

- Institutional Review Board (submit completed form to Graduate Studies Office)
- Departmental Review Committee (submit completed form to Committee Chair)

Human Research Approval Form

Principal Investigator (must be MSUM faculty):

Name: _____ Address where you want to receive IRB correspondence: _____
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail address: _____
 Signature: _____ Date: _____


Co-Investigator: Attach separate sheet if more than two

Name: _____
 Faculty Graduate Student Undergraduate Student
 If graduate student, is this research part of your final project/thesis?
 Yes No
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail address: _____
 Signature: _____

Co-Investigator: Attach separate sheet if more than two

Name: _____
 Faculty Graduate Student Undergraduate Student
 If graduate student, is this research part of your final project/thesis?
 Yes No
 Telephone: _____
 E-mail address: _____
 Signature: _____

Title of study:

Date submitted: _____ Project starting date: _____  Project ending date: _____

- Request: Exempt Status (complete *Request for Exempt Status*)
 Submit original and 1 photocopy
 Expedited Review (include reasons below)
 Submit original and 1 photocopy
 Full Review
 Submit original and 10 photocopies

Reason for requesting Expedited Review: _____ 

Institutional Review Board Recommendation:

- Exempt Status Approval: Yes No Revise and Resubmit (see attached)
 Expedited Review Approval: Yes No Revise and Resubmit (see attached)
 Full Review Approval: Yes No Revise and Resubmit (see attached)

IRB Chair's Signature _____

Date _____

This form and complete instructions are available online at: <http://www.mnstate.edu/irb>

- Institutional Review Board (submit completed form to Graduate Studies Office)
 Departmental Review Committee (submit completed form to Committee Chair)

Ethical Compliance Questionnaire

Name of Principal Investigator _____

Title of study _____

Complete all items on this form and/or on separate sheets of paper attached to this form.

I. Subject Recruitment and Requirements

1. What type and how many human subjects will you require? (gender, age, location, affiliation, special characteristics, estimated number required)

2. Where and how do you propose to recruit subjects?

3. If your study involves subjects in institutions other than MSUM (schools, hospitals, other agencies), how will institutional consent be obtained? A signed letter of permission from an institutional representative is required. Attach copy to proposal.

4. How much time will be required of each subject?

5. Will subjects be compensated for participation? Yes No

If yes, please specify:

6. Is confidentiality assured? Yes No

If yes, how?

If no, why not?

7. What benefits do subjects obtain by participating?

II. Subject Risk

Certain practices are generally to be avoided. If any are included in the proposed study, check the blank next to the appropriate category and justify with attachments.

Deception

Pain, threat, or aversive stimulation

Embarrassment

Invasion of privacy

III. Informed Consent

A copy of the signed Informed Consent form must be given to subjects or guardians. For surveys and questionnaires that do not involve sensitive topics or minors, return of the questionnaire can be taken as implying consent. However, a cover letter must be included which contains the elements of consent and gives enough information about the survey that the subjects can choose to participate or not. Attach copy of cover letter if appropriate.

Minors and/or Adults Incapable of Giving Consent



1. Will your study use minors or adults legally incapable of giving consent? Yes No

If yes, how will permission be obtained from parents or guardians and assent from the subject?

2. Is informed consent form, method of obtaining assent, and/or cover letter attached? Yes No

Consenting Adults

1. If subjects are of legal age and capable of giving consent, how will consent be obtained?

2. Is informed consent form or cover letter attached? Yes No

IV. Debriefing

1. Will subjects be provided with feedback about the study? Yes No

If yes, when and how?

2. Is a debriefing form attached? Yes No
Include debriefing statement when applicable.

3. If deception has been used, how will the subjects be informed?

4. What follow-up supports will be available if subjects experience undesirable consequences of participation?

V. Materials

1. What questionnaires, inventories, tests, or other instruments will be used? Attach copies of investigator-prepared materials or a description of commercially prepared or copyrighted materials.

2. Will you make audio-tapes, video-tapes, or photographs of subjects? Yes No
Consent must be obtained from subjects in the informed consent form for these types of materials. Include statements about assurance of confidentiality, the planned use and eventual disposition of these materials (i.e., use of materials at conferences, published research, posting to the internet).

3. What electrical, electronic, or mechanical equipment will be used? If any have been specially constructed or modified for use in this study, provide a description with sufficient detail so that any physical danger may be assessed. Supplementary documents may be attached if necessary.

**Federal guidelines require that *all* materials related to the research be retained for at least three years.
See current copy of *Code of Federal Regulations* for details.**

Minnesota State University Moorhead is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

This information will be made available in alternative format (Braille, large print, audiocassette tape) upon request by contacting Disability Services at 218-477-2652/V or 218-477-2047/TTY. For TTY communication, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529.

Abstract

Gourevia and Clark (2001) have defined the optimistic bias as the tendency for people to think that they are less likely to experience negative future events while they more likely to experience positive future events. The purpose of the present study is to investigate how belief in luck and thinking about lucky situations impacts this optimistic bias. Eighty participants will be asked to complete a survey of 24 possible future positive and negative outcomes, to describe three lucky or unlucky recent events, and complete the Belief in Good Luck Scale (Darke & Freedman, 1997). It is expected that participants who have a high belief in good luck and who are primed to think about good luck will show the greatest amount of optimistic bias.

Method

Participants

Eighty college students in psychology classes at Minnesota State University Moorhead will be asked to volunteer for this study called "Outcome Study." The participants may receive extra credit in their classes and will be treated in accordance with the "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" (American Psychological Association, 2002).

Materials

With the exception of the informed consent and debriefing, all materials in this study will be presented and responses will be recorded using MediaLab® programming software (Jarvis, 2005) on IBM-compatible computers.

Belief in Luck Scale. The Belief in Good Luck Scale (BIGL) (Darke & Freedman, 1997) measures individual differences that good luck is a stable and internal factor in their lives (see Appendix A). The BIGL is a 12-item six point Likert scale, ranging from strongly Agree (6) to strongly Disagree (1). Total scores can range from 72 to 12, with higher scores representing a higher level of belief in good luck. According to Darke and Freedman (1997), the BIGL

shows good internal consistency. No gender differences were observed for the BIGL.

Lucky/Unlucky Priming. In order to prime lucky or unlucky thoughts, participants will be asked to think about and briefly describe (type) three situations in which you were lucky or unlucky in the past year.

Optimistic Bias Survey. In order to develop a list of possible outcomes or events to measure the optimistic bias, 15 undergraduates volunteered to pre-test 59 possible positive and negative events. The pool of outcomes was developed from previous studies and several newer items we developed that are relevant to college students. Pre-test participants rated the future outcomes on four 7-point semantic differential scales: important/unimportant, positive/negative, desirable/undesirable, and controllable/uncontrollable. In the pre-test, participants were asked to rate each outcome "based on what you think the average college student your age and sex would likely believe." The 24 items selected for the major study possessed a moderate level of importance and controllability. In addition, the 12 positive outcome selected (e.g., getting back a large tax refund) were rated as positive and desirable outcomes, while the 12 negative outcome (e.g., being audited by the IRS for taxes within

five years) were rated as negative and undesirable outcomes. We also attempted to match positive and negative items based on context (e.g., work, family, health, and academics).

Based on the pre-test, 24 positive and negative outcomes will be used in the current study (see Appendix B). For each outcome, participant will be asked "What do you think your chances are of (e.g., getting a good job after graduation) compared to average college student your age and sex?" The respondent choices are 'Much lower than average' (1), 'Somewhat lower than average' (2), 'The same as for other people' (3), 'Somewhat higher than average' (4), and 'Much higher than average' (5). Optimistic bias is measure with higher scores for the positive outcomes and lower scores for the negative outcomes.

Additional Measures. Several demographic questions will be used to gather information on the participant's age and sex.

Procedure and Design

The proposed study will use a 2 (lucky/unlucky priming) x 2 (belief in good luck) between-subjects design. Participant will be randomly assigned to describe either three recent examples where they were lucky or unlucky (luck priming). Based on BIGL Scale scores, participant will be assigned to a high or low belief in good luck group using a

median split from the final sample. The major dependent variable is optimistic bias. The optimistic bias will be measure by asking participants to estimate their chances of experiencing positive and negative future outcomes compared to other college students their age and sex.

To begin, participants will be asked to read and sign an informed consent form. After signing the informed consent, participants will be given instruction on how to complete the other materials on the computer using the MediaLab program. First, they will be asked to complete the demographic question. Next, participants will be randomly assigned to complete the lucky/unlucky priming questions or the BIGL Scale. The items from the BIGL Scale will be randomly presented. Finally, participants will be randomly presented the 24 items from Optimistic Bias Survey.

After the participants have completed the survey materials, they will be debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Appendix A

Belief in Luck Scale

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using the scale below:

- 1 (Strongly Agree)
- 2 (Somewhat Disagree)
- 3 (Slightly Disagree)
- 4 (Slightly Agree)
- 5 (Somewhat Agree)
- 6 (Strongly Agree)

1. I consider myself to be a lucky person.
2. I often feel like it's my lucky day.
3. I consistently have good luck.
4. Luck works in my favor.
5. Luck plays an important part in everyone's life.
6. Some people are consistently lucky and others are unlucky.
7. I believe in luck.
8. I don't mind leaving things to chance because I'm a lucky person.
9. There is such a thing as luck that favors some people but not others.
10. Even the things in life I can't control tend to go my way because I'm lucky.
11. It's a mistake to base any decisions on how lucky you feel.
12. Luck is nothing more than random chance.

Appendix B

Optimistic Bias Survey

Please rate each of the following future events based on what you think your chances are of compared to the average college student your age and sex?'

- 1 - Much lower than average
- 2 - Somewhat lower than average
- 3 - The same as for other people
- 4 - Somewhat higher than average
- 5 - Much higher than average

Positive Events

1. Owning your own home within eight years
2. Graduating in top third of your class within four years
3. Living past 85 with good mental and physical health
4. Having your volunteer achievements recognized in the newspaper
5. Receiving a major promotion within ten years of graduation
6. Receiving a raise at your job of at least 15% within two years
7. Having no major surgeries for 5 years
8. Spending a week in your favorite vacation spot
9. Getting back a large tax refund
10. Having a mentally gifted child
11. Retiring comfortably by the age of 55
12. Having an exciting and interesting job

Negative Events

1. Feeling unappreciated at your work after graduation
2. Not finding a job for at least 6 months after graduation
3. Dying in your early 50's
4. Being audited by the IRS for taxes within five years
5. Feeling that you choose the wrong career or occupation
6. Getting divorced a few years after your first marriage
7. Being a victim of a home burglary while you are away
8. Having to take a boring job after graduation
9. Being laid off from your job within ten years of graduating
10. Marrying someone with \$30,000 or more of debt
11. Contracting five bad colds in a two year period
12. Not having the financial resources to afford owning a home within the next eight years

Department of Psychology
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Informed Consent Form

Please read this consent agreement carefully before agreeing to participate in this experiment.

Title of Experiment: Outcome Study

Purpose of the experiment: To study people's perception of future and past outcomes.

What you will do in this experiment:

Using a computer you will complete a brief scale and be asked to list three outcomes in your life that pertain to the topic. You will be presented a series of different life outcomes, in which you will rate the probability of the event occurring.

Time required: The experiment will take approximately thirty minutes to complete.

Risks: There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this study.

Benefits:

You will acquire first-hand experience in how psychological research is conducted. You also may receive credit in your psychology class for participating in this experiment. At the end of the experiment, you will receive a thorough explanation of the experiment, the hypotheses, and the potential implications of the results of the study. A summary of the results of the study will be posted on the research bulletin board across the hall from the Psychology Department at the end of this semester.

Confidentiality:

Your participation in this experiment will remain confidential, and your identity will not be stored with your data. Results will be reported in group format only.

Participation and withdrawal:

Your participation in this experiment is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the experiment at any time without penalty. You may withdraw by informing the experimenter that you no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked).

Contact:

If you have questions about this study, please contact Dr. Researcher, researcher@mnstate.edu, phone 477-9999.

Whom to contact about your rights in this experiment:

Prof. Louis DeMaio, demaio@mnstate.edu, phone 477-4643, Chair of MSUM Institutional Research Board.

Agreement:

The purpose and nature of this research have been sufficiently explained and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty.

In signing this agreement, I also affirm that I am at least 18 years of age or older.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

Note: This is a more extensive debrief forms used in the Psychology Department

Debriefing for Outcome Study

**Minnesota State University Moorhead
Department of Psychology**

This study dealt with how luck and how it impacts optimistic bias. In previous studies concerning the optimistic bias, participants were apt to believe that their chances of experiencing a positive event is more likely to occur compared to other people, while experiencing negative events was less likely.

While participating in the study, you were asked to complete a survey that consisted of different outcomes ranging from positive to negative. Depending upon the group you were placed, you were either asked to list three lucky situations or unlucky situations. Furthermore, after completing a luck scale, participants were either placed in a high or low belief in good luck group. Hence, it was assumed that individuals who had a high belief in luck and who are to think about lucky events will have the highest level of optimistic bias.

When an individual has a very high level of optimistic bias, their self-protective behavior may not be in line with reality. When people believe that they are invulnerable to risk or that their current behaviors lessen their probability of risk below those of other people, they may be more likely to perform riskier behavior and to disregard safety measures. Thus, by ignoring precautions, individuals may be prone to accidents, diseases, crime, and economic losses.

Whom to contact for more information:

If you have questions about this study, or if you would like to receive a summary report of this research when it is completed, please contact Dr. Researcher, researcher@mnstate.edu, phone 477-9999.

Whom to contact about your rights in this experiment:

Prof. Louis DeMaio, demaio@mnstate.edu, phone 477-4643, Chair of MSUM Institutional Research Board.

If you feel that you are experiencing adverse consequences from this study: Please contact the MSUM Counseling Center at 218-477-2227.

If you are interested in learning more about the topic of this research project you may want to consult:

Darke, P., & Freedman, J. (1997). The belief in good luck scale. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 31, 486-511.

Weinstein, N. (1980). Unrealistic optimism about future life events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 5, 806-820.

Thank you for your participation!