



CALIFORNIA SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR

2019 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s)	Project Number
Diogenes Angelo Bernal; Erin Hoffman	S0404
Project Title	The Relationship between Deception and Altruism amongst Teens of Different Economic Status
Abstract	
Objectives	This experiment was performed to investigate whether the economic status of young adults affect a tendency to lie for personal gain, or for the benefits of others. A preliminary survey was sent out to 58 high school-age teens to get a representation of the data the experiment could produce. The survey showed that 2.05% of people whose families struggled financially have a tendency to lie to benefit themselves, while 19.0% of people whose families are financially stable have the same tendency. The actual experiment, which included a survey that included multiple scenarios with decisions that allowed participants a choice between exuding a generous, honest behavior, or a selfish, deceptive behavior. A total of 105 teens in Ventura County took the survey, with about 28 of participants exuding a selfish, deceptive behavior. Out of these 28, 18 participants were of a high economic status, while 10 participants were of a low economic status. To determine whether a participant was of a high or economic class, participants were asked to state if their families owned more or less than \$80,000, which is the average income of a Ventura County household. The original hypothesis that teens of a higher economical class were more likely to lie to benefit themselves was proven to be correct. Not only was the hypothesis proven to be correct, but the stereotype society has instilled on the behaviors of lower class teens was as well. Society thinks today that teens of a lower economic class are more likely to lie or steal, however the experiment has shown this to be invalid and solely based off one's opinions, not fact.
Methods	Google survey (questions created by us), social media accounts
Results	A total of 105 participants in Ventura County took the survey on social media, however 89 participants were taken into consideration, due to insufficient answers or responses. Out of these 89 participants, 29 individuals families currently have an income less than \$80,000 a year, while 60 individuals families earned more than \$80,000. For the purposes of this experiment, results show that teens of lower economic statuses have a greater tendency to develop selfish, deceptive tendencies rather than teens of higher economic statuses. Out of these 89 participants, 28 teens communicated selfish, deceptive answers while 61 teens communicated altruistic, honest answers, out of a total of 7 different scenarios. Out of those 28 individuals who communicated selfish, deceptive answers, 18 were of a higher economic status than the average family household in Ventura County, while 10 were of a lower economic status.
Conclusions	
Summary Statement	The stereotype that someone who is poor will steal more than someone who is rich is not applicable and should not be taught to children to further advance to a unified society.
Help Received	