situation they feel they are making a quasi-legal decision.

Experimental Rationale and Hypotheses

The rationale of the present study is as follows. Internals see themselves as responsible for the outcome in their lives and as exerting relatively more control over the various events in which they are involved. They tend to project this internality onto others. Externals often perceive that events in their lives are determined by external forces beyond their control. They also tend to project their locus of control onto others. In any human interaction certain information about both the social setting and the participants is available to an actor in that situation. If internals differ from externals in the attributions of responsibility under certain circumstances, then we might well expect that under these same circumstances internals and externals would differ in their use of information or informational cues.

On the basis of prior research we would expect that in a competitive task situation, as opposed to a noncompetitive task situation, defensive externality would be engaged. If this is the case, then in a competitive task which involves making decisions about another's responsibility, defensive externals should be more resistant to making

extreme attributions of responsibility (blaming behavior) than either congruent externals or internals. The accuracy of the above statement is dependent upon the employment of assimilative projection by all subjects.

The process of making an attribution of responsibility will also be examined. Implicit in this investigation was a model which assumes that an attribution of responsibility is reached through two other processes: 1) classification or implicit classification of informational items and 2) the weighting of these items in terms of their importance. Even if individuals do not use conventional logic, they can usually explain why they feel that a person is, or is not, responsible for a certain action. An explanation of this nature can be broken down into those items which relate to the individual (recent or past experiences, etc.) and those that relate to the social situation in which the observer sees the actor placed. The observer will decide that some pieces of information are salient to the actor's culpability and others are not. The final attribution of responsibility will reflect these processes of information classification and importance evaluation.

More specifically, if a story is presented to subjects who are asked to classify information into those elements which pertain to the character in the story and those elements which pertain to the environment in which he is placed, internals and externals would be expected to differ in the classification of items as either environment related

or personality related. Their respective biases in viewing the events in their lives would seem likely to distort their processing and evaluation of information about the world. They would be expected to classify more or less items into one area or another, internals classifying more of the items as person related and externals classifying more of the items as environment related. Once having classified the informational items there could be a differential value placed on one class of information as opposed to the other. This value can be ascertained by a dependent measure requiring judgements of importance.

Since it is thought that an attribution of responsibility is affected by a subject's locus of control and level of interpersonal trust, it is reasonable to expect that the classification and importance rating processes will also be affected, since these presumably precede the attribution. For this reason, the classification and importance rating measures should precede the attribution measures in the experiment and related predictions will be made for all the experimental tasks and not just for attribution of responsibility.

This study will expand the notion of assimilative projection through the use of classification and importance ratings as well as attribution of responsibility measures. Both male and female subjects will be used and, hopefully, the task selected will be involving to both sexes. Subjects will be placed in a pseudo-counseling situation, where they will be presented with two case studies and asked to classify

informational items into environment or person related groups. They will also rate the importance of each item in its contribution to the client's problem and the client's degree of responsibility for his problem. In one condition the instructions will be designed to make subjects feel that their decisions are simply of interest in and of themselves and in the other condition a competitive element will be inserted so that they feel their decisions will be judged for their validity. This latter condition should engage defensive externality.

It is predicted that:

1. a) Differences in attribution of client responsibility will be replicated for internals and externals using both sexes.
b) Defensive externals will attribute less responsibility than congruent externals in the competitive condition.
2. a) Internals and externals will differ in the classification of informational items. Internals will select more items as relating to the personality and externals will select more items as relating to the environment.
b) In the competitive condition, defensive externals should select more items as relating to the environment than congruent externals.
3. a) Internals and externals should differ in their ratings of the importance of personality and environmental items in the degree to which they contribute to or are responsible for a situational outcome.

- b) Defensive externals should place more stress on the importance of environmental items than do congruent externals or internals in the competitive condition.

Method

Subjects

One hundred sixty subjects, half male and half female, were drawn from a larger sample of approximately 300 Kansas State University students enrolled in general Psychology courses. These students had all been pretested on Rotter's 29-item I-E scale (1966) and on Rotter's Interpersonal Trust Scale (1971).

All subjects were classified by median split into Internals and Externals. Individuals were regarded as Internal if they scored above the median of 10.5 on the I-E scale and as External if they scored below it. Externals were further divided by median split into defensive and congruent categories. Subjects who scored below the median of 64.0 on the trust scale were regarded as defensive externals and individuals who scored higher than the median were labeled as congruent externals. The above procedure was similarly applied to internals to produce low trust internals and high trust internals, respectively.

Procedure

Previous research indicates that I-E and trust are significantly correlated (Hamsher, Geller, and Rotter, 1968; Lamiell, 1974). This study's experimental design called for equal cell sizes. To maintain mathematical orthogonality in the cells of the I-E x Trust (high-low) matrix, subjects for the experiment were randomly selected out from

the highly populated cells of the original sample. Pretesting scoring errors discovered too late to be remedied prevented all 160 subjects from being used, and the final N for the analysis was 149. Of those cells that were short of the ten S's expected, one cell was four short, three cells were two short and one cell was one short. The four short cell was the noncompetitive internal low trust cell.

When the pretested subjects were being recruited for the experiment they were told that it would involve "taking the part of a counselor making decisions about his/her client after reading case history material." They were also told that volunteering for the experiment would require approximately 60 minutes of their time and that, in return, they would receive one unit of class credit.

Subjects were run in groups which ranged in size from five to ten. Upon being seated, each subject was given a complete packet of the necessary reading and questionnaire material. Each packet contained two "stories." In all cases Story One was a "Case Transcript" and Story Two was a "Case Report." Both stories were designed to be ambiguous as to sources of responsibility for the situation they reported. Two different contexts were presented. In the first story the hero's context or "social environment" was restricted to his interactions with his girlfriend, and in the second story it was provided by the agencies of the university, and the companies he interviewed with. These two different contexts were provided to enable greater representativeness and generalizability of results.

All groups were presented with the same two stories. Preceding each story was a set of either competitive or noncompetitive instructions, but in any particular group all instructions were the same. Packets were placed face down on the floor and subjects were asked to proceed only upon instruction from the experimenter. All instructions were read aloud by the experimenter while the subjects read along. After reading the first set of competitive or noncompetitive instructions (see Appendix A) in this manner, subjects were asked to read Story One silently (see Appendix B). Then subjects were asked to fill in the classification task which followed (see Appendix C). Subjects' scoring on the classification task was achieved by reading the "key words or phrases" that had been taken from the transcript and then encircling the appropriate letter, "P" or "E". The letter circled indicated the subject's belief that the word or phrase being examined was in a context such that it related more to the personality or social environment of the character in the transcript. The distinction between the two concepts was the subject's.

After all subjects had completed this task their papers were collected and they were asked to proceed to the next page, which consisted of the importance rating task (see Appendix D). The importance rating task provided a 7 point scale for each item which the subject had previously classified as "P" or "E". The direction of the scale was from 1 = not important to 7 = very important. In this task the subjects had to decide the amount of emphasis they would give to the items they had previously classified.

Upon completion of this task the experimenter again collected all subjects' papers. This collection procedure was followed after the completion of each rating task in order to avoid an artificial degree of consistency between measures which could have occurred had subjects been allowed to review their previous responses.

The attribution of responsibility tasks were next. The first attribution of responsibility measure (see Appendix E) presented two statements: "A," which imputed sources of control outside the individual, and "B," which suggested personal responsibility. This measure was designed to structure the subjects' thinking into locus of control terms and it was hoped that it might be more sensitive than the simple percentage attribution measure which followed it (see Appendix F). By writing opposing statements, which presented a conclusion as to the source of situation's outcome, it was hoped to congeal the subjects' own views on the matter. This battery of tests completed the first half of the experiment.

For the second story the same measures were used and they were taken in the same order. The wording of the second set of instructions, both competitive and noncompetitive (see Appendix G), which preceeded the second story (see Appendix H) and of the tasks themselves (see Appendixes I, J, K, L) were changed to fit the second story, but the basic format remained unchanged. The one exception was that the first attribution of responsibility statements were reversed such that "A" suggested personal responsibility and "B" imputed sources of control outside the individual.

At the conclusion of the experiment all subjects were debriefed regarding the purpose of the study and their questions were answered by the experimenter.

Results

Scoring and Analysis Procedures

For the classification task, the number of items classified by each subject as "P" or "E" were totaled. These "P" totals served as the subjects' raw scores. ANOVAs were performed on the "P" totals. Because the number of items was fixed and an item had to be classified as "P" or "E", an analysis of the number of "E" items would have been redundant. Consequently, all analyses were conducted only on the number of items classified as "P".

As mentioned previously, the importance rating task provided a 7-point scale for each item which the subject had previously classified as "P" or "E". The direction of the scale was from 1 = not important to 7 = very important. The scores for all items were summed and the mean importance rating score was produced by dividing this sum by the number of items previously classified as "P" or "E".

The first attribution of responsibility measures consisted of scoring statements "A" and "B", independently, on a 7 point scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. The second attribution of responsibility measure involved having the subject circle or write in a numerical percentage corresponding to the degree to which his/her client was responsible for their present situation. These attribution of responsibility measures were recorded directly from the answer sheets and used in the analyses in this form.

In each analysis the Clark University Computer Center/ Psychology Department Harmonic IV Analysis of Variance/ Trend Program (ANOVAT) as revised at Kansas State University was employed. All unplanned comparisons were made using a least significant difference test (Kepple, 1973, p. 135).

Hypothesis 1: Attribution of Responsibility Tasks

Hypothesis 1a predicted that differences in attribution of client responsibility would be replicated for the internals and externals using both sexes. Hypothesis 1b further predicted that in the competitive condition defensive externals would attribute less responsibility than other externals. To test both 1a and 1b, data was gathered on the two attribution of responsibility measures mentioned earlier. The percentage measure was analyzed first. A five-way ANOVA was performed with "stories" (ST) as the repeated measures variable. Sex (SX), Internal-External Locus of Control (I-E), Interpersonal Trust (IT), and Competitive/Noncompetitive (CN) factors were the between variables.

No support for Hypothesis 1a was found. Previously obtained attribution of responsibility differences between internals and externals were not supported.

No significant evidence was found for the prediction that both sexes would respond in like fashion with regard to I-E. In fact, a significant sex difference was found with males attributing more responsibility to their client than did females ($\bar{x}_{\text{males}} = 67.3\%$, $\bar{x}_{\text{females}} = 62.9\%$; $F(1,133) = 4.011$, $p < .05$). A significant $SX \times ST$

interaction ($F(1,133) = 4.397, p < .05$; see figure 1) was also found.

As figure 1 illustrates, the largest difference between the sexes was at ST-2. This difference was found to be significant (least significant difference test, $F(1,133) = 10.59, p < .01$).

Hypothesis 1b also received no support. The hypothesis implied a three-way interaction with a predicted strong decline in attribution of responsibility for defensive externals. This interaction was not found to be significant, nor was a planned comparison (Kepple, 1973, p. 98) conducted to assess the difference between low trust and high trust externals in the competitive condition. It is interesting to note that not one of the 242 means in this analysis had a value of 52% or below. Only 14 means had values between 53% and 60%, all other means were between 61% and 75%. Subjects showed an overwhelming bias towards seeing their story client as being responsible for his plight.

An unexpected I-E x ST interaction was found however ($F(1,133) = 4.397, p < .05$). The means are plotted in Figure 2. Comparing the means for internals and externals for each story, a significant I-E difference at ST-1 was found ($F(1,133) = 3.87, p < .10$).

It seems clear that the within variable, ST, was having an unanticipated effect. The second story influenced the males and females differently, and, although the difference is not significant at ST-2, internals' and externals' means are reversed over the two stories. To further complicate matters, the I-E x IT x SX x ST

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Figure One

Means of the sex by story interaction in the first ANOVA of the percentage attribution of responsibility results.

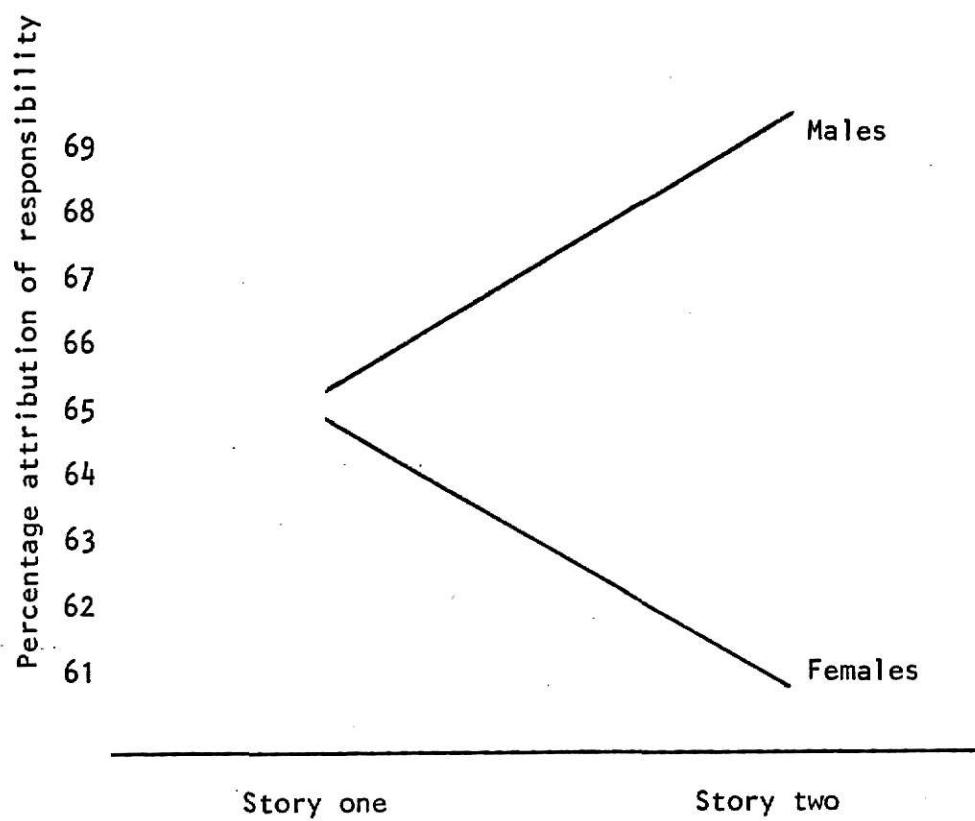
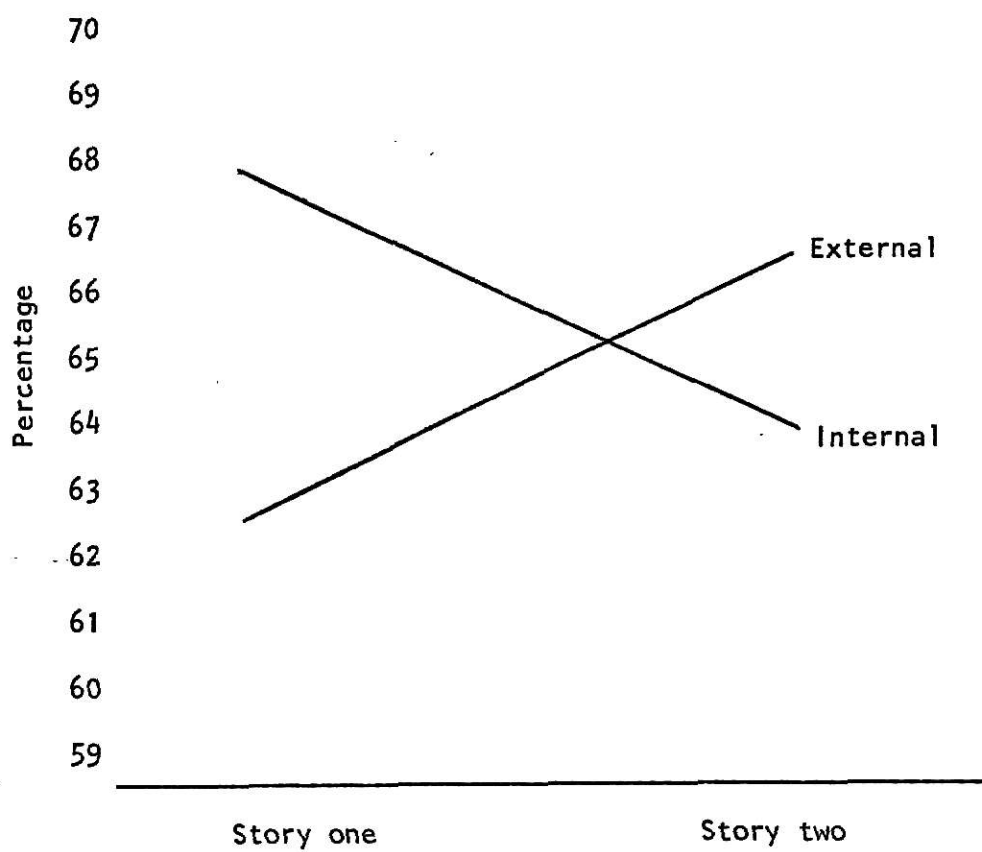


Figure Two

The means for the ST x I-E interaction in the first ANOVA



interaction showed a trend toward significance, if only at the .10 level ($F(1,133) = 3.387$, $p < .10$). This interaction was impossible to interpret in a psychologically meaningful way. The stories varied in uncontrolled ways such that the effects of the independent variables could have been weakened.

These story results and sex differences reported above, led to the decision to analyze each story and sex separately, thus gaining more power through an increase in degrees of freedom previously used to estimate interactions of little interest to the study.

ANOVA Number 2

This ANOVA analyzed the percentage attribution of responsibility measure for males after reading ST-1. No significant I-E main effect was found, although the means were in the predicted direction. The predicted three-way interaction for CN x IE x IT was not significant, nor was the planned comparison conducted to assess the difference between LT and HT externals in the competitive condition. These means were however in the predicted direction.

ANOVA Number 3

Analysis of the percentage attribution of responsibility measure for males after reading ST-2 produced no significant results supportive of Hypotheses 1a and 1b.

ANOVA Number 4

An I-E main effect was found to be significant for females responding on the percentage attribution of responsibility measure after the first story ($F(1,65) = 5.467, p < .05$). Internals found their imaginary client, Marty, more responsible than did externals. This supports Hypothesis 1a, therefore for this group the null hypothesis can be rejected. The CN x IE x IT interaction was not significant and, although the differences in the competitive external high and low trust means was in the expected direction, it also failed to reach statistical significance.

ANOVA Number 5

Analyses performed on females' percentage attribution of responsibility ratings after the second story were non-significant and did not support Hypotheses 1a and 1b.

ANOVAs Number 6 - 13

Eight more ANOVAs were conducted to test hypotheses 1a and 1b. The dependent measures in these cases were the scores given to the statements "A" and "B". In the first story agreement with "A" was an external response and agreement with "B" was an internal response, while in the second story the situation was reversed. An "external response" attributed responsibility to factors external to the client; either to another individual, or to social or environmental forces. An "internal response" attributed responsibility to the client himself

(see Appendixes E and K). Opposite results were expected for internals and externals. Results on these attribution measures did not support Hypothesis 1a. In fact, an I-E difference was found on ANOVA 9 (males rating "B", the external statement after ST-2) in the opposite direction to that predicted. Internals agreed with the environment blaming statement more than externals ($F(1,68) = 3.105, p < .10$). I-E means were in the opposite direction to that predicted in 6 out of the 8 analyses.

No support was found for Hypothesis 1b either, and defensive and congruent external means were in the predicted direction in only three out of eight ANOVAs.

A significant main effect for Interpersonal trust was found on analysis 11 (female ratings on internal statement "B" after reading ST-2). High trusting females agreed with the personality blaming attribution statement more than low trusters ($F(1,65) = 4.079, p < .05$). No other significant F values were found.

Scores for the "A" and "B" statements were originally included as second measures of attribution of responsibility in order to allow for a more discriminating analysis of responsibility attribution. The measures were designed to present two opposing statements which would consolidate the subject's picture of their client's case and enable them to more precisely attribute blame. It was assumed that the internal and external causal attributions would be inversely related and that scores on the "A" and "B" measures would correlate highly with

the percentage measure. The results reported above brought these assumptions under question, therefore the following analyses of the measure were conducted. To check the degree to which the statements were regarded as being opposite to each other in meaning, correlations between "A" and "B" were calculated for all subjects participating in the experiment. This included an extra eleven subjects who, because of full cells in the design, were not used in the analysis. The expected negative correlations were obtained (see Table 1) for ST-1 and ST-2, respectively. These correlations account for only 3.61% and 37.21% of the variance. Therefore it was decided to examine the sexes separately to see whether one of the sexes was weakening the correlation. These four correlations are recorded in Table 1 also. For each story, males perceived a weaker diametric relationship between the supposedly opposite statements than did females. For both sexes the "A" and "B" statements in the second story seemed more clear cut and dichotomous than the "A" and "B" statements in the first story. Subjects seemed to find the social interaction of job hunting more understandable, in terms of who or what carries the responsibility for the situation, than the interpersonal problem of a love affair.

While not as strong as might have been hoped, the predicted negative correlations between statements "A" and "B" are all significant, barring that for males in the first story. The subjects did, therefore, perceive the statements as being opposites.

Table 1
Correlations between "A" and "B" statements of responsibility

Subjects	Story	df	r	Significance
All	1	159	-0.19	$p < .05$
All	2	159	-0.61	$p < .05$
Males	1	79	-0.03	N.S.
Females	1	79	-0.33	$p < .05$
Males	2	79	-0.53	$p < .05$
Females	2	79	-0.69	$p < .05$

A further set of correlations was then conducted between the sentence statement of responsibility and the percentage attributions to see if these two measures were in agreement. These correlations are contained in Table 2. Because the pair of correlations for ST-1 were weaker than the pair for ST-2, separate correlations were performed for ST-1 for each sex. The correlations for "A" and "B" with the percentage rating in ST-1 are contained in Table 2.

Clearly, the "A" and "B" ratings in ST-2 held up better than "A" and "B" ratings in ST-1 as similar measures of responsibility to the percentage attribution of responsibility measure.

The breakdown by sex at ST-1 would seem to indicate that for men relative to women the "A" measure has only a very weak relationship to the percentage measure.

Again, there is an indication that men see "A" and "B" as being less dichotomous than do women. For men in the first story the negative correlation at "A" is not as strong as the positive correlation at "B". In fact, the external statement "A" does not even correlate negatively at a significant level.

Taken as a whole, these results demonstrate that the two measures of attribution of responsibility are consistently and strongly related. Thus, the assumptions that "A" and "B" attributions would be inversely related and that "A" and "B" measures would correlate with the percentage attribution measure, are borne out by the data.

Table 2

Correlations between the "A" and "B" statements of responsibility
and the percentage attribution measure of responsibility

Subjects	Story	Statement	df	r	Significance
All	1	A	159	-0.23	$p < .05$
All	1	B	159	0.37	$p < .05$
All	2	A	159	0.71	$p < .05$
All	2	B	159	-0.71	$p < .05$
Males	1	A	79	-0.12	n.s.
Females	1	A	79	-0.33	$p < .05$
Males	1	B	79	0.33	$p < .05$
Females	1	B	79	0.33	$p < .05$

*Note: Agreement with "A" is an external response and with "B" is an internal response for the first story, but this is reversed for the second story.

Hypothesis 2: Classification Task

ANOVAs Number 14 - 17

Hypothesis 2a predicted an I-E difference in the number of informational items that would be classified as personality and environment related. Hypothesis 2b predicted that, in the competitive condition, defensive externals would rate more items as environment related and fewer items as personality related than would congruent externals in the same condition. As before, each story was analyzed separately as was each sex. No significant results were found to support Hypothesis 2a or 2b, and the null hypothesis can not be rejected. Only in ANOVA 17 (female responses after ST-2) were the I-E and competitive external high and low trust means in the predicted direction.

Each informational item could be interpreted as conveying more about personality or social environment. However, in the first story, a majority of males classified 15 of the 25 items as "P" (60%), and a majority of females classified 16 of the 25 (64%) as "P". In ST-2 males classified 10 of the 17 items (58.8%) as "P" while females classified 11 of the 17 items as "P" (64%). In both cases males and females classified the same items as "P", the exception being that for both stories the females classified one additional item as "P". Thus, there seems to be a disposition to view pieces of information concerning another individual as more reflective of personality than environment.

Hypothesis 3: Importance Ratings of Classified Items

ANOVAs 18 - 26

Hypothesis 3a predicted that there would be an I-E difference in the ratings of importance which subjects gave to those items they had classified as "P" or "E". It was expected that internals would tend to rate items they had classified as "P" more important than items they had classified as "E". The opposite was predicted for externals.

The analyses were conducted on items classified as "P" and on items classified as "E", with sex and story being considered separately. This produced eight analyses of variance.

A significant I-E effect was found for males in ST-1 for their importance ratings of items they had classified as "P". Internal males rated their "P" items as being more important than did external males ($F(1,68) = 8.419, p < .01$).

In ANOVA 19 (male importance ratings of "E" items after story 1) internals were found to have rated their "E" items higher in importance than externals had rated theirs ($F(1,68) = 2.801, p < .10$). This result, although weaker than in ANOVA 18, is in the direction opposite to that predicted.

Male importance ratings of "P" items after Story 2 were examined in ANOVA 20. While the mean for internals was larger than that for externals as was predicted the difference was not significant.

ANOVA 21 (male importance ratings of "E" items in story 2) also produced an I-E result counter to prediction. Internals were found to

have rated their "E" items as higher in importance than externals ($F(1,68) = 2.797, p < .10$).

Females produced similar results to those of males. A predicted I-E difference was found in the importance ratings of "P" classified items after Story 1 ($F(1,65) = 3.320, p < .10$). A nonpredicted I-E difference was found for female subjects in ANOVA 23. While not significant it fits into the same pattern as that established by the males in ANOVA 21.

The difference in internal and external importance ratings of "P" items after Story 2 (ANOVA 24) is not significant, but is in the predicted direction.

As with the males in ANOVA 21, the difference in internal and external mean importance ratings of "E" items after Story 2, is not significant, but is in the opposite direction to that predicted.

In Hypothesis 2b it was predicted that defensive externals would place more stress on the importance of environmental items than would congruent externals. It was further predicted that defensive externals would place more stress on items they had classified as personality related than would congruent externals.

In only three of eight analyses dealing with the importance ratings of "P" and "E" classified items were the differences between the high and low trust external means in the direction predicted. In none of these three cases were the differences statistically different.

However, three significant competitive-noncompetitive x Internal-External locus of control x interpersonal trust interactions were found.

ANOVA 19

A CN x I-E x IT interaction was found for males importance ratings of their "E" classified items, after ST-1 ($F(1,68) = 3.215, p < .05$). The means for this interaction are plotted in Figure 3.

In the competitive condition low trust internals were found to place significantly more importance on their "E" classified items than did high trust internals ($F(1,68) = 3.221, p < .10$).

In the non-competitive condition another I-E difference was found. This time high trust internals gave significantly higher importance ratings for "E" classified items than did high trust externals ($F(1,68) = 4.0237, p < .05$).

ANOVA 22

The CN x IE x IT interaction for females importance ratings of their "P" classified items after ST-1 was found to be significant ($F(1,68) = 3.862, p < .10$). The means are plotted in Figure 4.

In the competitive condition, high trust internal females gave higher importance ratings than did high trust externals ($F(1,65) = 3.355, p < .10$).

In the non-competitive condition female low trust internals and externals differed significantly. The internals gave higher importance to items they had classified as "P" than the externals ($F(1,65) = 3.598, p < .10$). High trust externals and internals were not found to be significantly different as was the case with the difference between non-competitive high and low trust externals. Thus the biggest change is between high and low trust noncompetitive internals.

Figure 3

Means of the CN x I-E x IT interaction found for males' importance ratings of their "E" classified items after story one

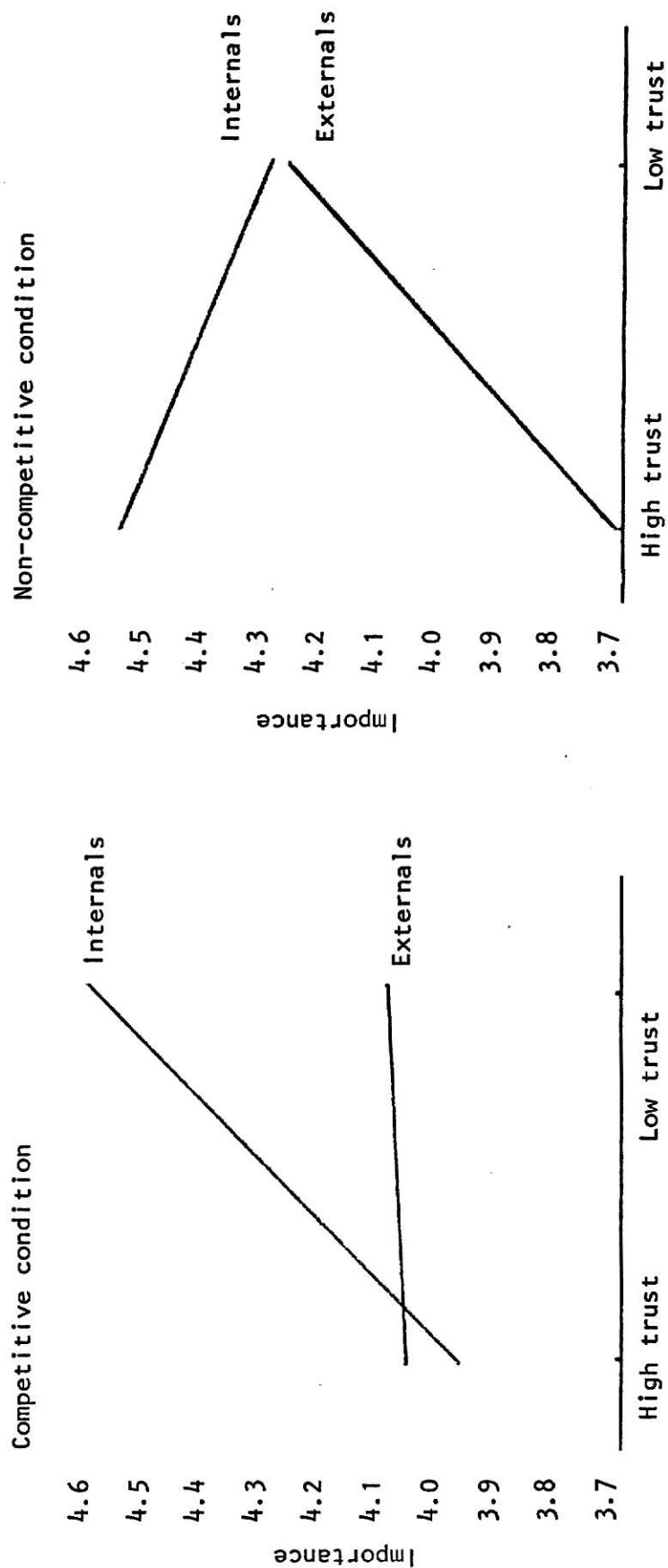
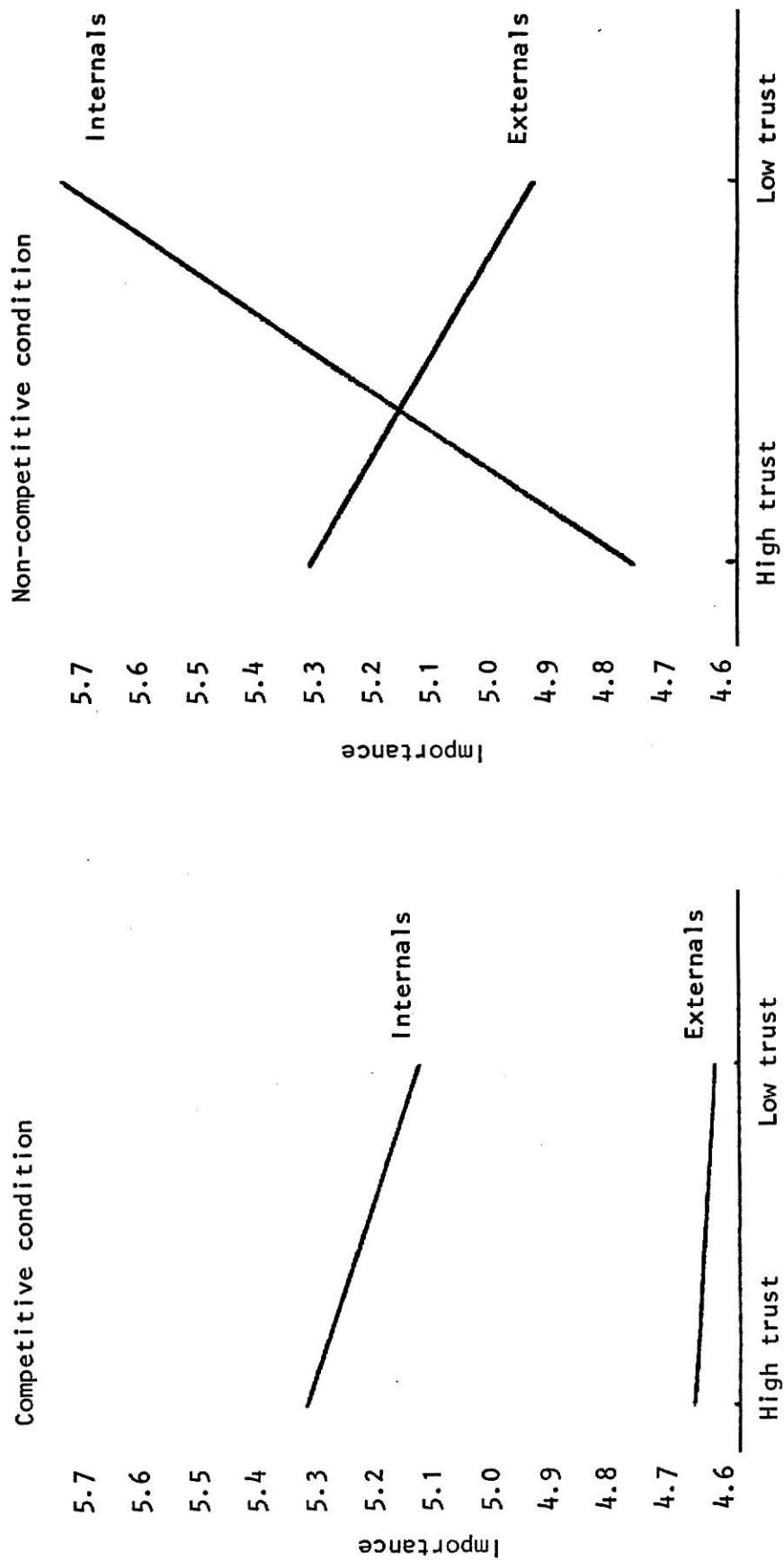


Figure 4

Means for the CN x I-E x IT interaction for females' importance ratings of their "p" classified items after story one



ANOVA 24

In this analysis a significant CN x IE x IT interaction was found ($F(1,65) = 4.093, p < .05$). The means are plotted in Figure 5. A very similar pattern of results was found with the three way interaction in ANOVA 24 as in ANOVA 22. In the competitive condition none of the means were significantly different from each other but, as in ANOVA 22 the internal means were higher than the external means.

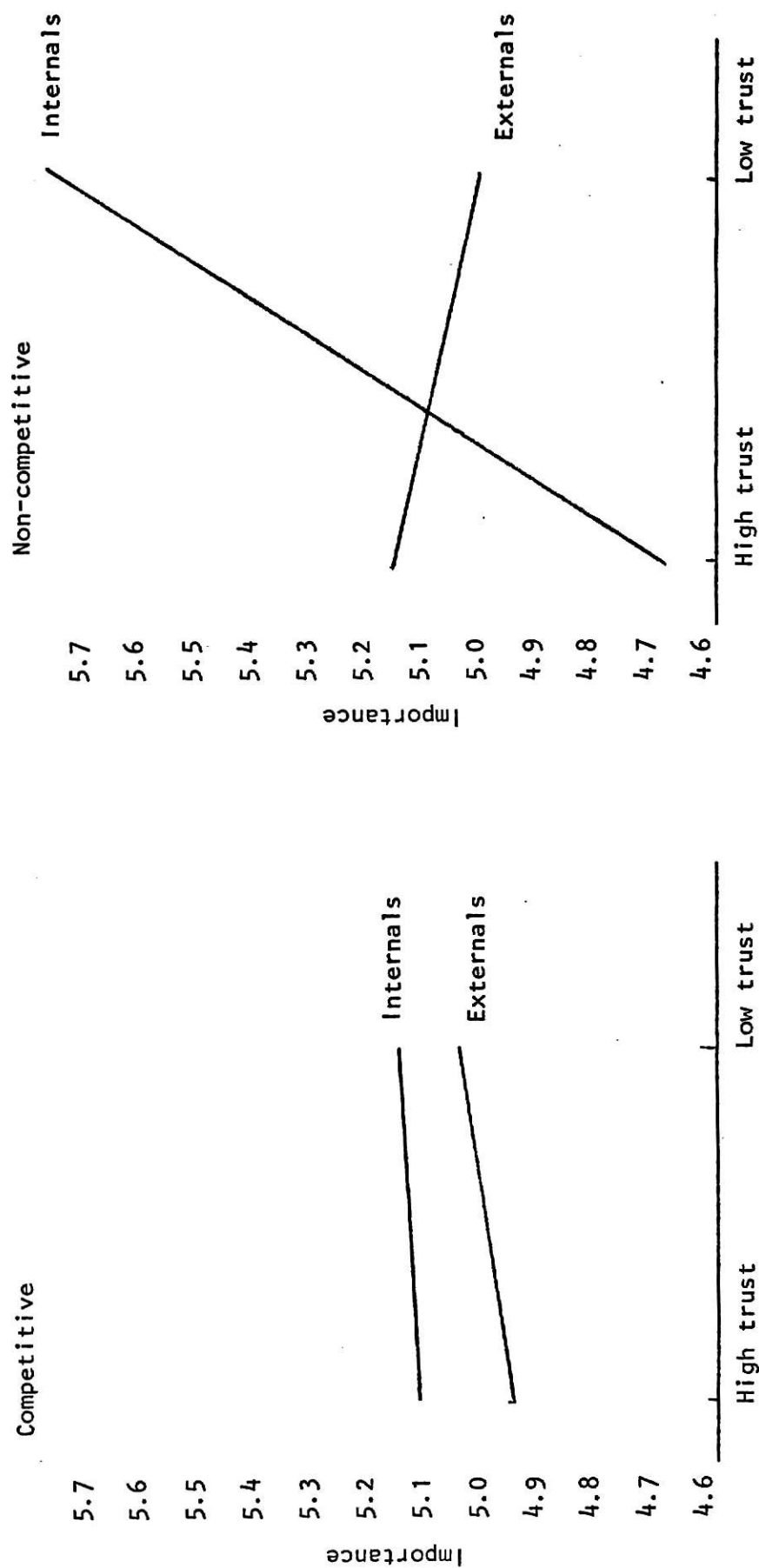
In the noncompetitive conditions the high and low trust external means were not significantly different but the high and low trust internal means were ($F(1,65) = 9.51187, p < .01$).

Further effects on the importance rating task

In ANOVA's 20 and 23 CN main effects were found. In the analysis of males' importance ratings of "P" items after ST-2 (ANOVA 20) males in the competitive condition gave more importance to "P" items than those in the noncompetitive condition ($F(1,68) = 7.863, p < .01$). Conversely females in the competitive condition after reading ST-1 gave less weight to "E" items than did women in the noncompetitive condition ($F(1,65) = 6.740, p < .05$; ANOVA 23). It would seem that the competitive condition might cause subjects to regard "P" classified information as more important than "E" classified information. The significant three way CN x IE x IT interactions seem to indicate that internals are the most affected by the CN manipulation. An examination of Figures 4 and 5 illustrates the rise in high trust internal scores in the competitive condition. A competitive situation seems to cause high trust internal individuals to act like low trusters when decisions

Figure 5

Means of the CN x I-E x IT interaction for female subjects' importance ratings of their "p" classified items after story two



regarding the importance of pieces of personality related information are being made.

ANOVA 23 produced a significant CN x IE interaction ($F(1,65) = 3.425, p < .10$), the means of which are plotted in Figure 6.

The differences between the external means over the competitive and noncompetitive conditions were not significant but the differences for the internal means were ($F(1,65) = 8.47, p < .01$). I-E differences were found in the noncompetitive condition ($F(1,65) = 5.3167, p < .05$) with internals placing more importance on "E" classified items than externals. This analysis again suggests that internals are more affected by competitive conditions than externals, but that all internals can be influenced and not just high trust internals.

In ANOVA 24 an I-E x IT interaction was found ($F(1,65) = 3.425, p < .10$). The means are plotted in Figure 7.

ANOVA 24 analyzed female subject importance ratings of "P" taken from ST-2. The external high and low trust means were not found to be different but the internal high and low trust means were ($F(1,68) = 5.713, p < .05$).

In ANOVA 23 the CN condition seems to have wiped out the trust effects but in ANOVA 24 while we have an IE x IT interaction an examination of the CN x IE x IT interaction suggests that it gets most of its variance from the non-competitive condition. Certainly while it accounts for 4.5% of the variance in the analysis, the three way interaction accounts for 5.4%.

Figure 6

Means of the CN x I-E interaction for importance ratings of
"P" classified items for female subjects after story two

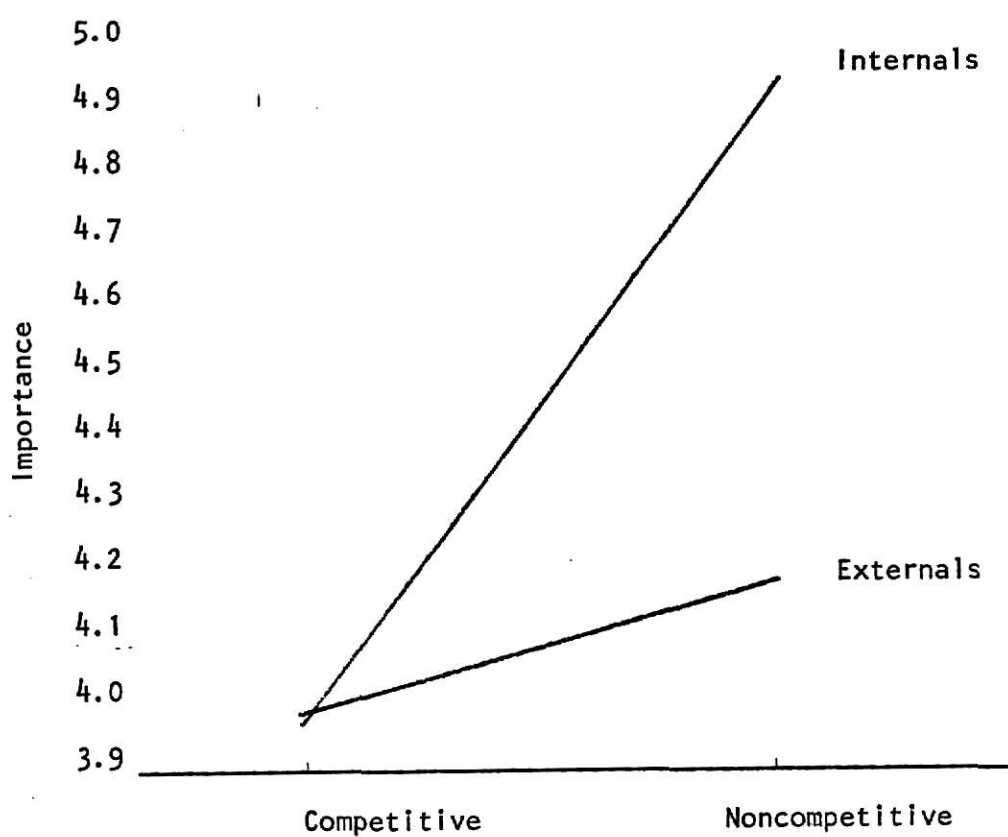
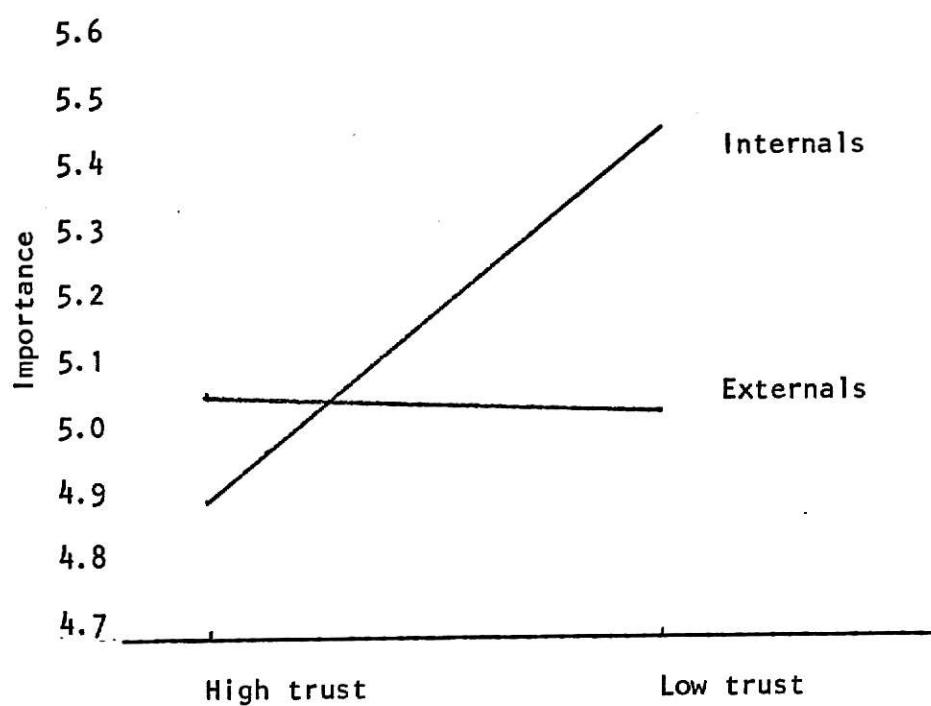


Figure 7

Means for the I-E x IT interaction found for female importance ratings of "P" classified items after story two



A dependent two tailed t test was conducted on the importance ratings of "P" and "E" classified items. On the first story the "P" and "E" importance means for all subjects were 4.9788 and 4.1479 respectively, ($t(148) = 13.6988$, $p < .001$) and 4.9736 and 4.5204 on the second story ($t(148) = 5.75$, $p < .001$).

A. Summary of the Results

No support can be claimed for Hypothesis 1a. Two different measures of attribution of responsibility were taken and 12 ANOVA's conducted. While one significant I-E difference was found in the predicted direction another was found in the opposite direction. Only three of the nonsignificantly different I-E means were in the direction predicted.

Hypothesis 1b received no support and only five of the twelve pairs of competitive high versus low trust external means were in the direction predicted.

The two measures of attribution were found to be consistently and strongly related. The assumption that "A" and "B" attributions of responsibility would be inversely related and that "A" and "B" would correlate with the percentage attribution measure was checked and supported.

It was noted that cell means, regardless of experimental condition, all tended to be 52% or higher in attribution of responsibility, indicating a general tendency for subjects to see their "client" as personally responsible.

Hypothesis 2a received no support and only one of the four ANOVA's dealing with the classification measure had an I-E difference that was in the predicted direction.

Hypothesis 2b was not supported either, and only one analysis had competitive external high and low trust means in the predicted direction.

Subjects, both male and female, tended to classify the same items consistently and to prefer a label of "P" rather than "E".

Of the 8 ANOVA's dealing with hypothesis 3a, two produced significant I-E differences in the predicted direction. Two also produced significant I-E differences in the opposite direction to that predicted. If the I-E main effect means are considered without regard to statistical significance it can be observed that in all 8 analyses the internal subjects placed a greater amount of importance on both "P" and "E" classified items than did externals.

Hypothesis 3b received no support. In only three of 8 analyses were the differences between the competitive high and low trust external means in the predicted direction.

Three significant CN x IE x IT interactions were found, along with a CN x IE and a IE x IT interaction. These five interactions point to a pattern in which high trust internals elevate their importance ratings of "P" classified items in the competitive condition. The reverse seems to happen to "E" items.

Subjects rated "P" classified items significantly higher in importance than "E" classified items on both stories.

Discussion

How can we account for these very disappointing results? While separate analyses were conducted so as to prevent the weakening of main effects by higher order interactions involving sex and stories the procedure was not successful in producing the predicted significant main effects and interactions for the independent variables.

If only female subjects had been used in the experiment the present results would not be surprising. While Davis and Davis (1972), Phares and Lamiell (1975), and Sosis (1974) have attained attribution of responsibility results with both males and females, Hochreich (1974), in the only published study on defensive externality and attribution of responsibility, was unable to obtain significant results for women. Other researchers (Lamiell, 1974; Phares and Wilson, 1972; and Phares, Wilson and Klyver, 1975) conducted their studies without the use of female subjects. Because studies reveal that the relationship between I-E and criterion behavior can differ for male and female subjects (Hochreich, 1968; 1972; Lefcourt and Wine, 1969; Feather, 1967; 1968), future researchers will have to pay closer attention to this variable.

Further, an unexpected sex difference was found in ANOVA 1. It had been expected that no significant differences between the sexes would occur on attribution of responsibility due to the hoped for equal involvement in the experimental task by both sexes. Males, however,

were found to attribute more responsibility than females on the percentage measure. This may have been due to the males' identifying with the male clients in the stories more closely than did the females, and consequently feeling freer to be more punitive. Perhaps females felt that they could not completely understand a man's point of view, the result being their relative leniency. Both sexes seemed to find the experimental task involving, although no tests were performed to confirm this. It is suggested that future researchers conduct tests prior to the commencement of their experiments, on sex and task variables. In any case, this sex difference did not seem to create a radically different pattern of results for females as opposed to males when all of the ANOVAs were considered. Clearly, not enough significant results were found for men to enable any comments to the effect that women are providing a different overall pattern of responses. It will be assumed, in future discussion, that the pattern of responses is the same, despite the indication of an elevation in male responses mentioned above.

The present study failed to duplicate I-E and attribution of responsibility findings for males (Phares, Wilson and Klyver, 1971; Davis and Davis, 1972; Phares and Wilson, 1972; and Phares and Lamiell, 1975) and the question "why?" still remains.

Differences in the two stories may account for the fact that the most powerful I-E differences found on any of the dependent measures were after ST-1. The first statistical evidence for a functional difference in the two stories came after ANOVA 1 when an IT x ST interaction was found on the percentage attribution of responsibility measure.

This interaction was plotted in Figure 2 and, as reported earlier, a significant I-E difference was obtained after ST-1 but not after ST-2. Phares and Lamiell (1975) report that researchers have obtained I-E differences in two different ways:

- 1) when the subject is attributing responsibility to himself and his situation is ambiguous
- 2) when the subject is judging another individual who is in an ambiguous situation which has a severe outcome. Ambiguous situations, it was suggested, cause subjects to act as jurors and refuse to commit themselves unless they understand the situation and its outcome clearly.

The first method of obtaining I-E differences is irrelevant to the present study, but the second is not. Both stories were designed to be ambiguous because it was thought that the role of counselor would remove "juror" type inhibition to attribute responsibility in an ambiguous situation. Note might well have been taken of Phares and Lamiell's (1975) findings, which indicate that a counselor type role on the part of their subjects made little difference in attributions. Moreover, only ST-1 could be regarded as having a severe outcome. This story had the client breaking up with his girlfriend and subjects' comments indicated that they felt that John (ST-2) could get himself a job if he tried hard enough, but that Marty (ST-1) could not get his girlfriend back. This difference in perceived severity of outcome could account for the occurrence of the strongest I-E differences being found after

the first story. Regardless of the cause of differential responding in the stories, its occurrence points to the need for testing such scenarios prior to their use in an experiment.

The weakness of the above argument lies in the fact that it only has any real application in regard to the importance ratings, since the strongest significant I-E difference for attribution of responsibility is for females after story one (percentage measure, ANOVA 4).

Further discussion of reasons for the lack of replication of male attribution of responsibility results is best deferred until the reasons for failure of the defensive externality predictions is conducted. At this point a more comprehensive argument which covers both sexes will be presented.

Defensive Externality

No support was found for Hypothesis 1b or its derivatives 2b and 3b. The concept of defensive externality will now be discussed, along with the problems associated with using the Interpersonal Trust Scale to measure it. Since this aspect of the study is salient to several of the hypotheses, it will be discussed at some length.

The reader will recall that Locus of Control is a generalized expectancy of the problem solving type. Researchers (Efran, 1963; Rotter, 1966; Lipp, Kolstoe, James and Randall, 1968; and Phares, Ritchie, and Davis, 1968) conducted experiments demonstrating that externals' strategies for coping with anxiety or threat were different

from those of internals. In addition, the idea that individuals assumed an external orientation as a defense against possible failure also arose early (Rotter, 1966). To oversimplify, there are two possibilities for an individual giving an external response: (1) it can be a "true" reflection of an individual's expectancy that he can not solve problems in his life and his expectation that other forces or luck will provide the solution or direction, or (2) an external response may be a means of avoiding responsibility for anticipated failures. This last statement reveals a contradiction. An external individual is less likely than an internal to try to control his environment, but to answer like an external in anticipation of future failure is, in a sense, an attempt at controlling one's environment. Such individuals are responding like externals but, at the same time, acting like internals. For this reason Rotter (1966) called them defensive externals.

Research was cited in the introduction which supported the notion that individuals may make use of an external locus of control as a defense against failure. Having established this construction, researchers set about ways of identifying this "defensive" external from true or "congruent" externals. An early approach was made by Hamsher, Geller, and Rotter (1968) who used Rotter's (1967) Interpersonal Trust Scale for the purpose. Subjects with low trust scores and a high degree of externality were found to express a distrust in the Warren Commission's findings (a response which history may still ironically vindicate as not defensive, but reasonable in light of more

recently revealed information). These defensive externals, it was argued, "develop the suspicious conviction that authority figures are bent on using their positions to thwart attempts at self control of the environment and to undermine efforts toward mastery" (Hamsher, Geller, and Rotter, 1968, p. 214). Hochreich (1968, 1974) used the Interpersonal Trust Scale as a method of distinguishing between defensive and congruent externals in two further experiments, as did Phares and Lamiell (1974), Lamiell (1974) and the present author.

Two different, conflicting sets of results presented themselves to Phares and Lamiell (1974) which they tried to integrate. Hochreich (1968) and Davis (1970) had obtained results which indicated that defensive externals behave less like externals and more like internals. In Davis' study, defensive externals placed a higher value on academic achievement goals than did congruent externals and in Hochreich's study they demonstrated a greater responsiveness to feedback concerning their performance on a competitive skill task than did congruent externals (although Hochreich found this only for males). Hochreich (1973) and Phares and Lamiell (1974) published findings that indicate that defensive externals behave in a manner consistent with their expressed external locus of control. In Hochreich's study, defensive externals (male but not female) attributed less responsibility to story heroes under failure conditions than did congruent externals. The relationship was strongest when story heroes failed in achievement situations. Phares and Lamiell (1974) found that defensive externals showed the

greatest preference for tests described with the so-called built in rationalizations for failure

Phares and Lamiell (1974) suggested that the difference between the two sets of results may be due to the experimental conditions. When threat of failure is present, defensive externals would behave externally and when it is not they would behave internally.

Lamiell (1974) decided to test this notion by getting subjects to choose between a task with a built-in rationalization for failure and a "non-rationalizable" achievement task under conditions of risk of failure and no risk of failure. However, Lamiell's study failed to produce significant statistical results to support his predictions that (1) both defensive and congruent externals would prefer a rationalizable task in the risk condition, (2) that in the no-risk condition, defensive externals and internals relative to congruent externals would prefer those tasks where the score indicates one's ability, and (3) that defensive externals would show quantitatively lower discrepancies between their expectancy for success and their criterion of success than would either congruent externals or internals.

The present study addressed its attention less towards identification of defensive externality than towards the components of responsibility attribution and its relationship with defensive externality. As reported in the results section, it is clear that the CN manipulation did not produce a risk condition, as Lamiell (1974) calls it (i.e. fears of competitiveness or failure). None of the 12 ANOVAs conducted

on the attribution of responsibility measures produced the significant three-way interaction predicted.

The Interpersonal Trust Scale (ITS) measures the general expectation of an individual that the messages he receives from other individuals are likely to be truthful. At face value this can be related to defensive behavior in the sense of reacting against authority figures supposedly bent on thwarting self control by the subjects (Hamsher, Geller and Rotter, 1968). But it is hard to see its relationship with responsiveness to feedback after performance on a competitive skill task (Hochreich, 1968), or how it is related to a preference for tests with built-in rationalizations (Phares and Lamiell, 1974). While Interpersonal Trust scores for externals may be correlated with these behaviors, interpersonal trust itself is not a good discriminator of defensiveness. The present study found two conflicting trust main effects. High trusting females attributed more personal responsibility than low trusters by agreeing more with Statement B after Story One (ANOVA 11). However, female high trusters placed less importance on "P" items than low trusters after they had read Story Two. These conflicting results may indicate a need to examine the credibility of a story hero and the context in which he is placed. High trusting females may well blame a story hero who is portrayed as having a bad relationship with a woman, perhaps because they can identify with the woman, and may not place as much importance on the male hero's personal characteristics when he is faced with a tough problem in life. They

trust he has made honest efforts to solve his problem. Future research would be warranted on the relationship between the credibility of the client and the subject's interpersonal trust.

When one reexamines Hochreich's (1974) findings, an aspect of her work is pertinent. Even though Hochreich maintains that her results were strongly supportive of the defensive externality hypothesis, it is clear that they can be more parsimoniously interpreted in terms of IT. Stories which involve failure at an achievement task by someone else need not be threatening personally to defensive externals and we would not expect to see defensive externals behave any differently, in these circumstances, from internals (Lamiell, 1974). Hochreich's results indicate that low trust internals and externals differ in their attributions of responsibility, whereas high trust internals and externals do not. Low trust externals identify with the story hero and his plight and distrust the environment in which he is placed. The low trust internal, conversely, in projecting his locus of control, allowed his tendency for distrust to focus on the hero.

Hochreich's results can be explained without reference to defensive externality. As Lamiell (1974) points out, there is no need to abandon the concept of defensive externality, just the use of the ITS in identifying it. Two alternative methods present themselves:

- 1) Lamiell (1974) has suggested a confidence measure which fits well with the social learning conceptions of needs and expectations.

Using this measure, Lamiell (1974) has produced some tentative but provocative conclusions from his data (pp. 57 and 58).

2) Davis' (1970) use of an action taking questionnaire points to the utility of setting some behavioral criterion directly related to what is known about defensiveness and then correlating this behavior with another behavior. In this way a network of behavioral criteria will be established to identify defensive externals, and the imbalanced practice of relying on one questionnaire which has not produced consistent, strong, or reliable results will be overcome.

To this point, difficulties in obtaining predicted I-E differences with female subjects, story differences, and the weaknesses of the ITS as a means of discriminating defensive and congruent externals, have all been discussed with a view to explaining the absence of predicted results in the study. Each of these explanations however is insufficient to explain the lack of significant differences among individual difference variables. One could be content with the explanation that the ITS discriminates defensiveness poorly if I-E main effects had been found. Likewise, if differences had been achieved for males, the explanation that the present study fits into a pattern of previous studies which have not replicated results for women would be more acceptable.

These explanations may have merit but are not a sufficient answer. A cultural bias explanation would seem to fill some of the gaps.

Cultural Bias

The following cultural bias explanation will argue that the subjects' responses were determined by values common to them all; values important enough to hide the effects of individual differences.

An examination of the results reveals three salient indicators of what may have happened in this experiment.

- 1) Subjects have a greater tendency to see their client as being more than 50 percent responsible for his predicament.
- 2) In the classification task a feature of subjects' responses was the degree of consistency with which items were classified as "P" or "E" regardless of experimental classification. Even more salient was the propensity of subjects to prefer a label of "P" rather than "E".
- 3) On the importance rating task, internals tended to give both "P" and "E" classified items more importance than externals did. The interactions found on the importance measure indicate that the competitive condition affected the ratings of high trust externals, so that under competitive conditions they downgraded the importance of "E" classified items and upgraded the importance of "P" classified items.

These observations lead to the tentative suggestion that, given the task of having to make judgments of a "clinical" nature (the counseling situation), the subjects' cultural values are more salient than

their individual differences on the I-E and Trust dimensions. Feather (1967) and Altrocchi, Palmer, Hellman and Davis (1968) reported a significant relationship between I-E scores and the Marlow-Crowne Social Desirability Scale scores ($r = -.42$, $p < .01$, $N = 53$; and $r = -.34$, $p < .05$, $N = 96$ respectively). Hannah (1973) found that both internals and externals perceived the "ideal or most admirable type of person" as being internal and the "non-ideal or least admirable type of person" as being external when they were asked to respond to the I-E scale as they thought the respective types would respond. These studies suggest a perception by subjects of the social desirability of being internal. Students of a midwestern state tend to feel that by and large an individual should be responsible for his fate and that in attempting to assess another's situation they tend to see more information as being informative of him as an individual rather than of his environment and, in turn, they rate this information as being more salient.

High trust internals were affected by the competitive condition, not because of defensiveness, as was predicted for low trust internals, but because the competitive instructions caused high trusters to stress the assessment of their own performance. Cues were provided to assess the "client" likewise. High trusters in the noncompetitive condition possibly tended to place lower importance on "P" items because they believed the client's side of the story. In the competitive situation the instructions mitigated against this more sympathetic attitude. High trusters, feeling that their own performance was "on the line", felt more prone to view their client in the same light.

Internals placed more importance on both "P" and "E" items than externals and in ANOVA 24 (analyses of importance ratings of "P" classified by females in ST-2) a significant main effect for interpersonal trust was found. High trusters placed less importance on "P" items than did low trusters. Internals, being more achievement or goal oriented than externals, seem to have decided that all information be given high importance. These results represent a "conscienciousness effect" with internals despite their biased classification of informational items, demonstrating to the experimenter that they are assessing the task carefully. They consequently felt that almost all the items should be rated as important.

This "cultural bias" explanation does not contradict the decision making model proposed in the introduction. That model suggested that classification of information, assessment of its importance and final attributions of responsibility were related. Clearly the data indicates that the subjects tended to classify more information as being personality related, regard personality related material as more important than environment related information and, as the model suggested, consequently found their "client" more than 50 percent responsible for his situation. This decision making model seems to have some validity, but the individual difference variables selected in this study have not allowed any finer discrimination within it.

A social learning approach, which is what this research is based upon, adopts the view that any particular behavior is determined by

three major variables: the situation, expectancy, and reinforcement. The generalized expectancies of I-E and IT were not found to be relevant in the prediction of subjects' responses because of the situational demands.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EXPERIMENT

Decisions After Reading Case History Material

As you know, we have counseling centers on campus. These centers serve to assist troubled students and to train new counselors. We are constantly seeking to improve the quality of our counseling services. One aspect of this involves making our instructions to the trainee counselors as clear as possible. The purpose of this study is to begin to develop a tool to select those people who are most competent in this situation. Wide variances in performance have been found. Rather than waste time on those people who lack the necessary discriminative and verbal skills, it is thought best to develop a method of selecting only those individuals who can demonstrate through their performance that they have the necessary potential for the job.

You are now a trainee counselor at one of our centers. Please read the following material and follow the instructions.

EXPERIMENT

Decisions After Reading Case History Material

As you know, we have counseling centers on campus. These centers serve to assist troubled students and to train new counselors. We are constantly seeking to improve the quality of our counseling services. One aspect of this involves making our instructions to the trainee counselors as clear as possible. We are not always certain that our counselors are able to uniformly interpret the guidelines which they are issued by their supervisors. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether or not this is a problem.

You are now a trainee counselor at one of our centers. Please read the following material and follow the instructions.

APPENDIX B

A Part of the Transcript from the Case of Marty Jackson

This is terrible, I'm going crazy. This girl is driving me nuts! We have been going out for six years and are informally engaged. I am very much in love with her, but lately we have been fighting a lot. One of us is always in the wrong mood for the other. A while back she started to think that she was too young to be settling down to dating only one person. Because of this she started to have some other dates behind my back. When I found out, I was upset and we had a quarrel over it. I felt that she had betrayed the relationship.

I have always been very possessive, I guess. I like to call her on the phone every day so we can have a nice long talk for an hour or so. Of course, since she knows me so well, if I don't call her, she ends up calling me. And whenever she needs a favor she always calls me because she knows that I will always help her. Sometimes I think that she is exploiting me. Last weekend she went out with another guy and on Monday asked me to change the oil on her car.

I like to know everything that she's been doing during the day. I like her to tell me about it. I don't really like her to spend too much time with other people. I think she should spend it with me. I visit her in the evenings and at 12 o'clock or so she likes me to go, when I don't go she asks me to leave.

We have broken up before, but we always start the relationship up again because one of us will always call the other. She says it's final this time but I don't believe it. I don't believe that she's happy dating other people. If she was, why would she tell me all about her dates? I wish she wouldn't tell me about those other guys in such detail, hearing all about them is driving me nuts.

APPENDIX C

Name _____ Sex _____

In any interview certain key words or phrases often stand out as clues to the interviewer as to exactly what needs to be dealt with. The interviewer must be able to clearly identify what aspects of the story are caused by the personality of the individual and what factors relate to his social environment (other people or the situation in which he is placed). The key words and phrases from the transcript you have just read are listed below. Please classify these words and phrases into what you perceive as personality related or environment related items. Put a circle around the appropriate "P" or "E". If there is a key word or phrase you think is missing, refer back to the story, write it down and classify it.

1. P E Six years
2. P E informally engaged
3. P E in love with her
4. P E wrong mood for each other
5. P E too young
6. P E other dates
7. P E behind my back
8. P E betrayed the relationship
9. P E possessive
10. P E call her on the phone every day
11. P E she ends up calling me
12. P E needs a favor
13. P E I will always help her
14. P E exploiting me
15. P E out with another guy
16. P E change the oil
17. P E I like to know everything
18. P E to spend too much time with other people
19. P E should spend it with me
20. P E I don't go

- 21. P E asks me to leave
- 22. P E broken up before
- 23. P E one of us will always call the other
- 24. P E I don't believe
- 25. P E wish she wouldn't tell me about those other guys in such detail
- Other. P E _____

On completion of this page, please hand it back to the experimenter.

APPENDIX D

Name _____ Sex _____

Before deciding on any course of action or in trying to understand a client, a counselor has to weight the relative importance of the various pieces of information placed before him. Feeling free to check back over the transcript as you do it, rate on a scale of 1-7 each of these items in terms of how important you think they are in contributing to your client's situation. Remember, be as objective as you can, but clear in your individual judgments.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Not	Slightly	Mildly	Moderately	Quite		Very
	important	important	important	important	important	important	important
1.	_____	Six years					
2.	_____	informally engaged					
3.	_____	in love with her					
4.	_____	wrong mood for each other					
5.	_____	too young					
6.	_____	other dates					
7.	_____	behind my back					
8.	_____	betrayed the relationship					
9.	_____	possessive					
10.	_____	call her on the phone every day					
11.	_____	she ends up calling me					
12.	_____	needs a favor					
13.	_____	I will always help her					
14.	_____	exploiting me					
15.	_____	out with another guy					
16.	_____	change the oil					
17.	_____	I like to know everything					
18.	_____	to spend too much time with other people					
19.	_____	should spend it with me					
20.	_____	I don't go					

21. _____ asks me to leave
22. _____ broken up before
23. _____ one of us will always call the other
24. _____ I don't believe
25. _____ wish she wouldn't tell me about those other guys in such
detail
Other. _____

Please hand this page back to the experimenter when you have finished it.

APPENDIX E

Name _____ Sex _____

Please read the following statements. Circle the one point on the scale below each statement which corresponds most with your feeling about the statement.

1. Marty is being exploited by his girlfriend and because he is in love with her, he can not help but "give in" despite an awareness of this situation.

Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

2. Marty is aware he is being exploited and for that reason the situation is his own fault.

Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

APPENDIX F

Name _____ Sex _____

Please circle on the scale below how responsible you think your client is for his present situation.

100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%	20%	10%	0%
Responsible					Responsible					

If you wish to discriminate more finely than is possible on the above scale, please write the percentage responsibility of your choice:

_____ %

APPENDIX G

Experiment Part 2

The assessment of information in a Case Report demands the same ability to make objective judgements and use sound discriminative and verbal skills as the assessment of a Case Transcript. It is, therefore, vital that you read the following materials carefully and closely, so that you demonstrate such skills.

Experiment Part 2

The purpose of this second part of the experiment is the same as before; to see whether or not we have a problem with the interpretation of instructions given to trainee counselors.

Please read the following materials with care and remember that there are no right or wrong answers.

APPENDIX H

A Case Report on John Shaffer

John Shaffer, a junior in psychology, first came to my office the last week of the Fall semester. He was distinctively dressed in a bright, bold and somewhat flamboyant style. According to his records he was 21 years old, but my first hand impression was that he appeared much younger. Although John's outward manner at first appeared to be one of confidence and optimism in talking he revealed his growing uneasiness with his situation in life. For the past semester he had unsuccessfully been trying to find part-time employment. He desired a clerical position and did not feel that he could consider taking more physically demanding jobs. The people at the Placement Center had made several efforts to help him find employment. They were honest with John and indicated that various factors were likely to make it difficult for him to obtain exactly the type of job he desired: 1) few such jobs were presently available, 2) local employers were concerned with hiring representative proportions of minority groups, and 3) full-time clerical positions were more easily obtained than were part-time positions.

In subsequent counseling sessions John would relate his experiences at the various job interviews he had recently attended. He told me that he felt that one prospective employer had liked him but had decided to hire "someone older." At another interview John said that he was told he was "overqualified" and that he should try to find a position "better suited to his skills and area of study."

John has become increasingly worried that he will be unable to complete his bachelor's degree since he is quickly running out of money. He is still going out on job interviews, but only when firms have provided a detailed job description in advance. He feels that in this way he is, at least, "not wasting time" that could be spent on his studies.

APPENDIX I

Name _____ Sex _____

From the case report you read I would like you to clearly identify which behaviors and events in the story are principally caused by the PERSONALITY of the individual and which are principally determined by his SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT.

Someone's "social environment" includes the physical environment and those people with whom one interacts, and the effects of their beliefs and behaviors. In John's case this includes, for example, the people at the placement center and the current job shortage. You no doubt saw other aspects of John's social environment in your reading of the story.

A factor which is "personality related" is a described characteristic or behavior which reflects personality; in this case John's personality. Deliberate actions, ways of doing and viewing things, give us clues about an individual's personality.

Key phrases from the transcript you have just read are listed below. Please decide which phrases you perceive as personality related and which you perceive as environment related. Put a circle around the appropriate "P" (personality related) or "E" (environment related). If you can not decide about an item, refer back to the story for an understanding of its context. For example, in a story about a truck driver who has a crash, you may decide the "crash" is mainly a product

of the driver's social environment (his company you have been told is notorious for poor vehicle maintenance and the wrecked truck was found to have had poor brakes). Alternatively, you might decide that the crash was mainly "personality related" (the story had also pointed out that the driver was reckless and just the type of individual who would not heed a loss in braking power, even if he perceived it).

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. came to my office | Does the information conveyed in this item relate most to John's personality or to his social environment as defined above? | P | E |
| 2. distinctively dressed | Does the information conveyed in this item relate most to John's personality or to his social environment as defined above? | P | E |
| 3. was 21...appeared much younger | Does the information conveyed in this item relate most to John's personality or to his social environment as defined above? | P | E |
| 4. outward manner at first appeared to be one of confidence and optimism | " | P | E |
| 5. growing uneasiness with his situation | " | P | E |
| 6. For the past semester he had been unsuccessfully trying to find part-time employment | " | P | E |
| 7. did not feel he could take more physically demanding jobs | " | P | E |
| 8. several efforts to help him | " | P | E |

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|-----|
| 9. | various factors were likely to make it difficult for him to obtain exactly the type of job he desired | " | P E |
| 10. | In subsequent counseling sessions John would relate his experiences at the various job interviews | " | P E |
| 11. | employer had liked him | " | P E |
| 12. | decided to hire "someone older" | " | P E |
| 13. | told he was "overqualified" and that he should try to find a position "better suited to his skills and area of study" | " | P E |
| 14. | became increasingly worried | " | P E |
| 15. | quickly running out of money | " | P E |
| 16. | still going out on job interviews | " | P E |
| 17. | only when firms have provided a detailed job description | " | P E |
| 18. | Other _____ | " | P E |

On completion of these pages, please hand them back to the experimenter.

APPENDIX J

Name _____ Sex _____

Before deciding on any course of action or in trying to understand a client, a counselor has to weight the relative importance of the various pieces of information placed before him. Feeling free to check back over the case report as you do it, rate on a scale of 1-7 each of these items in terms of how important you think they are in contributing to your client's situation. Remember, be as objective as you can, but clear in your individual judgements.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not Important	Slightly Important	Mildly Important	Moderately Important	Rather Important	Very Important	Extremely Important

1. _____ came to my office
2. _____ distinctively dressed
3. _____ was 21...appeared much younger
4. _____ outward manner at first appeared to be one of confidence and optimism
5. _____ growing uneasiness with his situation
6. _____ For the past semester he had been trying unsuccessfully to find part-time employment
7. _____ did not feel he could take more physically demanding jobs
8. _____ several efforts to help him
9. _____ various factors were likely to make it difficult for him to obtain exactly the type of job he desired
10. _____ In subsequent counseling sessions John would relate his experiences at the various job interviews
11. _____ employer had liked him
12. _____ decided to hire "someone older"
13. _____ told he was "overqualified" and that he should try to find a position "better suited to his skills and area of study"
14. _____ became increasingly worried
15. _____ quickly running out of money

16. _____ still going out on job interviews
17. _____ only when firms have provided a detailed job description
18. _____ Other _____

Please hand the page back to the experimenter when you have finished.

APPENDIX K

Name _____ Sex _____

Please read the following statements. Circle the one point on the scale below each statement which corresponds most with your feeling about the statement.

1. John Shaffer is a somewhat immature individual whose manner "puts people off" and who is not prepared to be flexible and do physical work. A change in these attitudes would certainly enable him to get a job and so complete his degree.

Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

2. John Shaffer is fighting a tough uphill battle to get what he wants and clearly needs. However, the lack of jobs and employment possibilities overwhelm any personal difficulties he might have. He is trying, but the facts of the situation are against him.

Strongly	Moderately	Slightly	Neutral	Slightly	Moderately	Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Disagree		Agree	Agree	Agree

APPENDIX L

Name _____ Sex _____

Please circle on the scale below how responsible you think your client is for his present situation.

100% 90% 80% 70% 60% 50% 40% 30% 20% 10% 0%
_____ Responsible _____ Responsible

If you wish to discriminate more finely than is possible on the above scale, please write the percentage responsibility of your choice:

_____ %

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to: Judith O'Brien for the incredible typing and proof reading services she provided, James Lamiell for his statistical advice, my advisor, the cryptic E. Jerry Phares, for his thorough and thoughtful comments during this project, and to Samuel Butler who might well have been talking of master's theses when he said--

"Life is the art of drawing sufficient conclusions from
insufficient premises."

DIFFERENTIAL USES OF INFORMATIONAL CUES IN THE
ATTRIBUTION OF RESPONSIBILITY AS A FUNCTION OF
INTERNAL-EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

by

RICHARD V. PEACH

B. Soc. Sc., University of Waikato, 1972
M. Soc. Sc., University of Waikato, 1973

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Psychology

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

The purpose of this study was to examine Internal-External locus of control differences in attribution of responsibility and to investigate the process of making an attribution. It was hoped to reproduce Hochreich's (1974) findings which showed that Internal subjects attributed significantly more responsibility to story heroes that fail, than do externals. Moreover, Hochreich found that defensive (low trust) externals differed from congruent (high trust) externals, and internals in their attribution of responsibility ratings of story heroes who had failed on a task. Hochreich found significant differences only for male subjects and the present study hoped to extend these to females.

A model was proposed for the attribution process. It was proposed that an attribution consisted of three parts: the classification of information, the rating of the importance of information and the subsequent attribution of responsibility. Subjects' processing of information, it was suggested, would be affected by individual differences. Internals were hypothesized to classify informational items and rate the importance of those items differently from externals. Consequently they would differ in their attributions of responsibility.

Since previous research had found that internals attributed more responsibility to a story hero than did externals, it was hypothesized that internals would see more information (when asked to classify it) in a scenario which related to the hero's personality, than which related to the social environment in which he was placed.

internals were also hypothesized to place more importance on those informational items they had classified as personality related than those they had classified as environment related. The reverse was hypothesized for externals.

Moreover, the defensive behaviour observed by Hochreich was hypothesized to include this model. In a competitive condition where subjects were told that their potential counseling skill was being tested, defensive externals were expected, because of their identification with their "client", to attribute less responsibility than congruent externals, and internals. Defensive externals were also expected to classify more items as relating to the social environment and to rate these as more important than either congruent externals or internals. The noncompetitive condition was not expected to produce this pattern of results.

All these hypotheses received little or no support. Difficulties in obtaining predicted Internal-External differences with female subjects, story differences and the weakness of the Interpersonal Trust Scale as a means of discriminating defensive externality were discussed. These reasons for the lack of predicted results were decided to be insufficient and a final argument involving the salience of a cultural response bias over the individual expectancy variables was presented.