

## Does Luck exist?

Author: Ujjyaini Mitra . November 2021

### What is luck?

You have applied for a job interview, your profile has more than 80% match to the skills the JD has mentioned. Yet you were not even called for an interview. Or you were called for an interview, but you were not selected even though the interview went really well. You later got to know that the company chose someone inside the organization from another department to offer the role. It feels as if you were not lucky enough.

Your department is looking to choose someone for a project to be deployed onsite and you are also nominated, though one of your colleagues was chosen. At times, it may feel that you are better skilled, yet why manager choose the other person?

You and a few of your batch mates who studied together in the same college are meeting at a reunion. You are discussing how has been the career journey of each one of you and where they all are today. You notice that one of them has achieved disproportionately high, both in terms of position, financial, family, properties, etc. compared to others. And especially if the person also comes from an affluent and influential family, you feel that's the luck.

*Have you faced luck in your career and life's journey?*

### A mathematical explanation of Luck

Let's look at it mathematically. We know about regression, where there is an outcome variable Y and multiple explanatory variables Xi.

$$Y = f(X_i) + ?$$

$f(X_i)$  are the parts those we can explain through factors or logical reasoning. For example, you may say the role for which I was interviewed required prior experience of team management which I do not have, role also required to come from Engineering background and relocation to a specific city which was not possible for me. Therefore, I was not selected for the role.

Here outcome =  $Y$  = Not being selected for a role

Explanatory variables are

$X_1$  = no prior experience of team management

$X_2$  = not having an engineering background

$X_3$  = relocation not feasible

However, if none of these  $X$ is exist, yet not chosen for the role, then what remains is the error term  $\epsilon$ . This  $\epsilon$  is the luck factor. The part of the outcome we can not be explained through explanatory variables is considered as luck.

You may even consider your current salary vs another person who studied with you, have the same number of years of experience, yet has a far higher salary or far lower salary! Same way, if you consider present salary =  $Y$ , you will find multiple  $X$ is which can explain part of the difference, e.g. the first company the person chose to join from campus placements (you probably chose a well-established company and (s)he chose a seed level startup, where salary growth was faster with the growth of the startup). Yet, there will be parts of the difference, which may not be explained by the mathematical formula, and that could be called as 'Luck' factor. If  $\epsilon$  or the luck factor is positive, it gives a favorable result to one vs another.

## A Spiritual explanation of Luck

Our ancient Indian scriptures talk about 'Karma', which says you get the result as per your 'karma'. If that is true, then there cannot be any existence of luck. Everyone doing the same 'karma' should ideally get the 'same result', isn't it?

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Well, interestingly, there are **3 types of Karma** –

1. Sanchita Karma: The accumulated past action, that you cannot change
2. Prarabdha Karma: The action you have done in the past which is shaping your present
3. Agami Karma: The action you are doing at present or done at past whose fruit is yet to receive.

And **4 kinds of Karmaphala** –

1. Drist Karmaphala – those results which are received and realized almost immediately after the Karma (e.g. you eat and you feel good and nourished)
2. Adrist Karmaphala – Results of Sanchita karma which are yet to be realized
3. Prapta Karmaphala – the results you are getting at present because of your prarabdha karma
4. Aprapta Karmaphala – the results which are yet to be received of the Karma already done.

Notice the subtle difference between Adrist and Aprapta karmaphala – realized vs received.

When we try to explain an outcome, the explanatory factors in our mind are the actions done in the past which we can remember, observe, realize. Sanchita karma, on the other hand are difficult to remember. Adrist karmaphala is not observed or goes unrealized. Aprapta is yet to be received.

So,

**Luck = part of the Prapta Karmaphala out of sanchita karma.** Since we do not remember them, but receiving results now, therefore cannot be attributed to a factor, and seems like an error term.

If you believe, you have done all possible right karma for the result, then,

**Luck = Aprapta karmaphala based on your Prarabdha karma which you are yet to receive.** Once again seems like a gap. Hold your patience, you

will get it. You are expecting it ahead of the right time and feeling sad.

*Note: This is my personal view, and would love to learn your views too.*

**The post "Does Luck exist?" was first published by Ujjyaini Mitra here**  
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/does-luck-exist-ujjyaini-mitra/>

## About Ujjyaini Mitra

I go beyond 'Best in Class', and passionate to build 'Next in Class' innovative solutions for businesses using design thinking, innovation and AI.

Top 50 Most Influential Women 2020 in Media, Marketing and Advertising by Impact.

Delivered measurable business impacts and positive ROI from Data Science COE within 18 months. I build an enterprise capability, integrating advanced data science into the workflow, acting as a change agent and advising business functions, board and CEO through collaborative efforts.

I have 14 years of rich Leadership experience in establishing Data as a Culture at large organizations. My strongest forte are: Building and growing a Data Org from scratch, developing data strategies, enabling business growth, Stakeholder collaboration, scoping their pain points, designing an overarching strategy to help the business drive ROI, influencing innovation, start-up collaboration, Building a cohesive, motivated and empowered Data Science team and mentoring through my domain expertise. My work experience is spread over the Globe across industries – Digital Media & Entertainment, , E-commerce, Telecommunication, CPG, Healthcare, Retail Banking, Travel & Hospitality Business – both B2C and B2B - to name few. In a nutshell - I am a strong people leader with in-depth domain expertise. I am an active practitioner of Vipassana Meditation & Sivananda Yoga. escape to mountains, in my free time. MMM of my life is Mathematics ? Meditation ????and Mountain ?

<https://thehumancapitalhub.com/articles/does-luck-exist>