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Buffering Role of Locus of Control on Stress among the College/University Teachers of Bahawalpur

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Abstract

The present research is aimed to ascertain the role of locus of control in mediating or coping on various degree/levels of stress among the college/university teachers of Bahawalpur. For that purpose a sample of N=200 male/female college/university teachers was selected by convenient sampling. Research tools, Locus of control by Julian Rotter (1966) and Stress questionnaire by International Stress Management Association UK, (2009) were administered for data collection. After the collection of data it was analyzed by SPSS. The results shows that the teachers identified with internal locus of control reveal low level of stress as contrast to the teachers with external locus of control. The study also confirms that high internal locus of control determines high coping and mediating ability of stress among the teachers. The study also pointed out that the teachers with external locus of control were more incline or prone to stress. Furthermore, Pearson and Spearman's Correlation results at significant level of .000 show that both variables are highly correlated. Similarly, overall Mean of locus of control and Co-efficient of variation reveals the high consistency role in relation with stress.

Keywords: Locus of control, Stress, External locus of control, Internal locus of control, Coping ability, Mediating or Buffering role.

1. Introduction

The concept of locus of control was developed by Julian, B. Rotter in 1954 and considered an important aspect or variable of social personality. Locus of control refers to the extent to which the individuals hold some beliefs about the events or situations around them. Individuals with an internal locus of control feel that they have choice in their lives and have a control over their circumstances. Such individuals usually tend to feel happier, freer, and less stressful. On the other hand, the individuals with an external locus of control feel more at the mercy of external events. They are more susceptible to depression as well as other health problems. They tend to keep themselves in a situation where they experience additional stress, feelings of helplessness, shame, grief, anxiety etc. Such feelings actually lead to maladjustment or also considered as a hallmark or a

seed for any psychological or cognitive upset if stress is beyond of person's locus of control.

2. Literature Review

The literature identifies a number of factors that has focused specifically on the relationship of stress and locus of control. Gifford et al. (2006) indicated that first-year students who entered university with lower scores on the locus of control scale (internals) obtained significantly higher GPAs than those who scored higher (externals) on this same scale.

As Selart (2005) ascertain whether locus of control act as a bias in organizational decision-making or not. The findings showed that officials with low external locus of control were habitual to join group consultative decision-making strategy more frequently as contrast to those with high level of locus of control. It was also concluded that externals were incline to use participative decision-making styles.

Annieet al. (2004) examined the influence of perceived control on the biological and subjective stress responses and concluded that the participants with more internal locus of control and with high perceived control over the stressor, showed a reduced cortisol and low stress.

Peterson et al. (1993) probed that individuals with an internal locus of control typically engage in proactive and adaptive behaviors. According to Rothbaum et al. (1982) internal locus of control is characterized by the belief that consequences are result of one's own behavior. As Demellow and Imms (1999) concluded that individuals who believe that their successes or failures result from their own behaviors posses an internal locus of control.

Halpin et al. (1985) conducted a research to test the mentoring role of locus of control among teachers. The study founded that the teachers with the feelings of being in control was less stressful as contrast to those with the feelings of not being in control.

Krauseaand Strykerb (1984) concluded that men with moderately internal locus of control orientations cope more effectively with stress than those whose locus of control and beliefs classified as extreme internal, extreme external or moderately external.

The results of Katharine **(**1984) study shows significant interactions between locus of control and appraisal for each of the measures. The research concluded that the patterns of coping reported by internals were potentially more adaptive in relation to types of appraisal than those of externals.

Thomas and Wesley (1979) explored the link of locus of control with trust and decision making and labeled the locus of control as a tendency to favor, prefer, or bias the subjective probabilities entering into a decision computation. They also concluded that in this regard females were more consistence as contrast to males.

A literature review on the relationship between locus of control and academic achievement showed that more internal beliefs was associated with greater academic achievement. This was also revealed that the relation tended to be stronger in adolescents than for adults or children. The relation was more substantial among males as contrast with females **(**Maureen and Harris, 1977).

3. Methodology

3.1. Purpose of the study and Hypothesis

The purpose of this study was to investigate the buffering or mentoring role of locus of control on stress among the teachers. Before conducting the research it was hypothesized that the teachers with high internal locus of control tend to be less stress prone as contrast to those with external locus of control. Similarly the teachers with external locus of control are more incline to the mercy of external events and tend to be more stressful. It was also assumed that the locus of control acts as a stress buffer in relation with stress.

3.2. Research Objectives

1. To check the level of stress and locus of control among teachers.
2. To check the relationship of stress and locus of control among teachers.
3. To ascertain the mediating or buffering role of locus of control on stress among teachers.
4. Gender wise compare the results.

3.3. Study Population and Sample

The population of the study was the College and University teachers of Bahawalpur. The sample consists of 200 teachers including Male and Female, Science and Arts discipline that was selected by convenient sampling.

3.4. Rationale of the Study

The current research emphasis to find out the possible relationship between the locus of control and stress on various degree/levels of each. The study focuses to elucidate whether the locus of control mentor/mediate or buffer the stress or vice versa. The investigation of this research is important due to several reasons. As the study of the buffering role of locus of control in relation with stress among the teachers is a significant source of information to be used in guiding the teachers. They can understand the role of locus of control in their life or as well as in teaching learning context. They can also understand that the sense of control determine how well they can cope with the circumstances at hand. It is presumed that the individuals with good sense of control over the events are able to make their own decisions, rather than letting others do it for them. The concept locus of control is important as it provokes an insight into your ability to make decisions. It also enables the individuals to reflect on their achievements. Having control over situation enhance responsibility of life and also foster self-worth and happiness in personality.

4. Results and discussion

The data were examined to ensure that only completed response sets were included in the analysis, as incomplete response sets could confound the study's results. Two hundred questionnaires were completed by the participants and analyzed by SPSS in 8 Tables. The discussion was done on the basis of the results from the collected data.

Table 1: Stress Vs Locus of Control among College/University Science Teachers (M)

Locus of Control						
Stress	0-4 (High Int. Loc)	5-9 (Low Int. Loc)	10-14 (Moderate)	15-19 (High Ext. Loc)	20-23 (Low Ext. Loc)	Total
4 or less (Low)	3	3	2			8
5-13 (Moderate)	4	10	6	3	1	24
14 or more (High)			10	5	3	8
Total	7	13	18	8	4	50

The output results cited in the above table indicated that the scores on internal locus of control significantly related with low or moderate level of stress degree as compare to the scores of moderate and external locus of control. 3 respondents with high / low internal locus of control showed relationship on low degree of stress. 5 respondents showed high external locus of control and 3 respondents showed low external locus of control were founded with high level of stress. The above captioned results table ascertain that internals are less stress prone as compare to the external.

Table 1.1: Statistical Analysis

Sr. No	Pearson and Spearman's Correlation	Value	Significant Level	Variables	St. Deviation	Mean	Co-efficient of Variation
1	Interval by Interval	.573	.000	Stress	.70	2.2	31.8
2	Ordinal by Ordinal	.602	.000	Locus of Control	1.13	2.8	40.3

The M=2.2 value and C.V=31.8 of stress and M=2.8 and C.V=40.3 of locus of control shows inter consistency between the variables. The significant level of the variables at 0.000 reveals high correlation.

Table 2: Stress Vs Locus of Control among College/University Arts Teachers (M)

Locus of Control						
Stress	0-4 (High Int. Loc)	5-9 (Low Int. Loc)	10-14 (Moderate)	15-19 (High Ext. Loc)	20-23 (Low Ext. Loc)	Total
4 or less (Low)	1		1			2
5-13 (Moderate)	3	15	7	2		27
14 or more (High)			9	8	4	21
Total	4	15	17	10	4	50

The maximum 15 respondents with internal locus of control rated on moderate level of stress and 09 respondents with moderate locus of control rated on high level of stress. Similarly, 08 respondents with high external locus of control rated on high level of stress degree. The above cited results also convey that the low internal locus of control buffer the stress level as contrast to the external locus of control. As the research findings of Gifford et al. (2006) indicated that first-year students who entered university with lower scores on the locus of control scale (internals) obtained significantly higher GPAs than those who scored higher (externals) on this same scale.

Table 2.2: Statistical Analysis

Sr. No	Pearson and Spearman's Correlation	Value	Significant level	Variables	St. Deviation	Mean	Co-efficient of Variation
1	Interval by Interval	.666	.000	Stress	.57	2.3	23.9
2	Ordinal by Ordinal	.697	.000	Locus of Control	1.07	2.9	36.8

The statistical analysis in above table shows the Pearson and Spearman's Correlation significant value at.000, M=2.9 and C.V. 36.8 of locus of control. This ensures the maximum buffering role of locus of control on stress.

Table 3: Stress Vs Locus of Control among College/University Science Teachers (F)

Locus of Control						
Stress	0-4 (High Int. Loc)	5-9 (Low Int. Loc)	10-14 (Moderate)	15-19 (High Ext. Loc)	20-23 (Low Ext. Loc)	Total
4 or less (Low)	3	3				6
5-13 (Moderate)	5	10	6	3	1	25
14 or more (High)			11	6	2	19
Total	8	13	17	9	3	50

On the basis of the results in the above table, 5 and 10 respondent identified at high and low level of internal locus of control and the same rated at moderate level of stress as well. 11 with moderate level of locus of control rated on high level of stress. Similarly 6 and 2 respondent with high or low external locus of control rated at high level of stress. The overall results showed that the respondents with moderate and external locus of control more inclined to stress as compare to internals.

Table 3.1: Statistical analysis

Sr. No	Pearson and Spearman's Correlation	Value	Significant level	Variables	St. Deviation	Mean	Co-efficient Correlation
1	Interval by Interval	.618	.000	Stress	.66	2.2	29.2
2	Ordinal by Ordinal	.648	.000	Locus of control	1.13	2.7	41.8

The M=2.7 of locus of control and C.V=29.2 substantiate the mentoring role on stress at M=2.2 and C.V=41.8. Pearson and Spearman's Correlation Interval by Interval and Ordinal by Ordinal values are above 0.5 and Significant level is 0.000 ensures maximum correlation between locus of control and stress.

Table 4: Stress Vs Locus of Control among College / University Arts Teachers (F)

Locus of Control						
Stress	0-4 (High Int. Loc)	5-9 (Low Int. Loc)	10-14 (Moderate)	15-19 (High Ext. Loc)	20-23 (Low Ext. Loc)	Total
4 or less (Low)	2	2				4
5-13 (Moderate)		15	4	1		20
14 or more (High)			8	12	6	26
Total	2	17	12	13	6	50

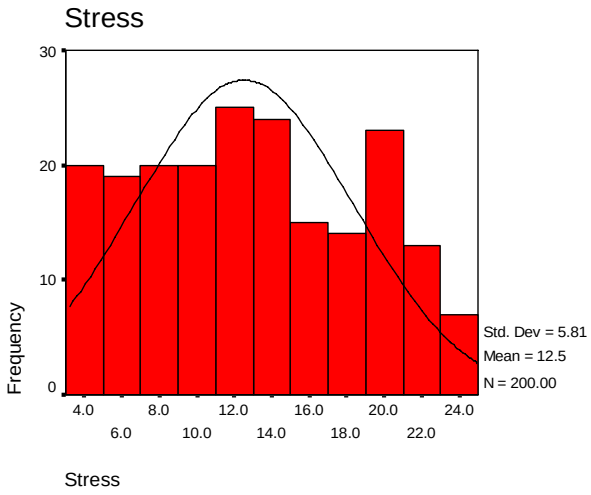
Total 19 respondents with high/low or moderate level of internal locus of control reported moderate level of stress while total 25repondents with moderate / high or low external locus of control reported high level of stress. This shows that externals are more incline to stress as compare to internals.

Table 4.1: Statistical Analysis

Sr. No	Pearson and Spearman's Correlation	Value	Significant level	Variables	St. Deviation	Mean	Co-efficient Correlation and Consistency
1	Interval by Interval	.798	.000	Stress	.70	.64	109.3
2	Ordinal by Ordinal	.828	.000	Locus of Control	1.12	3.1	36.12

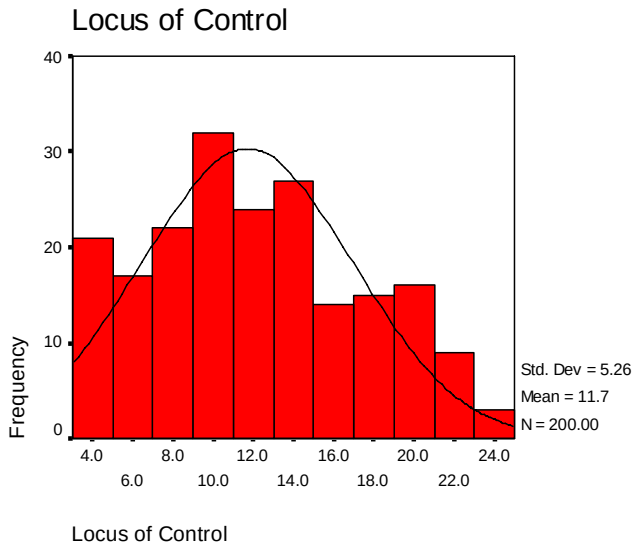
The mean value of locus of control reported at M=3.1 ensures maximum mentoring role of locus of control on stress. Similarly C.V=109.3 also shows maximum consistency in relation with locus of control. Moreover 0.000 level of significance confirm the relationship of both variables.

Figure 5: Histogram of Stress and Locus of Control of all teachers:



Co-efficient of Variation=S.D/Mean value x100.

5.81/12.5x100=46.48



Co-efficient of Variation=S.D/Mean value x100.

5.28/11.7x100=45.12

The histogram of stress and locus of control portrays the overall status of the relationship among both variables. The total mean value of stress is M=12.5 and locus of control M=11.7 showed that both variables are interlinked. Similarly the C.V of stress 46.48 and C.V of locus of control 45.12 confirm the inter dependency or consistency of the both variables.

5. Findings and Discussion

As other studies have consistently demonstrated the relationship of stress and locus of control in diversified fields, similarly the links of the same among teachers is a new addition. This study confirms the previous research results that internal locus of control acts as a stress buffer or mediator. The results of the present study showed that none of the respondent with high or low internal locus of control rated at high level of stress. On the basis of the results obtained from the collected data, total 79 respondents (male/female) with high or low internal locus of control rated at low or moderate stress level. This confirms the findings that internals are less stress inclined. The findings of the study also pointed out that external oriented individual cannot cope with stress because total 46 respondents (male/female) with high or low external locus of control rated at high level of stress. The results also reveal that the respondents with moderate level of locus of control rated at low, moderate or high level of stress. This confirms that individuals with moderate level of locus of control are also inclined to stress. Overall results status indicated that male teachers are more internal and female teachers are more external. Furthermore, the Pearson and Spearman's Correlation showed overall significant level at .000 value that confirms the relationship of both variables.

6. Conclusions

On the basis of the evidences from the results, the current study concluded that locus of control is an important social personality variable in relation to cope with stressful daily life events. The evidence from 79 respondents rated at high or low internal locus of control proves that the feelings of being in control make the potentially stressful environmental events less so and also sustain the feelings of empowerment and courage. On the basis of the overall Pearson and Spearman's Correlation results at significant level of 0.000 it is concluded that both variables are dependent and highly correlated. Consequently, the research concluded that the high internal locus of control determines high coping ability of stress among the teachers and also buffer against stress.

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