

International Entrepreneurship Educator's Programme

Entrepreneurial Learning - Pedagogical Note Series

23. – Use of Locus of Control Tests

1. What is Use of Locus of Control Tests

The purpose of the test in the context of entrepreneurship education is to help participants to understand how they see the world and in particular how entrepreneurs see the world. The test described below is based upon the work of the psychologist Rotter and his measure of Locus of Control*. This test is designed to measure the degree of autonomy that individuals feel they have in terms of making things happen. Those with high scores are those said to believe strongly that they can shape the world the way they wish. Those with low scores can be characterised as those more likely to believe that the world shapes them. The research strongly supports the view that entrepreneurs score more highly than the population at large. But whether this reflects personality or the results of exposure to a particular environmentally dictated 'way of life' is open to debate.

2. How is the exercise constructed?

Like most tests of a psychometric nature it can be used as the basis for a class discussion, in this case about the world of the entrepreneur with the test being handed out and completed before the group meets. The results can be collated anonymously and used for group discussion. Individuals can be asked to discuss their result with another participant or merely reflect on their own result in the light of class discussion. The main focus of any facilitated discussion is upon why entrepreneurs might see the world in this way and what influences them, Research readings can be discussed. The main advantage of the use of the test in entrepreneurial learning is that it is suitable for use with large groups of participants. (see the example attached)

3. Relevance to Entrepreneurial Learning

Completion of the test itself is not a particularly entrepreneurial process. Its value lies not in the results or debate on the construct validity of the test but in: the process of engagement of participants; the degree of personal involvement induced by completion of the test; the almost certain emotional impact it will have on the individual; and then the capacity it creates for lively engagement about concept, relevance and implication.

4. Outcomes

Participants will have insight into the way entrepreneurs see the world and will understand why they see it as so. They will also have understanding of the implications for society in terms of one aspect of creating Entrepreneurial Mindsets

Example

Participants are given the following instruction;

This scale is designed to tell you a little bit more about how certain important occurrences in society affect different individuals.

The activity will be carried out in three steps:

Step 1

Complete the attached scale according to the instructions preceding it

Step 2

Score your own responses according to the scoring system handed out

Step 3

We will then discuss the results in terms of:

- a. Which individual differences are revealed by the results?*
- b. What do the individual scores tell us about our individual and group's approach to life?*
- c. In what way might we wish to change approaches to life?*

The Test

Guidance

This is a questionnaire to find out how certain important occurrences in society influence different people.

*Each item in the attached questionnaire consists of two alternatives marked 'a' and 'b'. Please choose one statement from each pair (and only one), You must be convinced that it is so, as far as you are concerned. **Ensure that you choose the one of which you believe that it is more true, rather than the one which you think you should choose, or the one which you would rather like to be true.** This is a measure of personal conviction; there are obviously no right or wrong answers.*

Your answers must be filled in on the separate answer sheet.

Please answer the items carefully, but do not spend too much time of any of them. Ensure that you give an answer to each choice. Write "a" or "b" next to the number of the item on the answer sheet, depending on the statement which you believe to be most true.

In some cases you may find that you believe both statements, or none of them. In such a case ensure that you choose the one which you are more convinced about.

React to each item separately when you make a choice; don't be influenced by your previous choices.

Please proceed

Questionnaire

1.
 - a. *Children get into trouble because their parents punish them too much.*
 - b. *The trouble with mot children nowadays is that their parents are too easy with them.*
2.
 - a. *Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck.*
 - b. *People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make.*
3.
 - a. *One of the major reasons why we have wars is because people don't take enough interest in politics.*
 - b. *There will always be wars, no matter how hard people try to prevent them.*
4.
 - a. *In the long run people get the respect they deserve in this world.*
 - b. *Unfortunately, an individual's worth often passes unrecognised, no matter how hard he tries.*
5.
 - a. *The idea that teachers are unfair to students is nonsense.*
 - b. *Most students do not recognise the extent to which their grades are influenced by accidental happenings.*
6.
 - a. *Without the right breaks one cannot be an effective leader.*
 - b. *Capable people who fail to become leaders have not taken advantage of their opportunities.*
7.
 - a. *No matter how hard you try some people just do not like you.*
 - b. *People who cannot get others to like them do not understand how to get along with others.*
8.
 - a. *Heredity plays the major role in determining one's personality.*
 - b. *It is people's experience in life that determines what they are like.*
9.
 - a. *I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.*
 - b. *Trusting to fate has never turned out as well for me as making a decision to take a definite course of action.*
10.
 - a. *In the case of the well-prepared student there is rarely, if ever, such a thing as an unfair test.*
 - b. *Many times examination questions tend to be so unrelated to course work that studying is really useless.*

11.
 - a. *Becoming a success is a matter of hard work, luck has little or nothing to do with it.*
 - b. *Getting a good job depends mainly on being in the right place at the right time.*
12.
 - a. *The average citizen can have an influence on government decisions.*
 - b. *This world is run by the few people in power, and there is not much the little guy can do about it.*
13.
 - a. *When I make plans, I am almost certain that I can make them work.*
 - b. *It is not always wise to plan too far ahead, many things turn out to be a matter of good or bad fortune anyhow.*
14.
 - a. *There are certain people who are just no good.*
 - b. *There is some good in everybody.*
15.
 - a. *In my case getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.*
 - b. *Many times we might just as well decide what to do by flipping a coin.*
16.
 - a. *Who gets to be the boss often depends on who was lucky enough to be in the right place first.*
 - b. *Getting people to do the right thing depends on ability, luck has little or nothing to do with it.*
17.
 - a. *As far as world affairs are concerned, most of us are the victims of forces we can neither understand, nor control.*
 - b. *By taking an active part in political and social affairs, the people can control world events.*
18.
 - a. *Most people do not realise the extent to which their lives are controlled by accidental happenings.*
 - b. *There is really no such thing as "luck".*
19.
 - a. *One should always be willing to admit mistakes.*
 - b. *It is usually best to cover up one's mistakes.*
20.
 - a. *It is hard to know whether or not a person really likes you.*
 - b. *How many friends you have depends upon how nice a person you are.*

21. a. *In the long run, the bad things that happen to us are balanced by the good ones.*
b. *Most misfortunes are the result of a lack of ability, ignorance, laziness, or all three.*
22. a. *With enough effort we can wipe out political corruption.*
b. *It is difficult for people to have much control over the things politicians do in office.*
23. a. *Sometimes I cannot understand how teachers arrive at the marks they give.*
b. *There is a direct connection between how hard I study and the marks I get.*
24. a. *A good leader expects people to decide for themselves what they should do.*
b. *A good leader makes it clear to everybody what their jobs are.*
25. a. *Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.*
b. *It is impossible for me to believe that chance or luck plays an important role in my life.*
26. a. *People are lonely because they do not try to be friendly.*
b. *There is not much use in trying hard to please people, if they like you, they like you.*
27. a. *There is too much emphasis on sport in schools.*
b. *Team sports are an excellent way to build character.*
28. a. *What happens to me is my own doing.*
b. *Sometimes I feel that I do not have enough control over the direction my life is taking.*
29. a. *Most of the time I cannot understand why politicians behave the way they do.*
b. *In the long run, the people are responsible for bad government on a national, as well as on a local level.*

Answer Sheet

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

13. _____

14. _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

21. _____

22. _____

23. _____

24. _____

25. _____

26. _____

27. _____

28. _____

29. _____

My Score:**Average for the group:**

Scoring key and interpretation

To score in the **external** direction count all your answers which agree with the following:

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

Interpretation

Belief in external control

The individual believes that events take place at random and that these occurrences are the result of fate or chance, are under control of powerful people and are unpredictable, due to the enormous complexity of powers around him.

Belief in internal control

The individual believes that people can personally control what happens to themselves; that what happens is determined by his own actions, or is due to his own relatively permanent characteristics.

Research has shown that people with a belief in internal control can influence others in social situations more effectively, know more about environment factors which have personal implications for the individual and that they tend to be less susceptible to going along with a group decision which they know to be wrong.

Discussion

Facilitator can collect views about how participants see their society leading to discussion of the concept of culture.