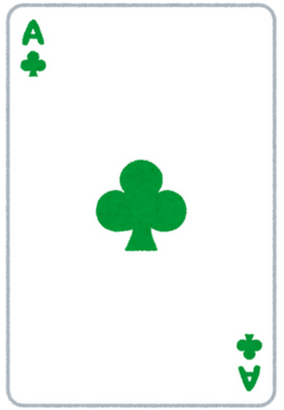
The luck factor



Big question

Does thinking you're lucky give you a better outcome?

abstract

My project is about if believing you're lucky lets you see better opportunities.

I conducted this test by asking my participants if they believe they are lucky or not. This gave me two test groups: people who identify as lucky and people who identify as unlucky.

I gave my participants a file of photos and timed them while they were counting those photos. They thought they were racing the time but I actually had hid a "luck factor".. One of the photos had a hidden message that said "stop counting there are 95 photos". My test was really to measure how many of the test group who considers themselves lucky saw the "luck factor" compared to how many of the unlucky test group saw the luck factor.

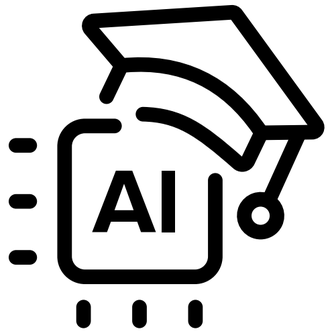
I ended up with 99 participants. Of my participants, 67 identified as lucky (test group 1) and 32 identfiied as unlucky (test group 2). A total of 19 of the participants caught the "luck factor" and stopped counting, or 19%. Out of the 67 participants in the lucky group, 15 saw the the luck factor, or 22%. And out of the 32 in the unlucky group, 4 saw the luck factor, or 12%.

The conclusion i came to is that the test group who identified as lucky were more likely to see positive opportunities.

Hypothsis

My hypothesis is thinking you’re lucky gives you a better outcome in life because if your mind is focused on something, it’s easier to notice.

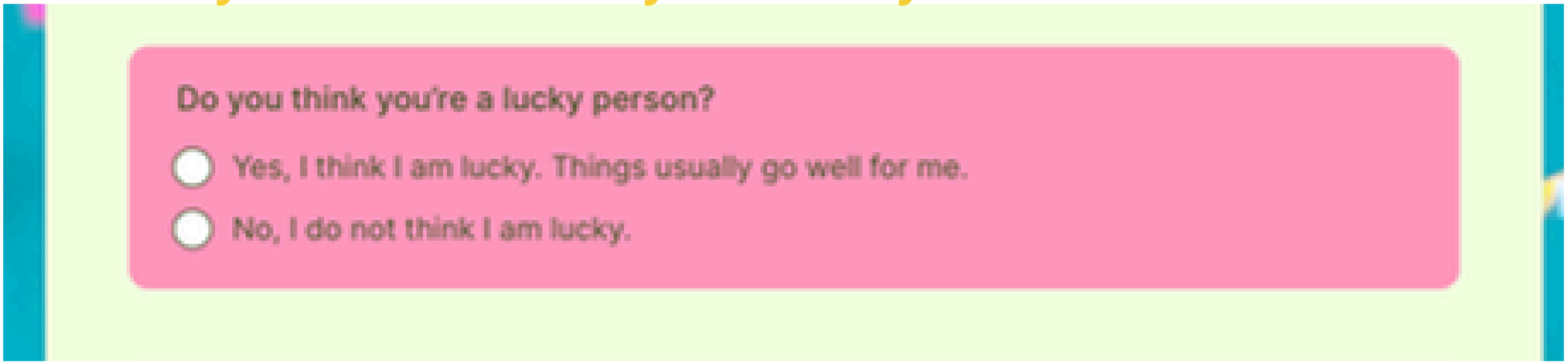
materials



- i-pad or computer
- Online survey platform
- 95 Digital photos, including one “luck factor” with a hidden answer in it
- AI to create the secret photo
- 99 participants
- timer

Experiment design[procedure]

1. **First, I created an online survey that asked my participants if they identified as lucky or unlucky.**



I used this question to sort my participants into two test groups:

Test Group 1: People who think they're lucky

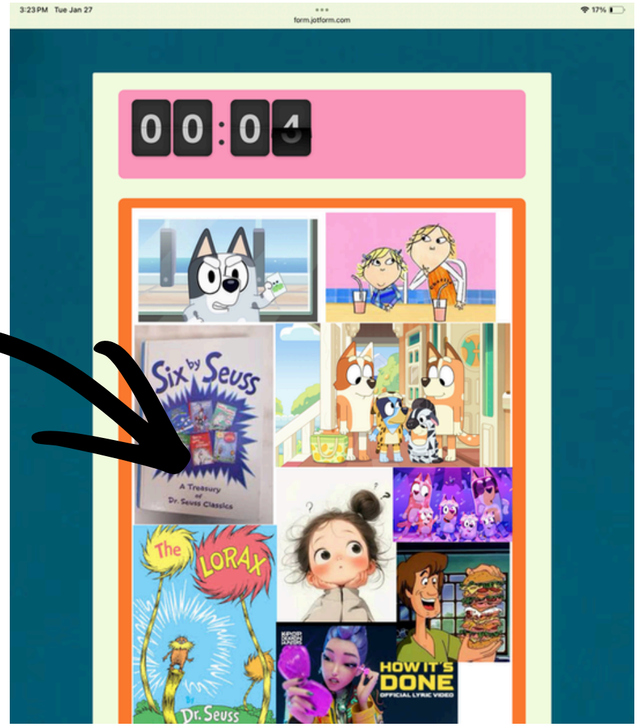
Test Group 2: People who think they're unlucky

Experiment design[procedure]

2. **Next, the survey asked the participants to count how many photos they saw while they were being timed.**

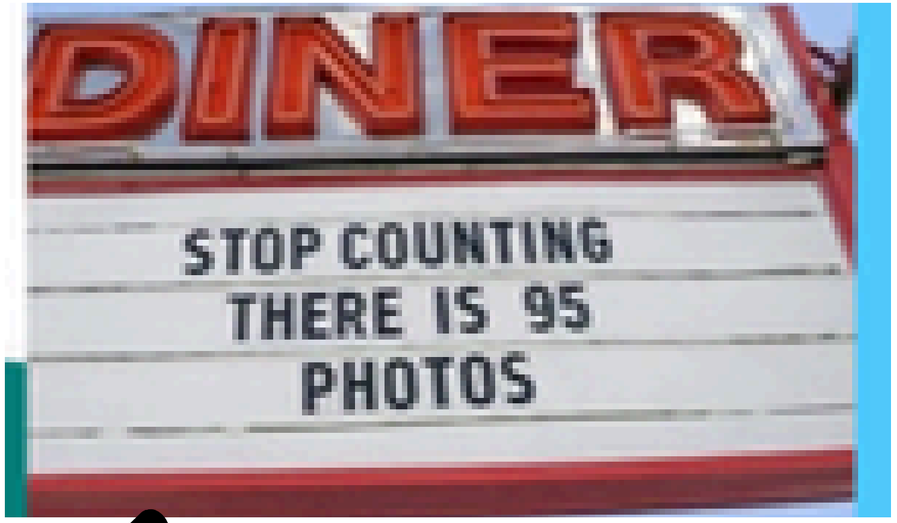
Timer

Series of 95 photos for participants to count



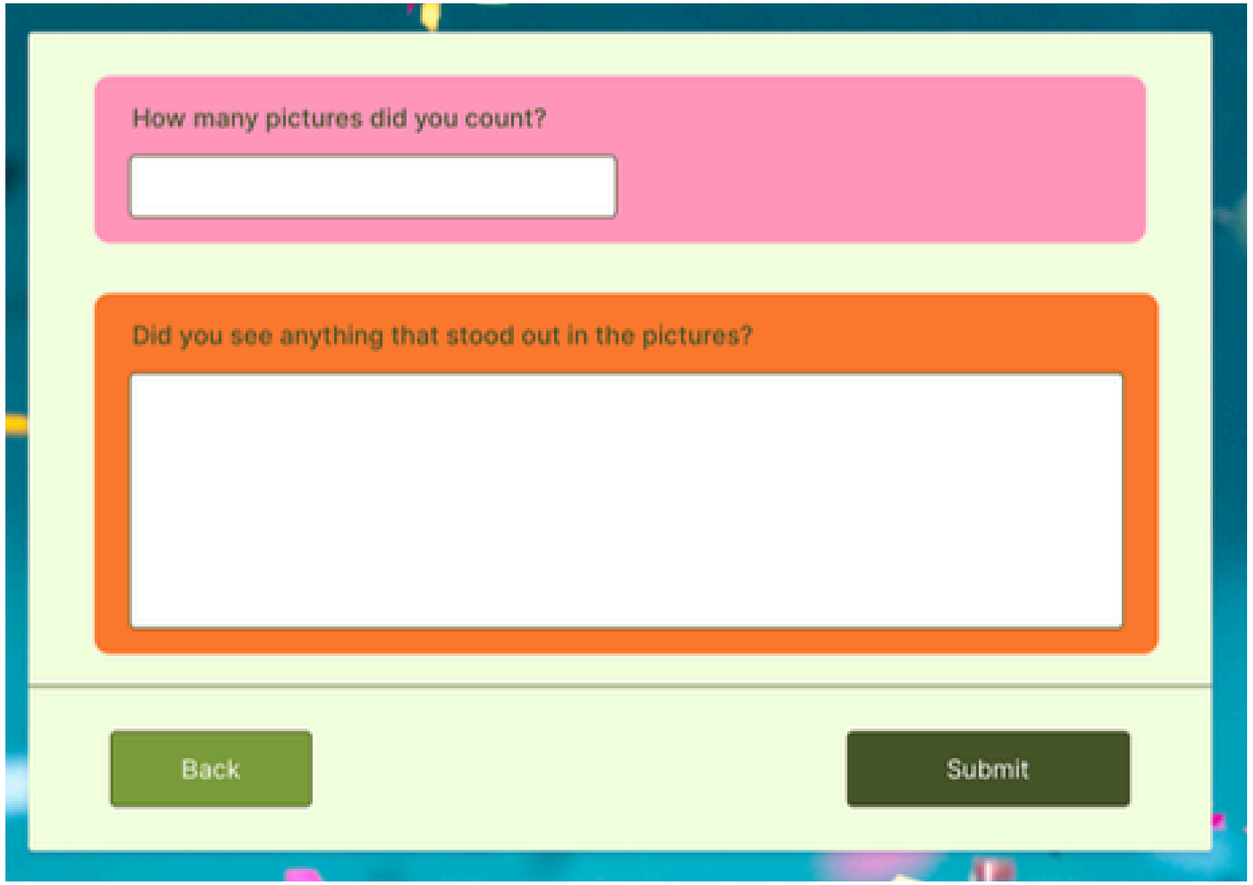
Experiment design[procedure]

3. **Hidden among the 95 photos was a secret picture that told participants to stop counting, there are 95 photos**



Experiment design[procedure]

4. **The last question of the test allowed participants to write if they saw the secret message (19 people found it!)**



How many	Did you see anything that stood out in the pictures?
95	The picture that says stop counting there's 95 pictures
95	Yes the 95 pictures, the grinc is a whole vibe
95	The diner pic
95	The clue with the diner
95	The photo with the 95 pics
95	There was a pic that gave the answer
95	The 95 pic
95	The picture that says 95
95	The 95
95	The pic with the answer
95	The diner pic
95	The photo with the 95
95	The 95

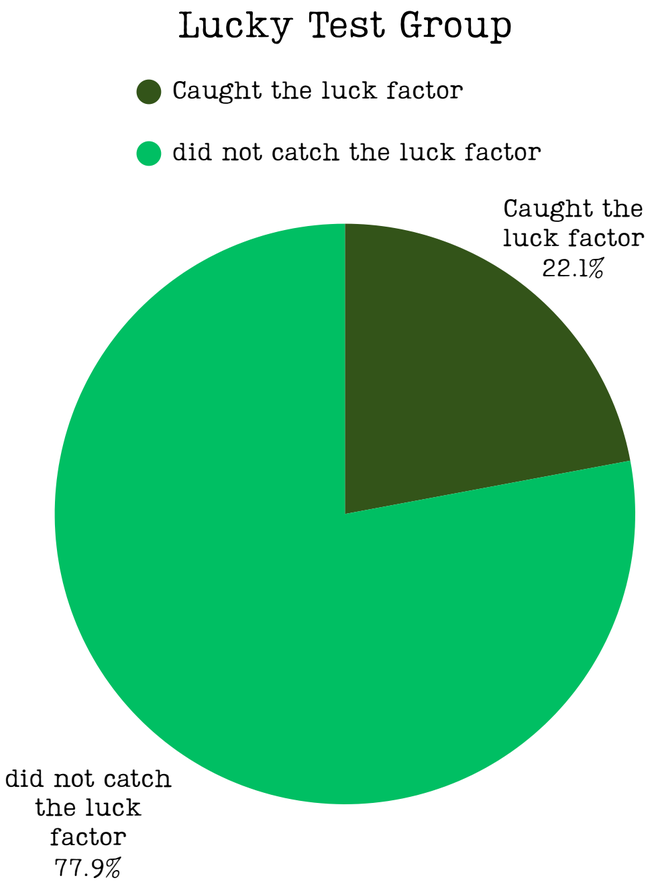
Experiment design[procedure]

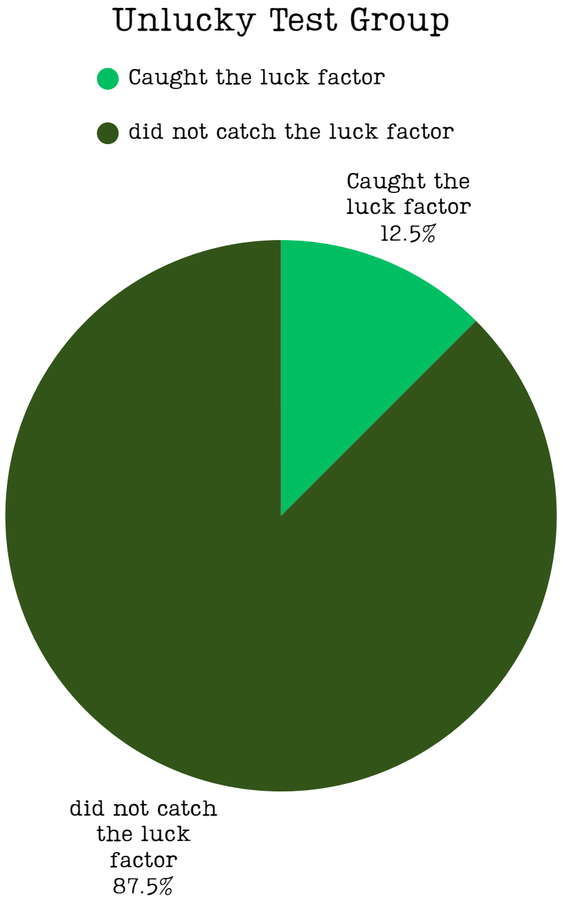
4. **I shared the survey link on my parents' social media, and in the first day, 99 people participated in my project**

5. **I analyzed the answers to see how many lucky groups caught the "luck factor" compared to how many from the unlucky group.**

Charts and Graphs

	Total	saw lucky factor	Percentages	Times
People who think they're lucky	68	15	22.39%	125
People who think they're unlucky	32	4	12.50%	135
Totals	99	19	19.19%	128





Results

- **Out of 99 participants, 67 people said they were lucky and 32 said they were not.**
- **Out of the 19 people who found the “lucky factor”, 15 identified as lucky (22% of the 68) and 4 identified as unlucky (12% of the 32)**
- **The average times of the two groups were 125 seconds for the lucky group and 135 seconds for the unlucky group.**

Conclushions

My project investigated whether people who think they're lucky have better outcomes than people who do not. My results showed that the test group who identified as lucky caught a positive opportunity in front of them 22% of the time, while the unlucky test group only saw it 12% of the time. This showed me the group that identified as lucky were nearly two times as likely to see a positive opportunity than the test group who does not identify as unlucky. My hypotheses was that I believed people who think they're lucky have better outcomes, so my hypothesis was correct.

In my research, I learned this is called the "Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon". Basically, your brain scans for information that it believe is relevant, and it filters out what it believes is irrelevant. When you tell your brain that your are lucky, it is programmed to make positive outcomes stand out to you. This is also called "Blue Car Syndrome"; after you decide to buy a specific color car, those cars will specifically stand out to you.

I really enjoyed this project and I learned a lot about the science of how our brains impact our outcomes. If i did it again, I would have found a way to make the lucky and unlucky test groups the same size. I just didnt realize that a lot more people consider themselves lucky than unlucky... hm maybe that could be something I'll do a science project on next year!

Research

1

The Baader-Meinhof Phenomenon is a scientific term that describes your brain filtering out irrelevant information and “spot lighting” what it thinks is important.

2

“Confirmation bias” is a phenomenon where your brain seeks information that it believes is true. So if you think you’re lucky, youre brain looks for positive opportunities to make that true.

3

“Motivated Perception” is a psychological term for your mind subconsciously seeing what you want to see (such as believing you’re lucky.)

Bibliography

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