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# Influence of locus of control on court attendance

Anna Cutlip

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College*

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INFLUENCE OF LOCUS OF CONTROL  
ON COURT ATTENDANCE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

in

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by  
Anna Cutlip  
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## **ABSTRACT**

The aim of the present study was to discover whether there is a relationship between locus of control and court attendance. Data were collected from 95 inmates residing in a southern Louisiana jail. It was expected that a person with an internal locus of control would choose to comply with court attendance requirements because of the belief that he may affect the outcome, while another individual with an external locus of control would passively respond through absence because the outcome is believed to be controlled by chance, luck, or fate. The Prison Locus of Control scale was employed to measure the inmates' origin of control. The logistic regression analysis revealed statistically significant relationships in the predicted direction between locus of control and court attendance in two models. The first model also included marital tie, education, and belief in the importance of a court appearance as being significantly associated with court attendance. In the second model, in addition to locus of control, education remained significant and age, race, and two interaction effects also achieve statistical significance.

## INTRODUCTION

This study is an investigation of elements associated with court nonattendance. A factor that contributes to the large number of individuals residing in local jails is the incarceration of those who failed to respond to mandatory court appearances for previous charges and, consequently were arrested on bench warrants. The law requires that if an individual ignores a citation to appear in court and/or ignores other required modes of action (i.e. fails to pay fines by a particular date), the judge is then to issue a bench warrant for that individual's arrest (R.S. 15:85).<sup>1</sup> The bench warrant is issued in order to ensure the offender's appearance in court. This means that many individuals are held in jail on bench warrants awaiting court dates for previous charges. For example, the jail used in this study on two occasions had a bench warrant population of 29.4% with 69 out of 235 inmates having current bench warrant charges and 29% with 72 out of 248 inmates having current bench warrant charges. According to the Director, Office of Special Support Research and Development at the jail, it is not uncommon for the bench warrant population to rise above 30 percent. Of the 95 inmates interviewed for this study, 47% have previously served time on a bench warrant, while the average number of court appearances missed for the sample was 3.18.

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<sup>1</sup> If at the time fixed for appearance the defendant fails to appear and answer when called, the judge, on motion of the prosecuting attorney, upon hearing of proper evidence including: the bail contract; the power of attorney if any; and the notice of the defendant and the surety as required by Article 344 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, shall immediately and forthwith issue a warrant for the arrest of the person failing to appear and order a judgment decreeing the forfeiture of the bond and against the defendant and his sureties in solido for the full amount of the bond.

In addition, for many of those residing in jail, bench warrants effectively end up as an impediment to their being released. Of the 40 inmates interviewed with a current bench warrant charge, only nine had violent offenses. The remaining 31 were being held for non-violent offenses. This indicates that approximately 78% of the inmates interviewed with a current bench warrant charge were non-violent offenders. It is a very costly endeavor on the part of the criminal justice system to house individuals waiting for a court date. This situation would be different if the majority of inmates when released left the area, but for the most part they live in the surrounding community and have no intentions or ability to displace themselves in order to run from the law. To most observers, there is little in the way of reciprocity of perspectives that can explain the phenomenon of court nonattendance.

The question addressed here is, what is the difference between the people who actively participate in their social responsibilities to their own benefit by attending court and the people who passively respond to the system's demands through absence and consequently overburden the jail system? Bonds and pretrial release programs are a common practice within the judicial system, and, because of this, it is important we understand the effectiveness of this practice and to assess factors that influence the resulting outcomes and the effectiveness of bonds and pretrial release programs to ensure court participation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> There are different ways an individual can be released from jail. There are several ways to "bond out": signature bonds, property bonds, and cash bonds. Another way is through pretrial release programs in which individuals are released on their own recognizant (ROR). Also, this is not a question of why a person commits crime, because all the individuals under question have already been accused of a crime.

There are studies that examine repeat offenders, pretrial release recommendations, and probation outcomes, however, few focus on the issue of bench warrants (Ingram, et al., 1985; Morgan, 1993; Petee, 1993). The aim of the present study was to discover whether locus of control, differentiates between those individuals who attend court and those individuals who do not attend court. Locus of control deals with an individual's expectation of reinforcements (outcomes) following behavior. To have an internal locus of control indicates that an individual believes that the reinforcements in his life are contingent upon his own behavior. On the other hand, to have an external locus of control indicates that an individual believes that the reinforcements in his life are a consequence of luck, fate, or chance (Rotter, 1966). Anthropologist Walter Miller (1958) suggests that the lower class is particularly concerned with the idea of fate or luck. He maintains that many individuals of the lower class feel they are relatively powerless to control their lives. This in turn, is associated with a worldview that reduces the value of effort on the part of the individual with regard to goal attainment (Miller, 1958). A belief in luck or fate effectively eliminates feelings of responsibility of the actor. Therefore, an individual with the belief that luck is against him feels helpless and unable to influence the outcomes of life's events.

Herbert Lefcourt (1982: 8) maintains that existing research that uses various methodological approaches and spans different species lends enough support to hold that control beliefs "have an important and assessable effect upon the ways in which persons encounter their experiences"<sup>3</sup>. This suggests that beliefs about control or lack thereof

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<sup>3</sup> This line of reasoning is based not only on humans, but also on other species like rats and dogs. Lefcourt examined several studies. One study involved experiments that examined the effects of noise on task performance for human subjects. They found that



have consequences for behavior. Control, perceived and actual, is important in the way that persons encounter life's situations (Lefcourt, 1982). The present study was designed to identify whether the degree to which an individual believes that he can change and control his own life is a factor influencing whether or not that individual participates in a (mandatory) court appearance.

The general expectation guiding this study is that a person with an internal locus of control will choose to comply with the court attendance requirement because of the belief that he may affect the outcome, while another individual with an external locus of control will passively respond through absence because the outcome is believed to be controlled by chance, luck, or fate. In this study a Prison Locus of Control Scale was employed in order to discover whether court attendance depends on locus of control. The data were compiled and analyzed using SPSS. Frequencies and logistic regression statistics are discussed. There was no effort here to explain the initial (prior) deviance or criminality; in that respect, this was an examination of a homogenous population. This study was designed to determine the possibility that locus of control is a component that differentiates those who choose to comply with court attendance requirements and those who choose noncompliance.

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the effects of predictability were of greater importance with regard to performance than the intensity of the noise. Moreover, they reasoned that predictability of the noise allowed subjects to feel less helpless and more in control of their responses to the noise. Another study involved shocking rats. They found that when the rats had some control over the shock, they were much less anxious than the group who had no control. Other experiments were conducted with canines and it was concluded that the passive acceptance of adverse stimuli is a result of a perceived lack of control over reinforcements.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### LOCUS OF CONTROL AND COURT ATTENDANCE

In Julian Rotter's conceptualization of locus of control, he uses social learning theory as the general theoretical background to explain how reinforcements and the corresponding effects influence behavior. Social learning theory dictates, "a reinforcement acts to strengthen an *expectancy* that a particular behavior or event will be followed by that reinforcement in the future (Rotter, 1982: 172)." <sup>1</sup> This means the way a person perceives the consequences (reinforcements) of his behavior has an effect on future behavior.

Rotter suggests that individuals differentially perceive reinforcements/gratifications. Moreover, individuals interpret reinforcements based on the accumulation of perceived personal experiences. Rotter sees "generalized expectancies" as being, at least partially, determined by the way in which an individual perceives the rewards or reinforcements in his/her life. In his view, individuals develop a generalized expectancy regarding the nature of the causal relationship between behavior and its consequences. This expectancy has the potential to affect a variety of behavioral choices in a plethora of life situations. (Rotter, 1982). "That is, over the course of a person's life experience he is believed to develop a relatively stable faith in his ability, or lack thereof, to exercise control over the things which happen to him in general" (Reynolds, 1976: 222). This perception can be internally or externally situated; meaning a person may perceive the outcomes (rewards) in his life as being "contingent upon his own behavior or attitudes

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<sup>1</sup> Rotter's exact definition of expectancy is as follows: Expectancy may be defined as the probability held by the individual that a particular reinforcement will occur as a function of a specific behavior on his part in a specific situation or situations. Expectancy is independent of the value or importance of the reinforcement. (p. 50)

(internally oriented) or as being “controlled by forces outside of himself and may occur independently of his own actions”, a function of luck (externally oriented) (Rotter, 1982: 171). For example, if a student fails an exam, the internally oriented student will attribute the outcome of the exam to something internal like not studying hard enough, while the externally oriented student’s reaction to the grade may be to blame the teacher for making the test too hard.

Locus of control can be seen as a continuum from the most internal on one end to the most external on the other. It should not be viewed as an underlying trait, however, that shadows all facets of an individual’s life. Unlike traits such as intelligence and competence, which permeate every aspect of human enterprise, locus of control “can be more fruitfully defined as a circumscribed self-appraisal pertaining to the degree to which individuals view themselves as having some causal role in determining specified events (Lefcourt, 1982: 183).” By regarding locus of control in this manner, it is incorrect to label individuals as having either an internal or external locus of control. However, the labels are used as shortcuts simply to avoid more lengthy descriptions. The terms are not meant to imply that persons cannot exhibit traits from either orientation (Lefcourt, 1982). A person’s locus of control shadows decisions with regard to behaviors. “With the locus of control construct, we are dealing with a person as he views himself in conjunction with the things that befall him, and the meaning that he makes of those interactions between his self and his experiences (Lefcourt, 1982: 35).” It is an individual level concept, however, it has implications at both the micro and macro levels of research.

Herbert Lefcourt proposes that an internal control orientation acts as a barrier to the unquestioning submission to authority (1982). At first thought this may seem to contradict the prediction that internals would be more likely to attend court, because being submissive with regard to the system could be interpreted as court attendance, i.e. doing what you are told to do. On the other hand, court attendance indicates a willingness to confront issues; while court nonattendance indicates more of an unquestioning submission because once court is missed the individual once found is under the control of the authorities. The external locus of control oriented individual will believe that his efforts in court would be fruitless and rather than act in his own behalf would leave the outcome up to chance.

In addition, Lefcourt (1982) concluded that perceived control is positively related to access to opportunity, meaning that the more opportunities open to an individual, the more choices and avenues the person has available to him in dealing with different situations. Therefore, those individuals with more internal control beliefs would more likely have greater access to opportunity while externals less so. Those individuals with greater access to opportunity are more likely to pay fines in a timely manner, to hire lawyers and pay to bond out of jail. “Blacks and other minority groups who do not enjoy as much access to opportunity as do the predominant Caucasian groups, are often found to hold fatalistic, external control beliefs (Lefcourt, 1982: 31).” Lefcourt and Ladwig (1965) found, using Dean’s Powerlessness Scale, that their sample of 60 black

prison inmates scored significantly more external than did their sample of 60 white inmates.<sup>2</sup> Other studies also suggest a relationship between race and locus of control (Battle, 1963; Lefcourt, 1965; Porter, 1979). In the present study, the interaction effect of locus of control and race was controlled for in the analysis.

Perceived control may also be related to age. As persons grow older they have more opportunities to exert control in their lives through education, employment, marriage, family, etc. and therefore may perceive more control as years pass. According to Reynolds (1976), however, those who have examined the correlation of age and locus of control have consistently found no relationship. After reviewing several studies, Reynolds concluded that locus of control does not vary systematically with age, at least with adult subjects. Moreover, in Lefcourt's review of the literature, he found that there is little that can be concluded regarding age and locus of control. Lefcourt (1982) does make the point however, that as persons mature they may experience greater familiarity with life experiences and, therefore, more able to judge the controllability of events, which in turn, may increase overall perceived competence. In this study, the interaction of age and locus of control was controlled for in the analysis.

#### STUDIES UTILIZING LOCUS OF CONTROL

Locus of control is a popular variable in social and behavioral science research and has been used extensively. In a study that examined the relationship between locus of control and reaction to threat, those individuals with an internal locus of control showed greater willingness to engage in remedial behaviors to confront their problems (Phares, Ritchie, and Davis, 1968). The results of the study indicated that "internals" are more

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<sup>2</sup> This instrument measures attitudes very similar to the attitudes assessed with scales derived from locus of control research. (Reynolds, 1976)

likely than “externals” to use “confronting behavior” to address problems. Gore and Rotter (1963) suggest that individuals’ who feel in control of the outcomes in their lives will be more apt to commit to personal or social action. Following this logic one can reason that internals may be more likely to address court requirements through attendance.

A study of work performance incentives and participation states “participation is related to the source of (an individual’s) control because when it is present, participation allows an individual to influence the setting of performance goals, and thus provides an internal source of control. In contrast, when participation is absent, the individual is denied control and the source of control is external” (Kren, 1992: 8). In this view, court attendance can be viewed as a utility, a forum to resolve issues, in that an individual can exert control (own up to punishment or clear name) in the situation. In the present study the external control is the legal system. By not attending court an individual places control into the hands of the legal authority.

Locus of control has already been utilized with some studies of prisoners (Levenson, 1975; Groh, 1976; Reitzel, 2000). One such study examines locus of control with a prison population in an effort to discover how locus of control relates to inmates’ characteristics and participation in activities (Groh, 1976). The authors found that the I-E scores (internal/external) were predictive of inmate involvement in prison activities. Those inmates who were not involved were found to be significantly more external than those who were involved in prison activities (Groh, 1976). This suggests that there is reason to believe that inmates may also be differentiated on locus of control in relation to court attendance.

Another study addresses the effects of locus of control on prison-adjustment depression. It was suggested that an individual's personal locus of control orientation can mediate the effects of stress, therefore having implications for depression (Reitzel, 2000). The authors found that those individuals who were the least depressed at Time 1 and Time 2 possessed a highly internal locus of control orientation. In contrast, those individuals who experienced a significant increase in depression after the adjustment period were those with a highly external locus of control orientation.

### RELATED CONCEPTS

A concept related to Rotter's locus of control is self-efficacy, a main component of Bandura's social-cognitive theory. "Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations (Bandura, 1982: 122)." How an individual believes he will perform has effects on behavior. In contrast, locus of control deals with an individual's belief of what causes his outcomes. Self-efficacy is related to locus of control, in that, a person with high self-efficacy (believes himself to be competent and in control) will usually have an internal locus of control (perceives outcomes as being contingent on personal actions). An individual must believe that outcomes are contingent on his behavior in order to perceive himself as competent, otherwise the resulting outcomes can not be attributed to the individual.

Moreover, Rotter (1982) suggests that the concept of alienation at the group level is related to his concept of locus of control. Theorists, such as, Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, have utilized the concepts of alienation and anomie. Many individuals who find themselves involved with the criminal justice system are unable to navigate the

system as others would, maybe because of ignorance with regard to the system and/or a lack of funds to hire attorneys or to pay fines. They may view the system as being out of reach and/or as a huge, complex machine unaffected by individuals. In turn, this group of people would perceive their actions as futile to change the momentum of the system in their direction. In this sense this group is alienated from the system. So, in effect, these alienated people may exhibit more external locus of control orientations, because of the perceived lack of control within the criminal justice system.

A fatalistic orientation may also be associated with Rotter's conceptualization of locus of control. Durkheim (1951) defines a fatalistic orientation as one "deriving from excessive regulation". This orientation exists when society dominates over the individual, placing them in structural positions with little likelihood of change. These people probably view their interactions with the criminal justice system as arbitrary and random. "The fatalists perceive no contingency between action and outcome, whereas those espousing internal control beliefs readily perceive such contingencies (Lefcourt, 1982: 37)." The extreme regulation of individuals can have the effect of eliminating beliefs about personal control, and in consequence a fatalistic or external locus of control orientation takes place. Incarcerated individuals are certainly living in excessively regulated situations. An external locus of control orientation coupled with excessive regulation and a static societal position could be what leads many prisoners to commit



suicide in jail. These same factors may also be that which leads to a jail population with almost a third of the inmates having a current bench warrant charge.<sup>3</sup> In this view, court nonattendance is a consequence of a fatalistic orientation toward the criminal justice system.

It could also be argued that control theories may help to explain the phenomenon of court nonattendance. “Control theories assume delinquent acts result when an individual’s bond to society is weak or broken (Hirschi, 1969: 16).” Control theory postulates that individuals who conform to legal standards do so because they are bonded to society and have a stake in maintaining those bonds. On the contrary, individuals who lack social bonds have no stake in conformity and are freer to behave non-normatively (Hirschi, 1969).

Moreover, a person’s locus of control has effects on the attainment of relational controls. “The holding of internal control expectancies presages a connection between an individual’s desires and his subsequent actions. As such, locus of control can be viewed as a mediator of involved commitment in life pursuits (Lefcourt, 1982: 184).” An internal locus of control orientation has implications for behaviors with regard to the acquisition and maintenance of goals. It has been stated that individuals who exhibit internal locus of control orientations should be more cautious and calculating about their choices and involvements (Lefcourt, 1982). Because of this internals should be better able to manage and sustain relationships, which in turn should allow them to secure more stable social bonds than externals.

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<sup>3</sup> This is not to mention all of the individuals who are incarcerated who do not have a current bench warrant charge, but have at some point not attended a mandatory court appearance.

There has been considerable research regarding the effects of social bonds on delinquency. The elements that comprise social bonds are: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. The attachment element has a moral aspect incorporated in it that discourages non-conformity. In the absence of attachment, the only control left is that of punishment. Once there is attachment, then commitments can develop. Commitments are investments in relationships with other people. Conventional relationships are recognized by conforming behaviors. If a committed person engages in non-normative behaviors, there is the probability that he stands to lose a positive reputation. Commitment leads to involvement. Persons spend time maintaining involvements. Being involved means to lose freedom. More involvement decreases time for non-normative behaviors. What emerges from this, in the control point of view, is a belief in the legitimacy of the rules. The belief aspect deals with the incorporation of social norms into a broader belief system. One could reason that those with the strongest social bonds would be more likely to attend court because the consequence of jail time would effect social relationships, jobs, and housing situations, in addition to, eliminating time for conventional activities, and loss of investment. In line with the sociological perspectives of control theory individuals with stronger social bonds should be more inclined to take care of their problems and to seek resolution through a court appearance, while those with no or weak bonds have less to lose by not attending a mandatory court appearance.

## OTHER RELATED RESEARCH

Research on pretrial release recommendations indicates that certain factors are considered in the decision to recommend an inmate for release. Pretrial release programs are an alternative to bonds as an avenue out of jail before a scheduled court appearance. However, this situation requires judges to make difficult decisions about which inmates are released. Six factors that are most commonly considered in recommendation decisions are: 1) seriousness of the prior offense, 2) number of prior convictions, 3) whether the accused had ever failed to appear in court on a felony charge, 4) whether the accused was currently on probation or parole, 5) living arrangements, and 6) employment (Petee, 1993). These factors are considered to influence the probability of whether a person will attend a mandatory court appearance once released. Petee (1993,) in a study of the factors that affect release recommendations, found that demeanor, race, and the interaction between race and offense severity were all significantly predictive of ROR recommendation outcomes.

Probation is a situation much like bonding out. In either case, the individual is free, but not completely. It is logical to reason that those factors that effect probation outcomes will be similar to factors effecting bonding outcomes. In addition to the factors considered for pretrial release, other factors such as, (1) age at first arrest, (2) marital status, (3) residential stability , (4) positive family support, (5) offender classification, and (6) age are included in the literature as influencing probation outcomes and could be considered disturbance factors (Morgan, 1993). Due to a lack of access to the official data at the jail, only a few of the variables believed to effect pretrial release

recommendations and probation decisions were controlled for in the final analysis.

Additional research is needed to find out specifically who functions best in pretrial release and probation situations and how to encourage others to function better.

### DISTURBANCE FACTORS

The analysis for this study examined whether locus of control is a factor effecting court attendance. In order to do this, as suggested above, other possible influences on the phenomena were controlled in the analysis. Based on the literature regarding control theory, pretrial release recommendations, and probation the following variables were included as controls: living situation, homeownership, church attendance, marital tie, education, employment, age, race, belief in the importance of a court appearance and belief in the criminal justice system. The interactions between locus of control and age and locus of control and race were also included in the analysis. The basic expectations of this study can be outlined in the following model:

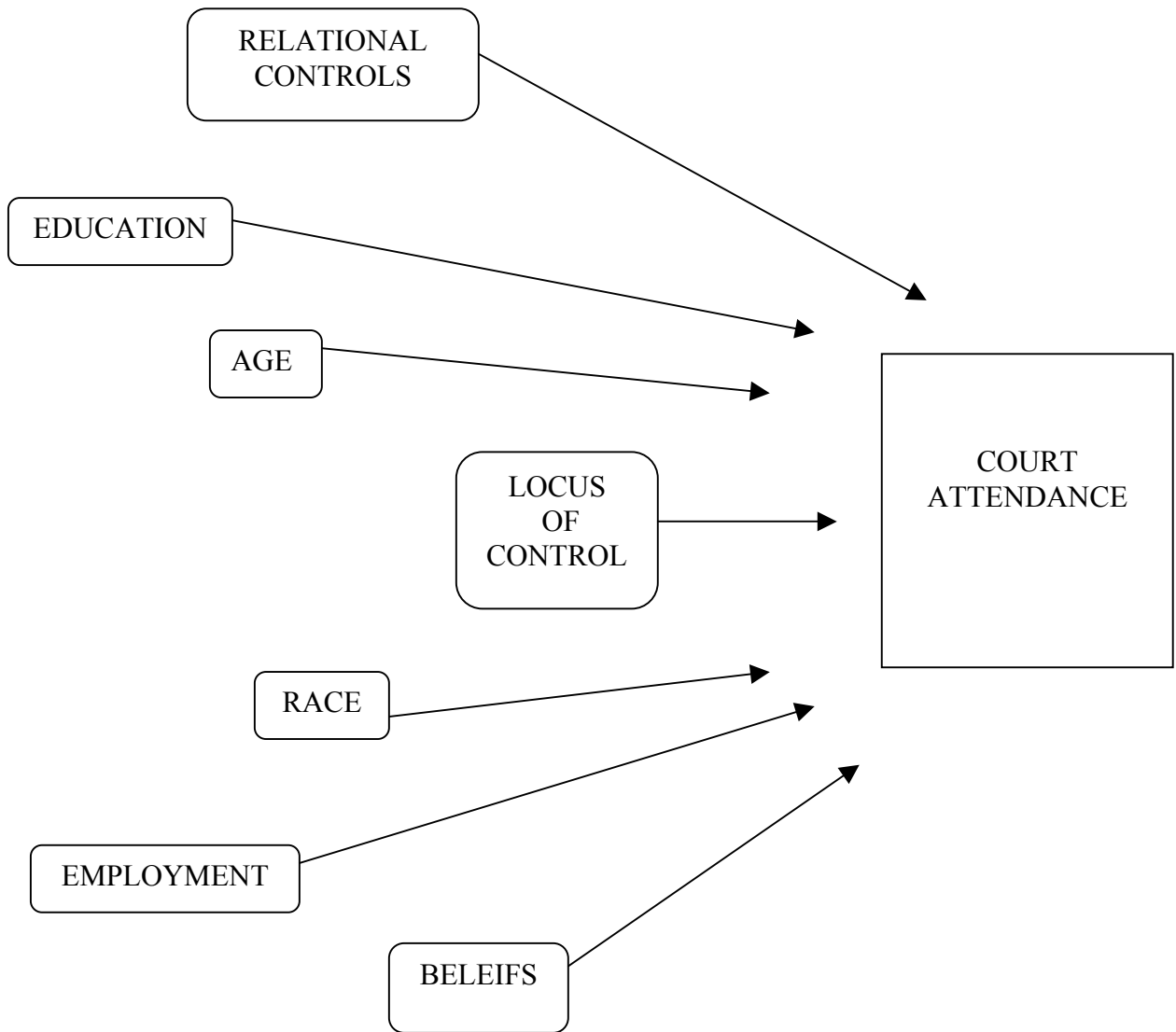


Figure 1: Model of Expectation

## METHODOLOGY

### SUBJECTS AND SAMPLE

Data were collected on 98 adult male inmates incarcerated at a southern Louisiana jail with the cooperation of the warden. The jail can house up to approximately 250 prisoners (mostly males, it accommodates only up to approximately 20 females). The permission to use human subjects was granted by the Louisiana State University, Internal Review Board prior to data collection. Inmates eligible for participation in the study had to have had previous experience with the courts system in order to be able to evaluate previous behaviors with regard to court attendance. An availability, non-probability sampling design was used for the selection of inmates for participation. The primary researcher of this project interviewed the respondents individually and many efforts to reduce social desirability effects were taken.<sup>1</sup> The inmates were provided with a standardized letter of introduction and an invitation to participate in the study.<sup>2</sup> It was stressed that participation was voluntary and assurances were given that the responses are confidential and will only be viewed by the primary researcher. It was required that the inmates sign a consent form, which was read to them before beginning the interview

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<sup>1</sup> The respondents were interviewed one on one. Also, they were told that the interviewer has no affiliation with the courts or corrections and that the interview would neither help nor hurt them in any way with regard to their current status in the jail.

<sup>2</sup> Every piece of information provided to the respondents was read aloud by the interviewer to help ensure the inmates' understanding.

(Appendix A). Instructions were provided and the subjects were given the opportunity to ask questions. For the final analysis, three completed interviews were omitted because of an apparent lack of understanding by the respondents.<sup>3</sup> The final analysis included a sample size of 95 adult male inmates.

## MEASURES

Researchers have argued that locus of control measures that are tailored to particular settings (ex. mental hospitals, jails and prisons) have better predictive powers. (Furnham & Steele, 1993; Leone, 1997) David Pugh addressed this problem by creating a situation specific scale for prisons. The scale used to measure the respondents' locus of control orientations in this study was the Prison Locus of Control scale (Appendix B) (Pugh, 1992). It has 35 statements that are designed to measure incarcerated individuals' locus of control. It is a Likert type scale that uses a self-anchored rating format from 0 to 10 where 0 represents "strongly agree" and 10 represents "strongly disagree". The survey was scored by reverse scoring certain items in order that for each individual scale 0 represented the most internal score and 10 represented the most external score. Then all the items were added. The range for the scale was 35 (the most internal) to 350 (the most external). The reliability coefficient for the scale is .78 for this sample of inmates.

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<sup>3</sup> The three completed interviews were omitted because of a perceived lack of understanding on the part of the respondent by the interviewer. The answer categories on the locus of control scale did not vary. The responses were expected to vary somewhat because the survey was divided so that for half of the statements the most internal represented 1 and the most external represented 10 and the other half were the opposite.

Margaret Coates provides additional support for the reliability and validity of the Prison Locus of Control Scale in an unpublished thesis (1993). Questions regarding age, race, education, employment, home status, church, marital status, and beliefs about the criminal justice system were asked during the course of the interviews.

The dependent variable, court participation (EVERBW1) was coded as: 0=never had a bench warrant and 1=has had at least one bench warrant. A court appearance is assumed to indicate that an individual is motivated to take charge of his punishment, accept punishment or to comply with punishment.<sup>4</sup> The second group is more passive with regard to the recognition of punishment and can be viewed as relinquishing control over their lives to the authorities.

The following independent variables were measured from responses to additional questions on the survey. Living arrangements (WHOLIV1) was coded 0=alone and 1=lives with others. Home ownership (LIVSIT2) was coded 0=rents or stays with someone else and 1=owns or buying home. Church attendance (CHURCH1) was coded 1=no church (0-1x a month), 2=some church (2-4x a month), and 3=more church (5 or more times a month). Marital status (MARITAL2) was coded 0=never married and 1=has been married at least once. Education (EDUC) was coded as 1=less than 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 2=completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 3=completed 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 4=completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade, 5=completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 6=completed 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 7=completed 11<sup>th</sup> grade, 8=high school diploma, 9=some college, and 10=college degree. Employment (EMPLOY3) was coded 0=unemployed and 1=employed (part and full). Belief in the criminal justice system (CRIMSYS2) was measured by asking the inmates the degree to which they agree or disagree with the

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<sup>4</sup> Punishment is referring to fines, community service, incarceration, etc.



statement, “The criminal justice system is an essential part of society”. The variable was coded 0=strongly disagree, disagree, and partially agree/disagree, agree, and 1=strongly agree. Belief in the importance of a court appearance (CTAPPR4) was measured with a Likert type scale from 1 to 10, with one being the least important and 10 being the most important. The variable was coded 0=1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 and 1=ten. Age was coded as a continuous variable. Race was coded as 0=nonblack and 1=black. The two interaction variables included in the final analysis, were an interaction between age and locus of control (INTAGE) and race and locus of control (INTRACE).

### SAMPLE STATISTICS

The sample descriptives are presented in table 1. Twenty-three percent of the inmates surveyed have never had a bench warrant, while the remaining 77% have had at least one. Forty-two percent of the respondents have a current bench warrant charge. Twenty percent have 2 or more current bench warrant charges. Of the total sample 47% have previously served time for a bench warrant. The average number of current overall charges for the sample is 4. The range of locus of control scores is 56 to 254 and the mean is 163. Forty four percent of the sample is black. The respondents’ ages range from 19 to 59 years old. The average age for the sample is 32 years old. Fifty-five percent have never been married and 18% live alone. Twenty-three percent of the respondents own their homes, while 34% rent and 43% live at someone else’s home. Seventy-one percent of the sample said they were employed at the time of their arrest. The median education level for the sample is 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents have a high school diploma or more and 7% have less than an eighth grade education.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable

Variable Description	Variable Categories	Number	Percentage
<b>Living Situation</b>			
	Lives Alone	17	17.9
	Lives with Others	78	82.1
<b>Homeownership</b>			
	Rent/Stays with Others	73	76.8
	Own	22	23.2
<b>Church</b>			
	No Church (0-1)	58	61.1
	Some Church (2-4)	26	27.4
	More Church (5 <)	11	11.6
<b>Marital Tie</b>			
	Never Married	52	54.7
	Ever Married	43	45.3
<b>Education</b>			
	Less than 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	1	1.1
	Completed 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	1	1.1
	Completed 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	0	0
	Completed 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	5	5.3
	Completed 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	21	22.1
	Completed 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	10	10.5
	Completed 11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	21	22.1
	High School Diploma	19	20
	Some College	14	14.7
	College Degree	3	3.2
<b>Employment</b>			
	Unemployed	28	29.5
	Employed	67	70.5

Continued

Table 1: Continued

Variable Description	Variable Categories	Number	Percentage
<b>Belief in the Importance of a Court Appearance</b>	Least Belief	26	27.4
	Most Belief	69	72.6
<b>Belief in the Criminal Justice System</b>	Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Partially A/D, and Agree	59	62.1
	Strongly Agree	36	37.9
<b>Race</b>	Nonblack	53	55.8
	Black	42	44.2
<b>Age</b>	18-25	31	32.6
	26-35	26	27.4
	36-45	28	29.5
	46-59	10	10.5
<b>Has Ever Had a Bench Warrant</b>	Never	22	23.2
	At Least One	73	76.8
<b>Locus of Control</b>	Range	56 - 254	
	Mean	163	
	Median	170	

## RESULTS

Does an external locus of control orientation influence court nonattendance? In this study, logistic regression is utilized to test whether any of the independent variables, most importantly, locus of control are significantly related to court attendance. Two logistic regression models are created.

Table 2 shows the coefficients from the logistic regression of court attendance on the 11 independent variables (model 1). The significance level of the Pearson's chi-square indicates the model does achieve significance. Locus of control, the independent variable of most interest, is found to be significantly associated with court attendance. Controlling for the other variables in the model, for every unit increase in locus of control there is a 2.6 percent increase in the odds of having at least one bench warrant. This indicates that for this sample locus of control orientations do have some effect on whether or not individuals attend mandatory court appearances. Stated alternatively, persons who exhibit more external locus of control orientations are more likely to be absent for a scheduled court appearance. Of the control variables in the model, marital tie, education, and belief in the importance of a court appearance achieve significance. Being someone who establishes marital ties decreases by approximately 82 percent the odds of having at least one bench warrant. This indicates that people who are more willing to establish marital ties are less likely to miss a scheduled appearance. Education has a surprising effect on the dependent variable. One would think that the more education someone has the less likely he would be to miss court. However, the results indicate that an increase in education actually increases the odds of having at least one bench warrant.

Table 2: Odds Ratio, Logistic Regression Predicting Who Will Be More Likely To Have At Least One Bench Warrant 2002 (Model 1)

Model 1	B	St. Error	Odds Ratio
<b>Living Situation</b>	-1.4450	.8985	.2381
<b>Homeownership</b>	.9030	.7814	2.4671
<b>Church</b>	-.4188	.4347	.6578
<b>Marital Tie</b>	-1.7077**	.7876	.1813
<b>Education</b>	.4368**	.2068	1.5478
<b>Employment</b>	.3901	.6190	1.4771
<b>Belief in the Importance of a Court Appearance</b>	1.3989**	.6984	4.0505
<b>Belief in the Criminal Justice System</b>	1.2028	.6724	3.3294
<b>Age</b>	-.0099	.0329	.9902
<b>Race</b>	.0797	.6240	1.0830
<b>Locus of control</b>	.0258*	.0097	1.0262
<b>(constant)</b>	-5.0672	2.7737	
<b>Model X2</b>	21.013**		
<b>N=95</b>			

\*p<.01

\*\*p<.05

Belief in the importance of a court appearance also had a counterintuitive effect on the dependant variable. It is reasonable to suggest that those who have the strongest beliefs regarding the importance of a court appearance would also be those individuals most likely to attend a mandatory court appearance. However, for this sample, having the strongest beliefs in the importance of a court appearance actually increases the odds of having at least one bench warrant by a significant margin. In other words, for this sample people with the strongest beliefs regarding the importance of a court appearance are more likely to miss a scheduled court appearance. Living situation, home ownership, church, employment, belief in the criminal justice system, age, and race do not achieve significance in model 1.

Table 3 shows the coefficients from the logistic regression of court attendance on not only the 11 independent variables but also 2 interaction terms. Here again the Pearson's chi-square indicates that the model is significant. Locus of control retains significance in this model. Moreover, when also controlling for the interaction effects, locus of control has a stronger effect on court attendance, for every unit increase in locus of control there is an 11 percent increase in the odds of having at least one bench warrant. Of the 12 control variables in this model, 6 achieve statistical significance. Education, age, race, locus of control, and the 2 interaction terms are found to be significantly associated to court attendance for this sample. The education effect increases from model 1 to model 2. Moreover, age is associated with approximately a 53 percent increase in the odds of having at least on bench warrant; meaning that as people grow older they are more likely have missed a mandatory court appearance. On the other hand, the interaction effect of locus of control and age is also significant, but in the opposite

Table 3: Odds Ratio, Logistic Regression Predicting Who Will Be More Likely To Have At Least One Bench Warrant 2002 (Model 2)

Model 1	B	St. Error	Odds Ratio
<b>Living Situation</b>	-1.1991	.9318	.3015
<b>Homeownership</b>	.9550	.8770	2.5987
<b>Church</b>	-.4116	.4886	.6626
<b>Marital Tie</b>	-1.5399	.8465	.2144
<b>Education</b>	.6212**	.2519	1.8612
<b>Employment</b>	.6566	.7124	1.9281
<b>Belief in the Importance of a Court Appearance</b>	1.1608	.8035	3.1926
<b>Belief in the Criminal Justice System</b>	1.4489	.7720	4.2583
<b>Age</b>	.4255**	.1689	1.5304
<b>Race</b>	-8.4126**	3.2968	.0002
<b>Locus of control</b>	.1076*	.0381	1.1136
<b>Locus of Control*Age</b>	-.0028*	.0010	.9972
<b>Locus of Control*Race</b>	.0581**	.0226	1.0598
<b>(constant)</b>	-19.3020	6.8402	
<b>Model X2</b>	35.274*		

N=95

\*p<.01

\*\*p<.05

direction of the independent effects of age and locus of control. The interaction term decreases the odds of court nonattendance. Stated alternatively, persons who are older who exhibit internal locus of control orientations are less likely to be absent for a scheduled court appearance. Similarly, the effect of race and the effect of the interaction of locus of control and race are significant and also in different directions. Being someone who is black reduces the odds of court nonattendance. While the effect of the interaction between locus of control and race has an increasing effect on the odds of having at least one bench warrant. This indicates that persons who are black and exhibit external locus of control orientations are more likely to miss a scheduled court appearance. Living situation, home ownership, church, marital tie, employment, and belief in the criminal justice system do not achieve statistical significance in model 2.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In summary, model 1 and model 2 reveals significant associations between locus of control and court attendance. With the inclusion of the interaction effects in model 2, locus of control remains significant with the odds increasing from model 1 to model 2. The logistic regression analysis in model 1 with the 11 independent variables also includes marital tie, education, and belief in the importance of a court appearance to be significantly associated with court attendance. The interaction effects of locus of control and age and locus of control and race work to conceal the independent effects of age and race on court attendance in model 1. Age, race, and the two interaction terms achieve significance in model 2. There are independent positive effects between age and court attendance and locus of control and court attendance, but the interaction effect of the two variables switches direction and has a negative effect on the odds of having at least one



bench warrant. Moreover, race and locus of control independently has effects on court attendance that are in opposite directions. The direction of the interaction effect of the two variables is positive and in the same direction as locus of control and in the opposite direction as race. Education is also significant in model 2 with a positive association. However, marital tie and belief in the importance of a court appearance no longer achieves significance in model 2.

## **DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS**

This study indicates that locus of control is a factor affecting court attendance, at least for this sample. This indicates that people with external locus of control orientations are less likely than those with internal orientations to attend a mandatory court appearance. In addition, the effect of locus of control is found to increase with the inclusion of the two interaction terms. Marital tie and belief in the importance of a court appearance are associated with court attendance only when the interaction effects are not included in the model. People who establish marital ties are less likely to have had a bench warrant. While people who have the strongest beliefs regarding the importance of a court appearance are more likely to have at least one bench warrant. Education has an increasing effect on the odds of having at least one bench warrant and this holds true in both models. Age and race are associated with court attendance only when the interaction effects are included. Older people are more likely to have bench warrants than younger people. While, blacks are less likely to have bench warrants nonblacks. The interaction terms, locus of control and age and locus of control and race, are also found to be affecting court attendance.

The results of this study suggest that people who exhibit external locus of control orientations are less likely to participate in their social responsibilities regarding court attendance requirements. This finding is in accordance with the general expectation guiding this study that persons with external locus of control orientations are less likely to attend a scheduled court appearance. With regard to the marital tie finding, people who establish marital ties are less likely to have a bench warrant. If one views marital ties as social commitments, then it seems logical that persons more apt to make social

commitments may also be more committed to court attendance. This finding is in line with social control theory, however, except for the belief in the importance of a court appearance none of the other social bonding type variables, living situation, homeownership, church, and belief in the criminal justice system proved to be factors effecting court attendance in model 1. And none of these variables, including marital tie and belief in the importance of a court appearance achieved significance with the inclusion of the interaction terms in model 2.

Moreover, intuitively one would think that those individuals with the strongest beliefs regarding the importance of a court appearance would be less likely to have ever had a bench warrant. However, given that the data for this study were collected from individuals already residing in jail, it is not surprising that having the strongest beliefs in a court appearance increased the odds of having at least one bench warrant. This indicates that persons with the strongest beliefs regarding the importance of a court appearance are more likely to miss a scheduled court appearance. This would have probably been different had everyone been surveyed before they had actually suffered the effects of a bench warrant. It can be reasoned that the results of this study seem to discount any social bonding effects on court attendance.

The education variable is significant in both models, however, has an unexpected positive association indicating more education as increasing the odds of having at least one bench warrant. There is evidence in the literature that locus of control is composed of three dimensions: control ideology, sense of personal control, and the degree to which the individual blames himself or the system. It is suggested that an external locus of control orientation can be a representation of system blame rather than evidence of belief

in luck or fate (Porter and Washington, 1979). This may help to explain the education finding in that these individuals may have a sense of personal control, which enables them to attain more education, yet at the same time exhibit no personal control with regard to the system due to high system-blame.

The analysis of model 2 revealed some interesting findings regarding age and race and locus of control. The interaction terms are included in this analysis because of the possibility that the variables combined may also have implications for court attendance. Age, race, and the interaction terms achieve statistical significance in model 2. Age has a positive effect on court nonattendance. This finding makes sense in that older persons have had more years to have a bench warrant. It is interesting that independently age and locus of control have increasing positive effects on the odds, while the interaction term locus of control and age has a decreasing negative effect on the odds of having at least one bench warrant. It may be that as people age they may experience greater familiarity with the system through their own and others' experiences and consequently perceive a greater degree of control over their position within the system (Lefcourt, 1982). This familiarity, in turn, may effectively help to reduce the likelihood of missing a mandatory court appearance.

Another interesting finding is with regard to race and the interaction term locus of control and race. Blacks and whites experience the world differently and because of this they may develop differently with regard to their locus of control orientations. It could be that the societal position of many blacks may help to externalize their locus of control beliefs with regard to the criminal justice system. The independent effect of being black decreases the odds of having at least one bench warrant. It could be that blacks perceive

themselves as more likely to suffer the consequences of a bench warrant and therefore less likely to take the risk of nonattendance. However, the interaction term locus of control and race has an increasing effect on the odds of having at least one bench warrant. This suggests that being black and having an external locus of control orientation has the combined effect of increasing the probability of court nonattendance. This may be evidence of a fatalistic orientation experienced by blacks. Blacks experience more interaction with police and corrections and are over represented in the corrections system. Because of this, a fatalistic orientation may develop which leads to higher rates of court nonattendance.

This researcher found it curious that 47% of this sample has previously served time on a bench warrant. One would expect that individuals would learn something from the first time. However, it can be reasoned that this is in line with an external locus of control orientation. Individuals, who do not believe their consequences are based on their own actions, will not consider a change in behavior to change outcomes and consequently will learn nothing from previous actions. Consider the example of the student used earlier in this paper. The internal locus of control oriented student will take responsibility for the failing grade, and thus can alter his behavior in some manner to change the outcome of the next exam. However, the external locus of control oriented student who blamed the teacher for the failing grade, has no recourse to change the outcome of the next exam. If offenders do not believe they put themselves in jail, then they do not perceive themselves in control of staying out of jail. This reasoning suggests that locus of control may also be a factor in recidivism.

The United States has been experiencing increasing incarceration rates for years. The number of jail inmates per 100,000 United States residents rose from 163 to 226 between 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Dept. of Justice). Bench warrants are a factor that needs to be addressed when considering overcrowding problems and high costs. The results from this study reveal that an external locus of control orientation plays a part in violations of court orders at least with this sample. The findings are based on an availability sample and therefore cannot be generalized to the U.S. jail population. The small sample size has implications for the findings and can also be considered a limitation of this study. However, this study does lend support for future research that utilizes locus of control with prisoners and also research involving the study of how to modify prisoners' locus of control in order to get greater compliance with court orders.

Some researchers have indicated that internals are more likely to empower themselves by learning about their situations, by gathering information. (Lefcourt, 1982) "Internals believe that they can act in their own behalf and therefore require more information, whereas externals more readily accept dependency on more competent others and thus has less need of information (Lefcourt, 1982: 61)." This allows internals to better negotiate and maneuver through their environment. One of the most common accounts given by the inmates for missing court was either a lack of information or confusion about specific information; miscommunication.<sup>1</sup> Other common accounts included: forgot/ignored, the system's mistake, no money to pay fines, working at the time of court appearance, and was worried about being locked up. An impression this researcher got while observing in the jail was the utter lack of understanding by many

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<sup>1</sup> An account is a verbal device used to normalize behavior (Scott and Lyman, 1968).

inmates about how the system works and the offender's role in the system. It may be to the system's advantage to provide this information to the offenders, in order that everyone may be operating at some minimal level of knowledge with regard to the system. This in turn may also have some effect on the offenders' locus of control pertaining to the criminal justice system.

Many of the programs sometimes available to inmates such as educational classes and vocational training should help to internalize offenders, in the sense that these programs increase perceived competence. However, these programs do not specifically focus on criminal justice issues. The system needs to more directly address the problems specific to it. Inmates need direct knowledge about the system in order to better maneuver their way within the system.

A more ambitious approach on behalf of the criminal justice system would be to try to modify offenders' locus of control orientations. In Lefcourt's (1982) examination of studies that deal with changing a person's perception of control, either through changing causal attributions or the encouragement of origin behaviors, he found evidence to suggest that a person's locus of control orientation can be modified through some sort of intervention. Further research needs to be conducted that sheds some light on how to best further this end.

Individuals who do not attend mandatory court appearances affect the system in many ways. First, it is very costly to track down and incarcerate individuals until their next court date. Second, it puts more pressure on the system with regard to overcrowding. Third, there is a negative impact on other inmates, due to the fact that

judges become reluctant to release inmates on their own recognizant (ROR). This study contributes to the limited existing research regarding compliance of court attendance requirements by lending support for a new avenue for study involving the locus of control concept.

In conclusion, our system has progressively become more willing to utilize incarceration in its reaction to offenders; the corrections industry has expanded and is very costly. It is imperative that research be conducted in order to address such problems as overcrowding and increasing costs. One avenue to reduce these problems is for an ideology to develop in corrections that concentrates on alternatives to incarceration. This ideology at the same time should emphasize the importance of research to evaluate the viability of programs and procedures implemented by the criminal justice system.



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United States Department of Justice Statistics

**APPENDIX A  
CONSENT FORM**

Factors Affecting Bench Warrants

My name is Anne. I am a graduate student at Louisiana State University in the Department of Sociology. I am conducting research, here, at the Ascension Parish Jail for my Masters thesis. The research is an effort to better understand social factors related to bench warrants. I am the principle investigator on this project.

This interview should take no more than 45 minutes. You will be asked questions dealing with such things as your background, degree of control you feel in jail, beliefs about the criminal justice system, and beliefs about bench warrants.

The only risk to you is the inadvertent release of any sensitive information. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. Files will be kept in a secure cabinet to which only the investigator has access.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research project. Just before we start the interview, I would like to reassure you that as a participant in this project you have several rights.

*First, your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary.  
You are free to refuse to answer any question at any time.  
You are free to withdraw from the interview at any time.  
This interview may be made part of the final research report, but under no circumstances will your name or identifying characteristics be included in the report.*

The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct any additional questions regarding the study specifics to the principle investigator. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B**  
**SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

Prison Locus of Control Scale

The following 35 statements on this questionnaire represent opinions that some inmates have about their experience in jail. Please read each statement, and circle a number that shows the degree to which you agree or disagree with it. For example, circling #3 would indicate that you pretty much agree with it, whereas circling #8 would indicate you lean toward disagreeing with it as far as your personal experience is concerned.

1. Rehabilitation is possible for me in this jail.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
  
2. You can't avoid trouble in jail because it comes looking for you.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
  
3. There is really no way I can relate to guards most of the time.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
  
4. Getting bonded out has more to do with luck than anything else.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
  
5. It seems no matter how hard I try the system won't give an inch.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
  
6. I can't get jail officials to notice when I do good.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
  
7. It makes little sense to plan in jail because you never know what will happen.  
Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. Most of what happens to me in jail is out of my hands.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. In jail you can't really think before you act.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10. Violence in jail can not be avoided.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
11. Only the administration can solve the tensions that exist in jail.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
12. I can use almost any program to my advantage.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
13. A inmate is really in charge of his own fate.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
14. I have very little influence over how much respect other inmates show me.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
15. How I act will influence how much respect guards show me.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
16. How soon I get released depends on how I act.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

17. I can take pretty good care of myself in jail.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
18. There are very few problems that come up in jail that I can't handle.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
19. I can stop myself from getting down or depressed.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
20. There isn't much I can do in this jail to stop myself from being bored.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
21. I have the power to make this bit ("time") useful.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
22. Be it good or bad, inmates deserve most of what happens to them.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
23. Inmates who can't get guards to treat them with respect don't understand how to get along with guards.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
24. It is really up to the inmate whether jail becomes an opportunity or a punishment.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
25. Society put me here, and society will determine when I leave and if I come back.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

26. The administration should listen to the ideas of inmates.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
27. My fate lies in the hands of the system.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
28. You have to be more smart than lucky to get by in jail.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
29. An inmate really can't be expected to keep his cool in a place like jail.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
30. When an inmate gets in trouble it is usually the end result of jail staff abusing their authority.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
31. An inmate has a lot of control over how he is treated.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
32. Most guards are influenced by the actions of inmates.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
33. Jail is so negative that I can't help but be influenced in a negative way.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
34. Good things happen to inmates who make good things happen.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



35. Peer pressure is so strong in jail that it prevents me from doing good.  
 Agree \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_\_  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
36. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
37. Are you ( Female or Male)?
38. \_\_\_\_\_ Black/African American  
 \_\_\_\_\_ White  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other
39. What is your marital status?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Never married  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Married: living with spouse  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Married: not living with spouse  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed
40. What was the last year in school that you have completed?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Less than 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Completed 7<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Completed 8<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Completed 10<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Completed 11<sup>th</sup> grade  
 \_\_\_\_\_ High school diploma  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Some college  
 \_\_\_\_\_ College degree  
 \_\_\_\_\_ GED  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Vocational School (formal training)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Any informal training (apprenticeship)
41. Before your current incarceration, how many people lived with you in your household? \_\_\_\_\_ WRITE NUMBER
42. Do you rent or own the space you lived in before your current incarceration or were you staying at someone else's house? \_\_\_\_\_
43. Have you had dealings with the courts prior to your current incarceration? If yes, under what circumstances?
44. Have you, in the past 5 years, had a bench warrant? About how long ago?
45. Did you serve any time on that/those warrant(s)?

46. Prior to 5 years ago, did you ever have a bench warrant?
47. Did you serve any time on that/those warrants?
48. What kind of offenses lead to you having bench warrants? (ticket, misdemeanor, felony)
49. Has there been a time when you have had contact with the police (courts) and went completely through the process?
50. What were the charges?
51. I am going to read you a statement. I want you to tell me if you SD, D, PA/D, A, or SA. The criminal justice system (police, courts, and corrections) is an essential part of society.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Disagree  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Partially agree/disagree  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Agree  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Strongly agree
52. On a scale of 1 to 10, with one being the least important and 10 being the most important, how important do you consider a court appearance?  
 (circle the number)
- 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10
53. Roughly, how many court appearances have you missed? \_\_\_\_\_
54. Have you, in the past, served time on a bench warrant? Yes / No (circle)
55. How many people (relatives and close friends) do you know who are currently spending time in either a jail or a prison? (write the number of people)  
 Relatives \_\_\_\_\_ (specify parents/ siblings/ children)  
 Close friends \_\_\_\_\_
56. How many visitors do you have a week? \_\_\_\_\_ number of visitors per week

57. How many letters do you receive a week? \_\_\_\_\_ number of letters per week

58. You are the natural parent of how many children?

\_\_\_\_ 0

\_\_\_\_ 1

\_\_\_\_ 2

(AGES)

\_\_\_\_ 3

\_\_\_\_ 4

\_\_\_\_ 5

\_\_\_\_ more than 5

59. How many brothers and sisters do you have? \_\_\_\_\_ WRITE  
NUMBER

60. How many children do you have custody of? (this includes your children and  
anyone else's that you provide the primary support for) \_\_\_\_\_ WRITE  
NUMBER

61. Before you entered jail, who did you live with? (check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_ None

\_\_\_\_ Mom

\_\_\_\_ Dad

\_\_\_\_ Grandmother

\_\_\_\_ Grandfather

\_\_\_\_ Aunt

\_\_\_\_ Uncle

\_\_\_\_ Other

62. Before your current incarceration, did you attend church services  
regularly? \_\_\_\_\_ x a month

63. Were you employed at the time of your arrest?

\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_ Full-time

\_\_\_\_ Part-time

64. What job or type of job did you work in the last 12 months?

65. In the last year, how much did you work? \_\_\_\_\_ # of months

66. Roughly, how much money did you make in a week?

Please describe to me the nature of your most recent arrest.

Please describe to me why you were unable to attend a scheduled court appearance.

Intoxicated \_\_\_\_\_  
Environmental factors (ex. no ride) \_\_\_\_\_  
Personal reasons (ex. sickness) \_\_\_\_\_  
No information (did not know court date) \_\_\_\_\_  
No money to pay fines \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Did you know that you could pay and have your court date changed?

If has served time on a bench warrant before but does attend now, what changed?

Does it matter whether the court appearance is for a misdemeanor or a felony or tickets?

What is the difference between the times you do attend court and the times you don't?

## VITA

Anna Cutlip was born September 25, 1973. She is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She attended Shenandoah Elementary and Woodlawn High School. In 1999, she graduated from Louisiana State University with a bachelor degree in sociology with a concentration in criminology. Her main interests lie in the areas of criminology, deviance, social control, and law. She enrolled in the graduate program in sociology at Louisiana State University in 1999 and plans to receive her Master of Arts degree in May of 2002.