

Locus of Control in Adolescent Females Relationships with Mental Health and Adjustment

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ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have established the importance of the locus of control in preserving good mental health and adjustment. The current study looked at how adolescents' loci of control related to their mental health and general adjustment. The participants were 50 female adolescents. The Rotter's Locus of Control Scale (1966), the Adjustment Inventory for College Students (1995), and the Mental Health Battery (Singh, Gupta, 2000) were also used. Findings: According to the study's conclusions, adolescent females who have an internal locus of control exhibit better mental health and an overall pattern of adjustment that includes their homes, their relationships with others, their emotions, their education, and their health. This is in contrast to those who have an external locus of control. The study emphasises how internal and external loci of control have a pervasive impact on adolescent females' mental health and adjustment.

Keywords: Adjustment, adolescent females, locus of control, mental health.

1. INTRODUCTION

Complex hurdles in academic, personal-emotional, and social adjustment characterise the move to college (SA).

Adolescents must learn to cope with and adapt to the unprecedented rate of social change, as well as to the numerous pressures, temptations, and perceived barriers to which they are forced to respond. At the same time, they must maintain a strong sense of identity with clear boundaries and a developing sense of presence and focus in the adult world.

[1] The locus of control is one psychological concept that may be helpful in explaining individual differences in the capacity to adapt to university life. Locus of control is a personality trait based on Rotter's [2] social learning theory that describes a person's inclination to attribute responsibility for the occurrence of events [3] and their generalised expectation that they can control reinforcing (Phares, 1976). [4] Prototypical externals do not perceive a trustworthy relationship between their actions and their results. [5] Typically, these people think that their rewards and punishments depend on erratic, unpredictable causes like luck or the actions of strong people. Prototypical internals believe there is a solid correlation between their actions and the results.

Adolescents are frequently influenced by outside forces, such as incentive structures, academic performance ratings, or the perceptions they fear others may have of them.

Nevertheless, hobbies, curiosities, and enduring ideals are frequently what drive teenagers internally. These internal drives can sustain passions, inventiveness, and persistent efforts, which are healthy attitudes, even though they are not always acknowledged or encouraged by others. Self-determination theory's domain is the interaction between external forces operating on people and the underlying demands and motives that are part of human nature. [6] An adjustment sequence starts when a need is perceived and concludes when it is met. Students who are leaving high school, enrolling in college full-time, and living on campus likely to face the most significant adjustment, according to Chickering and Schlossberg (1995). [7] Modifications in roles, relationships, academic obligations, and social demands are some specific examples of collegiate adjustment.

In their study, Jeffery et al. [8] discovered that first-generation students had the highest correlation between psychological variables and academic outcomes. Furthermore, it was discovered that first-generation status served as a sensitising factor that enhanced both the favourable and unfavourable effects of locus of control for the majority of interactions with locus of control. In terms of academic achievements, internal locus of control is somewhat linked to a higher grade point average and highly predicts better college adjustment among freshmen women [9] (GPA). [10] Self-esteem has been found to be a poorer predictor of college grades than perceived academic control, a construct related to internal locus of control, which is associated with better college adjustment [11] and higher GPA [12]. Numerous substantial interactions between generational position and locus of control for academic success are reported by Pascarella et al. [13].

A small but significant positive rank-order connection between locus of control and self-esteem was found by Fitch (1970). Subjects with low self-esteem tended to receive external ratings. [14] Since self-actualization is frequently interpreted as a measure of personal adjustment, Warehime and Foulds (1971) discovered a significant relationship between internality and self-actualization among college students. Their findings showed that internal students had higher self-actualization than external students. Increased externality is linked to more adjustment issues (Joe, 1971 and Phares, 1976). [15,16]

Adolescents who struggle with adjustment may turn to unhealthy or maladaptive coping mechanisms to deal with stress, which increases their susceptibility to illnesses and mental abnormalities. Prior to the second half of the 20th century, mental health was thought to be the absence of mental illness, but today it is more generally understood to be a state of well-being.

The ability to balance one's objectives and aspirations, to deal with life's stressors, and to make psychosocial adjustments have all been described as indicators of mental health.

[17] According to Laddell (1950), maintaining good mental health is crucial for encouraging effective environmental adaptability. Humans must adapt to the outside world and to one another in order to be as effective and happy as possible. It is the capacity for self-control, keen intelligence, socially responsible behaviour, and a cheerful demeanour.

Mental health refers to a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour in response to challenges in life. Mental health is the way in which a person views themselves, their lives, and the other people in them, assesses their difficulties and issues, and considers their options.

This includes making decisions, managing stress, and interacting with others. Children and adolescents who are mentally healthy have a high quality of life, perform well at home, in school, and in their communities, and don't have any disabling psychopathology symptoms. [18]

The psychiatric community generally believes that adolescents are prone to recklessness and risk-taking behaviours, which can result in substance misuse, auto accidents, risky sex, and young criminality. These could result from an incorrect adjustment pattern. Teenagers' academic success is correlated with their family environment, adaptability at home, and family functioning. Academic achievement and adaptability are impacted by the family environment. An individual's relationships with their parents and classmates can aid in shaping their overall personality. In a study of depressed female teenagers who had attempted suicide, their attributional style was found to be a factor connected with irrational and depressive thinking, even though occasionally disputes may develop and result in maladjustments.

The sad group in the sample was found to have a particular thought pattern where they believed that all of their positive attributes were the consequence of random events or the efforts of others. [19] This association between depression and a feminine exterior attributional style has been confirmed in other investigations. [20] Numerous studies on the relationship between locus of control and various characteristics of psychopathology have been conducted in connection to mental health and locus of control. [21] Given these results, the current study examines the locus of control in a sample that is exclusively made up of female adolescents because this construct has a significant impact on the behaviour of female adolescents. Adolescent mental health is the best indicator of overall mental health, according to studies on adolescents, and their locus of control has an impact on that health.

The results also point to a significant, favourable, moderate connection between locus of control scores and overall health. It is reasonable to infer that teenagers who score poorly on mental health may also struggle with adjustment, which would lead to a poor adjustment score. However, if a teen has an internal locus of control, they may exhibit good mental health and do well on the adjustment scale.

2. METHODS

Sample: The study's participants were 50 adolescent girls from the upper middle class who were purposefully selected, enrolled in various courses at Amity University Rajasthan, and were high school students. The sample's standard deviation (SD) was 1.37 and its mean age was 19.5 years. The sample was composed of 50 participants, 25 of whom had an internal locus of control and 25 of whom had an external locus of control. In order to achieve the desired sample size, an appropriate number of cases were added to replace those with neutral locus of control scores (12).

Measures

Rotter's locus of control: Julian Rotter was the one who created the test. The test had a test-retest reliability of 0.49 to 0.83. There are 29 statements in the test, each with two "a" and "b" options. Among these statements, the subject choose the one that, in his or her opinion, is more pertinent at the time. Each statement included in the key receives a score of one, and the overall score is calculated. An external locus of control is indicated by a high score, whereas an internal locus of control is indicated by a low score. A number between 1 and 11 denotes the internal locus of control, while a score between 13 and 29 denotes the external locus of control. The cutoff point was set at the median value, or 12, which is 12.

Mental health battery: By Singh and Gupta, the mental health battery (MHB) was created (2000). [22] It aims to evaluate the mental health of people between the ages of 13 and 22.

For all six dimensions, the test-retest reliability of MHB is between 0.767 and 0.876. The concurrent validity lies in the 0.673–0.823 range. This battery consists of six examinations with a total of 130 questions that were chosen based on dimensions. Each part's answers are added up with the ones in the scoring key to determine the final score, which is +1. If they don't add up, there is no score.

Adjustment inventory for college students: Sinha and Singh (1995) created the adjustment inventory for use with Indian pupils. [23] With regard to five adjustment categories (home, health, social, emotional, and educational), the test aims to differentiate between well-adjusted and poorly-adjusted college students of all grade levels. The test is useful for identifying students with poor adjustment who may require additional psycho-diagnostic research and treatment. The inventory, which comprises 102 elements (home = 16, health = 16, social = 19, emotional = 31, and educational = 21), has been created in both Hindi and English. The test's test-retest reliability is 93, and in the item analysis, validity coefficients were calculated for each item using the bi-serial correlation method; only those items that produced a bi-serial correlation with the criteria, i.e., the total score and area score, significant at the 0.001 level, were kept.

Statistical analysis: For each variable, the mean and SD have been determined. The at-test was used to see whether there are any appreciable variations in adjustment and mental health between those with internal and external loci of control. Internality and externality cutoff scores were based on the median value. [24]

2. RESULTS

Table-1: Mental health of individuals having both internal and external sources of control

Locus of Control	Mean±SD
Internal locus of control	87.60±9.224
External locus of control	80.40±9.460

Table 1 shows the mental health of adolescent girls with an internal locus of control will differ dramatically from those who exhibit an external locus of control, and vice versa, according to the theory. Our results ($t = 3.725$, $P 0.05$, 0.01), suggest that this hypothesis is supported.

Table-2: Adolescent females' general adjustment with both internal and external loci of control

Locus of Control	Mean±SD
Internal locus of control	13.52 ±2.830
External locus of control	48.36±8.717

Table 2 shows that the girls who have performed badly on adjustment also have an external locus of control ($t = 19.07$, $P 0.05$, 0.01). They have a stronger conviction that the events in their lives are the result of external factors. Their general pattern of adjustment is therefore not particularly successful.

3. DISCUSSION

The goal of the current study is to determine how a locus of control affects adolescent females' mental health and adjustment. Many significant physical and cognitive changes occur during adolescence. Adolescents are more prone to develop an internal or external locus of control along with other psychological traits because their personalities are still developing. Some students manage to adjust to college and make this adjustment successfully, but others feel overburdened and unable to handle the responsibilities of their new positions. [25] A increasing amount of research indicates that psychological functioning plays a significant role in predicting college students' psychosocial adjustment. [26-30]

Adolescent girls who have demonstrated an external locus of control are more likely to attribute their success or failure to factors outside of their deliberate control. They have lower mental health scores than individuals who have an internal locus of control. Over the course of their lives, adolescent psychiatric problems have increased in frequency and start earlier in life. Although behavioural issues in children and adolescents are on the rise in emerging nations, child and adolescent psychiatry is still not receiving sufficient attention. Early-onset depression frequently lasts, recurs, and continues into adulthood, suggesting that depression in adolescence may potentially signal a more serious condition in maturity. Additionally, there is a link between depression in kids and teenagers and a higher risk of suicidal thoughts and actions. According to various research findings, if teenagers' adjustment levels are not acceptable, it may prevent them from reaching the best possible mental health. Abraham investigated how psychosocial factors affected mental health.

The findings showed a relationship between the students' mental health state and adjustment as well as other psychosocial characteristics (need for love, desire for belongingness, need for acceptance, etc.). Strong mental health is characterised by emotional balance, general adjustment, autonomy, security, and a positive self-concept, as shown by people with an external locus of control. Locus of control is adversely correlated with numerous characteristics of psychopathology, including as depression, anxiety, anger, somatization, psychoticism, and interpersonal issues, and favourably correlated with the capacity to manage stress. In other words, these studies demonstrate that individuals with a strong internal locus of control are significantly better at managing their difficulties than individuals with a high external locus of control. In addition, Argan et al. noted the significance of self-esteem in adolescent academic success, social functioning, and psychopathology, which is affected by locus of control. The mental health of adolescent girls with an internal locus of control will differ dramatically from those who exhibit an external locus of control.

Emotional stability is a sign of good mental health. The person feels stable, subjective emotions. Both positive and negative values might be associated with these for the person. Autonomy, or a stage of independence and self-determination in thinking, is a quality of those having an internal locus of control. They have a strong sense of safety, confidence, freedom from fear, and are less anxious and insecure about meeting their immediate and long-term requirements. He or she has a healthy sense of self. A person has positive self-perceptions and is aware of and appreciates his or her accomplishments. The person has good mental faculties, which aids in helping him or her think clearly and act meaningfully in his or her surroundings.

It was predicted that teenage girls with an internal locus of control would fare much worse than those with an external locus of control in terms of overall adjustment. Girls who have performed badly on adjustment also have an external locus of control. They have a stronger conviction that the events in their lives are the result of external factors. Their general pattern of adjustment is therefore not particularly successful.

The findings suggest that individuals who have demonstrated an internal locus of control have superior adjustment patterns, while those who have demonstrated an external locus of control have demonstrated a substantial difference with regard to adjustment, performing badly on adjustment as predicted.

Everybody has to adapt their daily life to the demands of their circumstances. Positive adjustment behaviours aid people in upholding a sound psychological frame of mind. Domains covered by adjustment include those related to the home, health, social, emotional, and educational aspects. According to the findings, personal adjustment and locus of control are correlated linearly. Those with an external locus of control performed worse than those with an internal locus of control in the domain of home adjustment. This demonstrates that people with internal and external loci of control differ significantly from one another. Although complex, health attitudes that affect lifestyle choices are typically formed during childhood and adolescence. People who believe their health is less dependent on influential others, also known as those who have an internal rather than an external locus of control over their health, or simply those who do not, have an information preference that is positively correlated with a decisional preference. Those with an internal locus of control are more likely to be emotionally well-adjusted than people with an external locus of control ($t = 11.776$, $P 0.05$, 0.01). The two groups differ significantly from one another. While people with an internal locus of control exhibit more stable emotional patterns and behaviours, those with an external locus of control tend to exhibit unstable emotional patterns and behaviours. People with an internal locus of control are likewise extremely interested in the educational activities.

On the other hand, those who have an external locus of control may not be as well adjusted to their extracurricular activities ($t = 14.407$, $P 0.05$, 0.01). The two groups differ significantly from one another. According to research, high school and college students who have an internal locus of control are more confident in their ability to make a professional choices, have higher expectations for their careers, and are more determined to make that choice. Another contribution to earlier research by McArdle et al. is the mediating function of locus of control in the relationship of career optimism and self-esteem to adaptability. Along with Creed, Patton Bartrum, and Hirschi.

The results thus lend credence to the notion that adolescent females with an internal locus of control will differ significantly from those with an external locus of control in terms of overall adjustment, and vice versa.

4. CONCLUSION

We can therefore draw the conclusion that there is a considerable difference between people who have an internal locus of control and people who have an external locus of control in terms of locus of control, mental health, and general adjustment based on the results collected. Individuals who have a strong internal locus of control are better able to maintain their mental health and make effective environmental adjustments.

Our results are consistent with the expectation that adolescent girls who exhibit an internal locus of control will differ significantly in terms of their mental health from those who exhibit an external locus of control, and vice versa. Our results are consistent with the notion that adolescent girls who exhibit an internal locus of control will adjust to life differently than those who exhibit an external locus of control, and vice versa.

For a more thorough analysis, the study used the overall mental health scores. It is possible to do another research on the same topic using an instrument that provides independent ratings on different aspects of mental health.

5. REFERENCES

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