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AN INVESTIGATION INTO A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN

LOCUS OF CONTROL AND ATTRIBUTION THEORY

IN THE FIELD OF CONSUMER DECISION-MAKING.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology
at Massey University, Palmerston North.

Kathleen Blanche Orr

November, 1980.

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation examines a relationship between Rotter's (1966) Locus of Control Theory and Kelley's (1967) Attribution Theory in the field of Consumer Decision-Making.

The main hypothesis tested whether there was a difference in the probability of choosing in favour of a product with consensus information between individuals who have a belief in external control and individuals who believe in internal control.

Secondary hypotheses were also investigated to detail other aspects of this relationship. Firstly, it was suggested that with externally and internally controlled individuals, the probabilities of choosing in favour of consensus and distinctiveness information will differ. Secondly, that the probability of choosing in favour of personal control, and non-personal control information will differ for externals and internals. Finally it was suggested that the probability that externals and internals will have their responses rated as external or internal respectively, will be greater than the reverse.

The main hypothesis was not substantiated, however there was a strong trend in the predicted direction, suggesting the value of future research. Some support was found for the secondary hypotheses. Results are discussed in light of social learning and attribution theories and suggestions for future research offered.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Mrs Beryl Hesketh for the time and support she gave, as supervisor, for this study.

Also thanks to Basil Orr for use of his Word-processor on which this thesis was compiled.

To all the others who helped in many respects, thank you also.