

Locus of Control and Its Impact on Self-Efficacy of University Graduates

Nazar H. Phulpoto, Ayaz Hussain, Zafar Anjum, Sohail A. Memon, Mujeeb Ur Reham

Department of Information Technology, QUEST University, Nawabshah, Sindh, Pakistan

Abstract

This study explored the impact of internal locus of control and external locus of control on self-efficacy of graduate university students. An already developed questionnaire was used to measure the both dimensions. Convenience sampling technique was applied and 150 students were selected to record the response. The regression analysis was applied to draw the results. A conclusion shows that the university students who have high internal locus of control have higher-level self-efficacy as compared to the students with external locus of control. The study is beneficial for academicians to develop internal locus of control in the university students.

Key words:

Locus of Control, Internal Locus of Control, External Locus of Control, Self-Efficacy

1. Introduction

The present study explored the relationship between locus of control and its impact on self-efficacy among university students attending business Courses. The locus of control referred to a personality trait which demonstrated the perception of an individual regarding locus of events as either determined internally by his/ her attitude against the external factors like luck, fate and external locus of events. It has been derived from the Social Learning Theory. It is the belief of a person on his/ her own actions which are responsible for outcomes or some external circumstances are the factors of outcomes. According to Rotter (1966) internality is the expectations of humans that one can take rewards from the environment by himself and it is not dependent on external factors. While externality is that luck, fate and others behaviors also determined the rewards.

Locus of control consists of a personality trait, which refers to the perception of the individual scenes, as defined in its own behavior in relation to fate, luck or external circumstances. It is derived from social learning theory and the belief that the results of our actions are subject to what we do (the orientation of the internal control) or events beyond our personal control (external control orientation) (Boniwell and Zimbardo, 2015).

Self-efficacy is the personality trait which consists of individual belief on his or her own abilities to perform well in critical circumstances and especially to perform

those tasks which needs effectiveness (Yusuf, 2011). Theory of self-efficacy emphasized that human actions and the success depends on the depth of interaction between one of the individual belief and critical tasks assigned (Bandura, 1997). People who have low self-efficacy mainly have negative feelings and they perceive the problems as threats and not the beneficial for them and have low self for themselves (Yunus et al., 2009). Students who have high self-efficacy are able to perform well, therefore it is perceived that if students are started with effective training to enhance their self-efficacy and have sufficient training on self-regulation strategies which are useful to enhance the learning, can be exposed to any type of extra knowledge and academic failure (Zimmerman, 1986). Consistently, evidence of extensive empirical studies have demonstrated the effects of self-efficacy of student performance (Bandura, 1997).

More specifically, academic self-concept refers to individuals the knowledge and understanding of his achievement situations (Byrne, 1996), while academic self-efficacy consists of the conviction of individuals who successfully completed the data scientific problems (Sagone and Caroli, 2014). An enormous research has been already conducted on locus of control and self-concept, its challenges and benefits. Researchers are available on Self efficacy, its functions and its relationship with self-concept. But limited research found on the self with the perspective of locus of control this topic constituted the rationale for the current study. This study fills the gap by conducting structured research by focusing on these variables.

2. Research Objectives and Significance

The current study was designed to measure the relationship between locus of control and self-efficacy. It will answer the question whether any relationship exists between both variables. It will further explore dimensional and overall impact of locus of control on self-efficacy. The study is beneficial for the academicians and policy makers. It will enhance the academicians' awareness about locus of control and they can better design the curriculum in its light and examine the academic performance of students in this perspective. It will add value in existing

body of knowledge. It will be useful for students as well to measure their self-concept and improve their academic self-efficacy level.

3. Literature Review

Academicians have considered a long that students' ability to know themselves and their academic capacity identification is of significant importance to motivate them and achieve well. Initial studies hardly measure the student's self-concept and take into account the environmental factors such as success or failure attributed to luck and fate which can increase the chances of academic failures (Zimmerman, 2000). One of the protective factors for performance are self-sufficient as a main component a person's ability to operate successfully, reference to "a belief in their ability to organize and execute courses of action required to produce products to achieve this" (Bandura, 1977) and action -guiding self-aspect (Pajares, 1996).

According to the Rotters(1966) Locus of control refers to the assumption of one of their ability to control the life events. A person with an internal locus of control believe the results of Computer Assisted Language Learning related to his conduct or personal investments, while a man with an external locus of control believe that the results are not related to their behavior, but external forces beyond his control. People with an external locus of control may perceive events in life to be controlled by luck, chance, fate, or more powerful. People with an internal locus of control are more likely to change their behavior after the reinforcements are individuals with an external locus of control (Chang, 2009). According to Rotter (1966), internality refers to the hope that someone or controls a crucial role in getting the rewards from their environment, while externality refers to the belief that the rewards are beyond our control and some by sheer luck.

Rotter (1966) differentiated between Locus of Control into internal and external. The internal believers are those who believe that they are masters of their destiny and therefore are often in the security warning and often believe that they can control their external environment by themselves. Besides that they have perceived close relationship between their efforts and the outcome. External locus of control is on the other hand for those humans who though that they cannot have any ability to control the external circumstances and these are all beyond their control. Therefore they normally attributed their successes and failure towards luck, and fate. Researchers have identified that Locus of control plays an important role in performance of human beings. It is strongly associated with job satisfaction and employee productivity as well.

Many other fresh studies also validated the same premise that students having high internal locus of control are high

achiever, instead of those who believe on external locus of control (Yazdanpanah, Shragrad and Rahimi, 2010). Various studies in past also validated that locus of control is an important determinant of academic performance. GurinGurin, Lao and Beattie (1969) concluded that self-concept and academic performance are dependent in internal and external locus of control. Stipek (1980) also attested that locus of control is strongly correlated with academic achievements. Mooney, Sherman and Presto (1991) are in point of view that academic locus of control is the best predictor of academic self-efficacy and performance. Valenteine, Dubois and Cooper (2004) validated that positive self-concept is also related with academic performance.

Previous researchers have also studied the gender differences in terms of academic performance. Dweck and Reppucci (1973) are in point of view that boys are normally having more internal locus of control. They rarely attribute their success and failure to luck as compare to girls who attribute more to their fate. Girls are normally having less self-concept. Dweck and Goetz (1978) further verified that girls are having high external locus of control rather than internal locus of control in contrast to the boys. He further explained that students normally receive negative feedback regarding their performance from instructors in which normally girls are considered tie do intellectual work therefore girls are considered to be attributably related with internal failure and performances. Stipek and Hoffman (1980) recommended that high performance expectations normally underestimate their future as they will face more anxiety, depression to fulfill the expectations of their elders. Strickland and Haley (1980) proved that female students normally perform well in outward situations in schools as compared to male students. Their results are in line with the study by Dweck, Goetz and Strauss (1980)in which they verified that girls are more attributed towards internal factors and motivated more to study as compare to boys who rated strongly their external circumstances like lack of effort and poor evaluation criteria. A recent study by Zaidi and Mohsin (2013) also reported that men have an internal locus of control, while students have an external locus of control. While the lower performance attributes the success to the outside so not experience much personal pride. High performance, they believe that success depends on its performance characteristics while believe success depends on external forces such as luck, etc. easy task (Arkes and Garske, 1982).

Self-efficacy refers to the ability of an individual to have self-perception in a way that creates the control over events that affect his / her life (Bandura, 1997). The persons who have high scale on self-efficacy have more confidence to control the challenges in their lives. They can perform in difficulties ben better than others. It regulates the humans to work efficiently in critical

situations. As per social cognitive theory self-efficacy arises from experiences, persuasion, Learning, and observations. Based on above literature Review, Figure-1 shows the theoretical frame work.

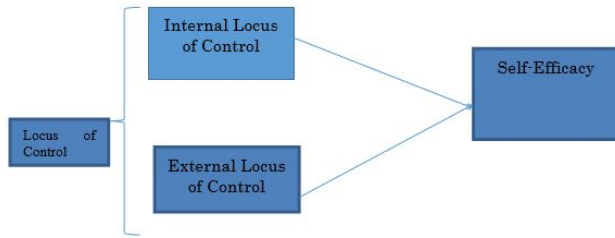


Fig. 1 Theoretical Framework

Based on above model following hypotheses were studied.
H1: Locus of Control is correlated with self-Efficacy.
H2: Locus of Control has positive impact on Self-efficacy.

4. Methodology

The nature of the study was deductive. The research approach was explanatory. Research was structured and based on quantitative approach. It was non- contrived and

cross sectional. Primary source were students of Universities. Secondary sources were books, journals & internet. The target population was higher education institutes situated in Lahore region. Data collection tool was an already developed questionnaire which was close ended. 5 point Likert scale was used to measure the response. Scale is adopted from the studies of Rotter (1966) and Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Convenience sampling technique was applied. Sample size was 150 students. (Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin, 2012). However the researcher received 131 responses. Person correlation and Regression analysis was used as statistical Techniques. SPSS version 20 was used as a software package.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

Table-1 shows the person correlation analysis between all variables. The data revealed that internal locus of control has moderately significant and positive($r=.489^{**}$, $p=.000$) relationship with Self Efficacy. It means that if students will have high internal locus of control, their self-efficacy will be increased.

Table 1: Pearson correlations Analysis (n=131)

Sr.#	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4
1	Internal locus of control	3.618	.703	1			
2	External locus of control	2.994	.661**	.246**	1		
3	Locus of control	3.306	.538**	.804**	.774**	1	
4	Self- efficacy	3.324	.587**	.489**	.248**	.471**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed).

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If analysis of independent variable external locus of control against Self Efficacy was examined, it was revealed that it has low positive($r=.248^{**}$, $p=.000$) relationship exists between external locus of control and Self Efficacy. It means that if students will have sufficient

external locus of control their self-efficacy may be improved with only a little margin.

If analysis of independent variable locus of control against Self Efficacy was examined, it was revealed that it has moderate positive($r=.471^{**}$, $p=.000$) relationship exists between locus of control and Self Efficacy. It means that if students will have sufficient external locus of control their self-efficacy may be improved with only a little margin. Linear Regression Analysis was further applied to test the 2nd hypothesis.

Table 2: Regression Analysis (Internal Locus of Control and self-efficacy)

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	1.847	.236	7.815	0
	Internal Locus of control	.408	.064	6.369	0
$r = .489$, $R^2 = 0.239$					
Dependent Variable: Self Efficacy					

Table 3: Regression Analysis (external Locus of Control and self-efficacy)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Decision
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.667	.232	11.491	0	Supported
	external Locus of control	.220	.076	2.902	0	0.000 < 0.05
r = .248, R² = 0.061						
Dependent Variable: Self Efficacy						

Tabl-2 showed the impact of internal locus of control on self-efficacy. Regression Output validated that 23.9% of the variance is explained by independent variable ($R^2 = 0.239$; $p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 2. Moreover the overall regression model was valid and statistically significant.

Therefore, it is proved that internal locus of control has a positive impact on self-efficacy. The regression equation of study was achieved as

$$\text{Self-efficacy} = 1.847 + 0.408 \text{ Internal locus of control}$$

Therefore it is evidenced that internal locus of control has positive impact on Self efficacy.

Table 4: Regression Analysis (Locus of Control and self-efficacy)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	Decision
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	1.626	.283	5.738	0	Supported
	Locus of Control	.514	.085	6.068	0	0.000 < 0.05
r = .222, R² = 0.471						
Dependent Variable: Self Efficacy						

Table-2 showed the impact of external locus of control on self-efficacy. Regression Output validated that 6.1% of the variance is explained by independent variable ($R^2 = 0.061$; $p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 3. Moreover the overall regression model was valid and statistically significant. Therefore, it is proved that external locus of control has no significant impact on self-efficacy. The regression equation of study was achieved as

$$\text{Self-efficacy} = 2.667 + 0.220 \text{ external locus of control}$$

Therefore it is evidenced that external locus of control has no strong positive impact on Self efficacy.

Regression analysis was further performed to measure the impact of locus of control on self-efficacy as shown in table-3. Regression analysis of the results showed that 47.1% of the variance is explained by the predictors ($R^2 = 0.471$; $p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 4, so the model was also valid and regression was statistically significant. Therefore, it is proved that the locus of control has a positive impact on self-efficacy. The study achieved following regression equation.

$$\text{Self-Efficacy} = 1.626 + 0.514 \text{ Locus of Control}$$

We conclude that student's self-efficacy is dependent on an internal locus of control. The study concluded that students who are high or low performers attribute their failure or success to the internal and external factors which may be good or bad and they have strong impact on their results like luck, fate, teachers favoritisms, poor evaluation criteria and examination process etc. It is also found that students who have different internal locus of control have high self-efficacy and it controls their performance. Further internal locus of control is the main

predictor of CGPA and associated with the high and low performances of the students.

Previous studies have been conducted on locus of control and its impact on academic success. Lefcourt (2014) concluded that student's perform different in their academic career due to their locus of control besides they have same level of intelligence present. Current study is also aligned with the findings. It is the main conclusion that students who will have high internal locus of control will perform better instead of students those who have high external locus of control.

A meta-analysis of academic performance has validated that self-efficacy was the strongest predictor which has impact on CGPA of students with having moderate relationship existed between academic performance with self-efficacy (Richardson et al., 2012). The current study is also aligned with the study of (Multon, Brown and Lent 1991) in which they have done meta-analysis and measure the strong relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance. It also validated that academic performance is dependent on self-efficacy and self-efficacy is strongly dependent on locus of control.

6. Conclusion

The study was aimed to measure the relationship between locus of control and self-efficacy. The study validated that locus of control is strongly correlated with self-efficacy. This idea has been already supported by the studies of Rotter and schwarzer. The students who have high internal locus of control have high self-efficacy as well as compare

to those students who have high external locus of control because these students focus on their own abilities rather than luck and fate and they better perform in critical conditions. The study concluded that locus of control has strong impact on self-efficacy. If the students will consider their own efforts and abilities more as compare to the luck, fate and chances then their self-efficacy will be improved and then performance will be enhanced.

7. Managerial Implication

The current study has many implications for academicians, teachers as well as for students. This study will facilitate the students to know their locus of control attribution inside and act accordingly. This study will also help the teachers to identify the level of attribution of students and teach them according to best dialogues and students counseling. It will help academicians and educators to improve the education at both secondary and tertiary level. Teachers can inspire students to reward themselves if they are attributed internally and they should measure their success and improve their academic performance.

8. Kimitation and Future Research

The study is limited to only graduate students. In future other students can also be included. The research has a limitation that it is based on the universities situated in Lahore. In future other cities students can also be the part of the research. Other factors like social media network consumption, self-regulation, and attribution errors can also be included as independent factors to evaluate the self-efficacy of the students.

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