



Differences in Locus of Control Among Students Studying in Colleges Located at Udhampur

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Abstract:

Locus of control is one of the important psychological concepts that helps the people to understand that how much control they have over their life or decisions that they are going to take or how they are going to face the challenges in their life. There are generally two types of locus of control internal locus of control and external locus of control. Locus of control perceives that external forces such as fate, luck, or other people exert a significant influence on their lives. Understanding locus of control has implications in fields such as education, organizational behavior and personal development, as it impacts the overall achievement of the individual in life. The present investigation was to study difference in locus of control in students studying in the various colleges.

Keywords: *Locus of control, Psychological, Personal development, Internal locus of control and external locus of control.*

1. Introduction

The term "locus of control" refers to the personality dimension that helps to explain one's behavior. Locus of control is defined as a person's tendency to see events as being controlled internally or externally. People who perceive that outcomes of their work are determined by external forces like luck, chance, and fate have an external locus of control orientation. People with internal locus of control believe that they can influence the outcomes of their work with their own efforts, skills, and characteristics. The degree to which you believe that other people control events in your life is powerful others control.

Locus of Control is an aptitude that is relevant to control in excess of outcomes. People considering themselves able to control their outcomes are known as internal or possessing internal Locus of Control. Externals or individuals with external Locus of Control considered their outcomes beyond their control. Individuals with internal Locus of Control have high motivation for achievement and low outer directedness. On the other side externals always keep trying to search out explanations for their failures. We may also refer to internals as "self control" or "self determination".

Internal individuals can be psychologically unhealthy and unstable if they decline competence, efficacy and opportunity. They may become neurotic, nervous or depress. It can be said that they require suitable surroundings which influence them to experience success. External individuals may be easy going, relaxed and lead a pleasant life (Hans, 2000; Hattie, Marsh, Neill & Richards, 1997).

An internal locus of control is composed of dependent events mostly related to one's permanent characteristics. Three types of locus of control had been acknowledged. Foremost, internal locus of control reflects the trust that one has personage control in surplus of the proceedings to make possible, Succeeding, authoritative other locus of control is the conviction that proceedings are not resolute by one's own behavior, excluding by persons who are in positions of power over the human being. Third, unidentified locus of control is at what time a person is not acquainted with why actions take place (Doumas, Halloran, John & Margolin, 1999).

Internal locus of control is often used synonymously with "self-determination" and "personal agency." Some research suggests that men tend to have a higher internal locus of control than women, while others suggest the opposite: that women have greater internal locus of control in comparison, other research reports a shift towards more internal locus of control as people grow older.

Experts have found that, in general, people with an internal locus of control tend to be better off. However, it is also important to remember that internal locus of control does not always equal "good" and external locus of control does not always equal "bad."

In some contexts, having an external locus of control can be a good thing—particularly when a situation poses a threat to self-esteem or is genuinely outside of a person's control.

For example, a person who loses a sports game may feel depressed or anxious if they have a strong internal locus of control. If this person thinks, "I'm bad at sports and I don't try hard enough," they might allow the loss to affect their self-image and feel stressed in future games. However, if this person takes an external focus during such situations ("We were unlucky to get matched with such a strong team," or "The sun was in my eyes!"), they will probably feel more relaxed and less stressed.

2. Concept of locus of control

The concept behind locus of control is fairly simple. Our lives are full of actions and outcomes. Each of us will ascribe a certain locus of control over these outcomes. The theory states that we will place the location, or locus, either externally or internally. If we place the locus of control externally, we are likely to blame the outcome on fate, luck, or happenstance. If we place the locus of control internally, we are likely to believe our own actions determine the outcome. Rotter (1966) stated that where we place that locus will either reinforce or punish our actions. An internal locus of control will lead to a reinforcement of that behavior, and the behavior will continue. An external locus of control will cause the behavior to extinguish – why would we continue to try if the outcome is outside of our control? However, Rotter (1975) was careful to state that we should conceptualize this as a continuum between external and internal, rather than an either/or categorization. In general, healthy adults rarely believe that everything is either entirely out of our control or entirely within it.

In fact, individuals who employ a blend of both internal and external loci in their reasoning report higher levels of happiness (April, Dharani, & Peters, 2012).

2.1 Internal vs External locus of control

Here are three examples of how our locus of control may influence the way we view an outcome and the behaviors that follow. We will call these two people Ram the Internalizer and Sham the Externalizer.

Work

Ram and Sham are both up for a promotion. Ram, with his internal locus of control, believes that his hard work will get him the promotion. He also believes that if he doesn't get it, he just needs to work harder. Sham, on the other hand, feels that the promotion is largely outside of his control and that external forces, whether they are just chance or the boss's whims, will determine whether he will get the promotion. Although he may not work as hard to obtain the promotion, if he doesn't get it, Sham may be easier on himself than Ram.

School

There is a big test coming up, and Ram and Sham are at the library. Ram believes his score will directly reflect the amount of studying that he did, and since he wants a good grade, he applies himself and studies hard. Sham has an external locus of control and believes that the grade may well reflect the teacher's bias. He believes that studying too hard is a waste of time.

Health

Ram's doctor tells him he has the potential to develop Type II diabetes. Ram has heard that it's possible to control this outcome with diet, so he decides to cut out all sugar and try to eat more vegetables. Sham

gets the same diagnosis, but he believes that it's all genetic. He comes from a family with a history of diabetes and feels that the outcome is inevitable. He doesn't try to change his diet because he doesn't think it will make any difference.

3. Need and significance of the study

The study is vital because it can provide an idea about the personality traits of youth. It can also help to improve their existing traits and develop new ones to help the youngsters have more control in an environment, where they usually feel out of control. Our locus of control describes how much responsibility we take for the outcomes in our life. Someone with an internal locus of control will be prone to take credit for their successes, as well as to take the blame when something goes wrong. A person with an 'external' locus of control will be more likely to blame their current situation on outside factors – the circumstances, other people or luck. The influence of powerful others (such as doctors, the police, or government officials) is a belief that the world is too complex for one to predict or successfully control its outcomes. One can learn to predict their behaviour and possibly change some of their behavioural faults. It also helps in self evaluation.

Locus of control is a psychological concept that refers to how strongly people believe they have control over the situations and experiences that affect their lives. In education, locus of control typically refers to how students perceive the causes of their academic success or failure in school.

Students with an “internal locus of control” generally believe that their success or failure is a result of the effort and hard work they invest in their education. Students with an “external locus of control” generally believe that their successes or failures result from external factors beyond their control, such as luck, fate, circumstance, injustice, bias, or teachers who are unfair, prejudiced, or unskilled. For example, students with an internal locus of control might blame poor grades on their failure to study, whereas students with an external locus of control may blame an unfair teacher or test for their poor performance. Whether a student has an internal or external locus of control is thought to have a powerful effect on academic motivation, persistence, and achievement in school. In education, “internals” are considered more likely to work hard in order to learn, progress, and succeed, while “externals” are more likely to believe that working hard is “pointless” because someone or something else is treating them unfairly or holding them back. Students with an external locus of control may also believe that their accomplishments will not be acknowledged or their effort will not result in success.

3.1 Locus of control affects student achievement

There have been a number of studies that conclude that there is a correlation between locus of control and academic achievement. These studies concluded that students with an internal locus of control had higher academic achievement than students with an external locus of control (Uget, 2007). The reason for the internals performing better academically comes from their belief that if they work hard and study, they will receive good grades. Therefore, they tend to study longer and spend more time on their homework (Grantz, 2006). On the other hand, externals believe they have no control over what grade they get. This belief may have been caused by many attempted school assignments that they failed, leading them to have low expectations of studying and school (Grantz, 2006). Any success that they might experience will be rationalized as luck or that the task was too easy. They have come to expect low success and whatever goals they do set are unrealistic (Uget, 2007). It seems that a person's locus of control can greatly affect their academic achievement. The way they perceive themselves and the world around them affects how well they will do in school. It only makes sense that if you work hard and study, then you will do well. However, students with an external locus of control do not feel that way and feel there is no need to try. This, of course, will greatly affect their academic achievement. Although there are ways of trying to change their thinking process, it may not be successful every time. It is important that we encourage our children at an early age and show them that hard work and diligence does make a difference.

4. Statement of the problem

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5. Operational Definition

5.1 Locus of control

Locus of control is an epiphenomenon, a mere diagnostic indicator of persons capacity for achievement; that is, the more intelligent and achieving a person is, the more likely he will perceive himself to be an active, effective person. It will be Apparent that locus of control plays a mediating role in determining whether a person became involved in the pursuit of achievement.

Locus of control is concerned with assignment of responsibility, regardless of behavioral instrumentality. One perceives internal control when one assumes full responsibility for what has happened, even though it was externally caused. One perceives external control if the responsibility for an outcome rest entirely elsewhere, regardless of whether it is the direct consequence of one's own behavior. One perceives dual control when the responsibility for an outcome is shared by the individual as well as external sources.

5.2 College students

College students are those who have passed from high school and enrolled in college for a particular course in order to complete the degree course.

6. Objectives

The following objectives were set up for the present study;

1. To find out differences in locus of control among male & female students studying in colleges located in Udhampur
2. To study differences in locus of control among students belonging to different age groups
3. To find out differences in locus of control under the joint influence of different levels of sex & age

7. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were set up to realise the objectives of study

- Ho₁:** There will be not Significant differences in locus of control among male & female students studying in colleges located in Udhampur
- Ho₂:** There will be not Significant differences in locus of control among students belonging to different age groups
- Ho₃:** There will be not Significant differences in locus of control under the joint influence of different levels of sex & age

8. Methodology

8.1 Sampling

In a current study, non-probability sampling method of selecting units from a population using a subjective (i.e. non-random) method was used. A sample of 200 students, 100 (males) and 100 (females) has been taken by simple random sampling from the different colleges.

8.2 Tools

Locus of control scale developed by Rotter's having 40 item locus of control was used in this study to measure Locus of control and to assess the level of locus of control.

9. Findings of the study

9.1 Research Objective 1

1. To find out differences in locus of control among male & female students studying in colleges located in Udhampur

There was no difference in locus of control among male & female college students. Male & female students were similar in their approach towards locus of control. Both may have similar inclination towards their self & the actions associated with their thinking. Hence hypothesis of no difference was accepted.

9.2 Research Objective 2

2. To study differences in locus of control among students belonging to different age groups. The age appears to have caused a difference in locus of control. It seems to be a valid reason for the value to be significant. As one grows in age, his thinking & approach towards life undergoes a distinct change & this change influences the feelings & action associated with approach as students grow age wise irrespective of sex to which one belongs. The hypothesis of no difference was thus rejected.

9.3 Research Objective 3

3. To find out differences in locus of control under the joint influence of different levels of sex & age. Locus of control under the joint influence of different levels of sex & age was similar. The joint influence of sex & age had no impact upon the locus of control. The hypothesis of no difference was thus accepted.

10. Conclusion and discussion

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of results obtained

1. Male & Female revealed no difference in overall locus of control. Research data showed no statistically significant difference between genders in their overall perception of control. Both men and women, on average, are just as likely to attribute outcomes to internal or external factors. This conclusion suggests that, at least in the studied context, gender does not play a role in influencing whether individuals believe their lives are primarily controlled by internal or external factors.
2. Age as per results have caused difference in locus of control. The study's finding that age influences the locus of control of college students points to a natural progression where younger students may feel less in control of their academic and social outcomes, while older students, having gained more independence and experience, tend to develop a stronger internal locus of control. This suggests that as college students mature and take on more responsibility, they begin to believe more strongly that their actions, rather than external factors, determine their successes and failures.
3. Sex & age in combination created no differences in locus of control suggests that the study found no significant interaction effect between gender (sex) and age on the locus of control of college students. In other words, when considering both age and gender together, there was no noticeable difference in how students perceive control over their lives and outcomes, regardless of whether they were male or female or how old they were.

11. Educational implications of the study

If the study finds that sex and age do not significantly affect locus of control among college students, this has some important educational implications. Here are a few ways educators, counselors, and institutions might apply this insight to better support students:

- Since neither age nor gender significantly impacts students' locus of control, colleges can develop standardized programs aimed at fostering a stronger internal locus of control across all students. Workshops, seminars, or courses on self-efficacy, goal setting, and personal responsibility could help students understand the power of their own actions and decisions in shaping their academic and personal lives.
- Academic and career counseling services can adopt a gender-neutral approach when guiding students to take ownership of their academic and professional goals. Counselors can focus on helping students build internal control beliefs based on individual needs rather than assuming different approaches for men and women.

Academic advisors and counselors can adopt age-sensitive counseling techniques. Younger students may benefit from guidance that helps them recognize the control they have over their academic success and

personal growth, while older students can focus on taking ownership of their future, such as in career planning and personal goal-setting, which reinforces an internal locus of control.

Students with an external locus of control may feel that external factors primarily influence their success. Providing structured guidance, such as clear instructions, step-by-step tutorials, or supportive study groups, can help them build confidence. Structured environments enable these students to succeed within a framework that feels manageable and within reach.

Creating a supportive educational environment that acknowledges both internal and external loci of control helps all students thrive. Colleges can use a mix of independent and collaborative learning opportunities, provide both structured support and autonomy, and encourage a balanced perspective on how personal actions and external factors interact. Educators can also use counseling and mentorship to help students with external loci of control feel more empowered; while ensuring students with internal loci of control maintain a realistic perspective on factors, they may not be able to control. By understanding these differences and tailoring strategies accordingly, educators can support all students in building a healthy, balanced locus of control that enhances academic success and personal development.

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