

Research Paper

Exploring the Relationship between Self-Actualization and Locus of Control: A Correlation Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the connection between locus of control and self-actualization, two psychological concepts that are essential for comprehending how people view themselves and their surroundings. Self-actualization is the pursuit of personal growth and the realization of one's potential, whereas on the contrary, locus of control is the degree to which people feel in control of their lives. The sample comprises of 100 university students aged 14 to 24, reflecting diverse backgrounds. Participants used standardized measures of Rotter's locus of control and Short Index of self-actualization through the use of a correlational research design. Correlation coefficients is the statistical technique that is used to investigate the relationship between these constructs. The findings exhibit a very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.0698$) that is not statistically significant ($p = 0.4903$) at the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicating that people who believe more strongly in internal control typically have higher levels of self-actualization. The theoretical framework provides a basis for comprehending how self-actualization and locus of control interact and impact one another by drawing on prior research. Results add to the current conversation on human development by illuminating the psychological processes behind these conceptions. The study's limitations are discussed in the conclusion, along with the necessity of using diverse samples and exploring potential moderating variables in future research. Even though there isn't a significant correlation in this particular setting, studying self-actualization and locus of control is still important for improving our comprehension of how people behave and grow as individuals.

Keywords: *Self-actualization, Locus of control, Correlation analysis, Psychological constructs Personal growth*

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Abraham Maslow, a psychologist, developed the idea of self-actualization, which is the process of reaching one's potential and making an effort to grow and fulfill personally (Maslow, 1954). It stands for the pinnacle of psychological growth and is defined by originality, self-reliance, and a feeling of direction. Conversely, Julian Rotter introduced the concept of locus of control, which relates to people's perceptions of how much control they have over their own lives (Rotter, 1966). It can be divided into two categories: internal, where people think they have control over their results, and external, where people think luck or outside forces have control. Self-actualization and locus of control have been linked in the past; some research suggests that those who have a stronger internal locus of control also tend to have higher levels of self-actualization (Snyder & Lopez, 2007). But little is known about the kind and extent of this relationship, especially in settings and populations that are diverse.

Knowing how self-actualization and locus of control relate to one another can help one better understand how individual differences in psychological health, adaptive functioning, and personal development differ from one another. As a result, the current study uses a correlational research design to investigate this relationship.

The results of studies examining the connection between locus of control and self-actualization have been inconsistent. A positive correlation has been suggested by some studies (Maddi & Kobasa, 1984), but no significant relationship has been found by others (Burger, 1984). These contradictions draw attention to the need for more research on this relationship and its consequences for psychological health and personal growth.

Self-Actualization

Self-actualization is a concept rooted in humanistic psychology, representing the realization and fulfillment of one's potential, talents, and capabilities. Coined by the renowned psychologist Abraham Maslow, self-actualization stands at the pinnacle of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a motivational theory that describes human needs arranged in a hierarchical order.

Self-actualization is the process of becoming the best version of oneself, achieving personal growth, and realizing one's unique abilities and potential. It involves the pursuit of meaningful goals, self-discovery, and the actualization of one's passions and aspirations. According to Maslow's theory, individuals are motivated by a hierarchy of needs, ranging from basic physiological needs to higher-level psychological needs. Self-actualization is situated at the top of this hierarchy, emphasizing its significance in human experience. Individuals who are on the path to self-actualization often exhibit certain characteristics; Autonomy, Creativity, Authenticity, Purpose, and Continued growth.

Locus of Control

The construct of Locus of Control was first described by Rotter (1966). Locus of Control emerged from his social learning theory. Locus of control is considered to be an aspect in the social learning theory. In order to define Locus of Control, Rotter (1966) uses the following three concepts: expectancy, behaviour potential, and reinforcement value. Locus of Control in the social learning theory represents generalized expectancies and helps in the refinement of predicting 16 Master Thesis - Lisette Feijen reinforcements to change behaviour. Change in behaviour or behaviour potential (BP) is a function of the expectancies (E) and the reinforcement value (RV) in the formula: $BP = (E * RV)$. The construct LOC is seen as generalized expectancies for control of reinforcement. Rotter (1966) set a

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unidimensional scale with two ends. These ends are defined as external and internal LOC. External and internal Locus of Control have received many descriptions in literature (Rotter, 1966; Lefcourt, 1972; Smith, Dugan, & Trompenaars, 1997; Kovaleva, 2012), but all concentrate on the same underlying thought. Rotter (1966) describes external LOC (ELOC) as beliefs that his/her life is in the hands of his environment, fate, chance, or others. Internal LOC (ILOC) is described as a belief that one is in charge of his/her own life.

Expectation of a Correlation between Locus of Control and Self-actualization

The anticipation of a correlation between locus of control and self-actualization is grounded in theoretical frameworks and empirical observations that highlight the interconnectedness of these psychological constructs. Several key factors contribute to the expectation of a positive correlation.

Internal Locus of Control and Autonomy

Both self-actualization and an internal locus of control share a common thread of autonomy. Individuals with an internal locus of control believe in their ability to influence outcomes through their actions. Similarly, self-actualization involves the pursuit of personal growth and realization, reflecting an innate drive for autonomy and self-directed development.

Goal Orientation and Belief in Capabilities

Individuals with an internal locus of control are often more goal-oriented and attribute their successes and failures to their own capabilities. This aligns with the characteristics of self-actualized individuals who exhibit a strong sense of purpose and actively work towards meaningful goals. The belief in one's capabilities is a shared aspect that contributes to positive attitudes and proactive behaviours.

Resilience and Coping Strategies

Resilience, a quality associated with both self-actualization and an internal locus of control, involves bouncing back from setbacks and adapting to challenges. Individuals with an internal locus of control tend to employ effective coping strategies, and self-actualized individuals often demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity. This resilience may stem from a belief in personal control and the ability to navigate life's complexities.

Positive Psychological Functioning

Both constructs are linked to positive psychological functioning, encompassing high levels of well-being and life satisfaction. Individuals who perceive control over their lives (internal locus of control) and actively pursue self-actualization often experience positive emotional states, reinforcing the expectation of a positive correlation.

Cognitive and Emotional Processes

The cognitive and emotional processes underlying both constructs suggest a convergence. Positive beliefs, goal-oriented behaviours, and adaptive coping mechanisms may collectively contribute to the development of self-actualization, creating an environment where an internal locus of control facilitates the realization of one's potential.

The theoretical underpinnings of an internal locus of control align with the characteristics and processes associated with self-actualization. The shared emphasis on autonomy, goal orientation, resilience, and positive psychological functioning provides a foundation for expecting a positive correlation between locus of control and self-actualization. Empirical evidence supporting these connections reinforces the anticipation that individuals with a

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stronger internal locus of control are more likely to exhibit traits indicative of self-actualization. The connection between locus of control and self-actualization has been demonstrated by earlier studies. Research has demonstrated, for instance, that those with high self-actualization scores have an internal locus of control, which is a belief in personal destiny control (e.g., Maddi & Kobasa, 1984). On the other hand, because they feel they have no control over their environment, people with a more external locus of control could find it difficult to reach their full potential (Rotter, 1966).

Objectives/Hypothesis

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the correlation between self-actualization and locus of control. The hypothesis posited a significant positive correlation between these two constructs, based on the theoretical alignment of positive beliefs, goal orientation, and resilience, internal locus of control, and positive psychological functioning self-actualization and locus of control.

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no significant correlation between self-actualization and locus of control in the studied population of university students aged 14 to 24.

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁): There is a significant correlation between self-actualization and locus of control in the studied population of university students aged 14 to 24.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design:

This study employed a correlation research design to investigate the relationship between locus of control and self-actualization.

Participants:

A total of 100 participants were recruited for the study, comprising university students between the age group of 14 to 24. The sample includes 65 male and 35 female participants. Participants were selected through the process of, convenience sampling from diverse backgrounds just to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Measures:

- **Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (I-E):** Locus of control was assessed using Rotter's Internal-External Locus of Control Scale (Rotter, 1966). This scale consists of 23 items that measure the extent to which individuals believe they have control over events in their lives. Responses were recorded on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).
- **Short Index of Self-Actualization (SIS):** Self-actualization was measured using the Short Index of Self-Actualization (Jones & Crandall, 1986). This scale comprises 15 items designed to capture various aspects of self-actualization. Participants indicated their agreement with each statement on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Procedure:

Participants were provided with informed consent and assured of the confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaires were administered in a counterbalanced order to control the order effects. Participants completed the Rotter's I-E Scale and the SIS in a quiet and controlled environment.

Data Analysis:

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to analyze the relationship between locus of control and self-actualization. This statistical method assesses the strength and direction of a linear relationship between two variables. The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Table -1 Showing Mean SD & Percentile

Statistic	Self- Actualization	Locus of Control
Count	100	100
Mean	12.39	31.65
Std Dev	3.14	5.48
Min	4	17
25th Percentile	10	27.75
Median (50th %)	12	30.5
75th Percentile	15	36
Max	19	48

Table -2 Showing Correlation Self –actualization and Locus of control

Correlation Measure	Value
Pearson r	0.0698
p-value	0.4903
Significance	Not Significant at $p < 0.05$

RESULTS

Pearson Correlation Analysis:

The results of the correlation analysis displays that self-actualization and locus of control had a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.0698$, with a p-value of 0.4903. The two constructs had a weak and non-significant relationship, as indicated by the correlation not being statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

DISCUSSION

The study explored the relationship between self-actualization and locus of control among university students of age group 14 to 24. On Contrary to the initial hypothesis, the findings revealed a very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.0698$), which was not statistically significant ($p = 0.4903$). This challenges the theoretical expectation of a clear positive relationship between the two constructs. The non-significant correlation suggests that, within this specific population, there is no discernible linear relationship between self-actualization and locus of control. The theoretical underpinnings, emphasizing autonomy, goal orientation, and resilience, did not align with the observed data. Possible explanations include individual differences in interpreting measurement scales and the limitations of convenience sampling and the narrow age range. Subjective nature of self-report measures may not fully capture the complexity of these psychological constructs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study explored the relationship between self-actualization and locus of control, two crucial psychological constructs in understanding human behavior and personal development. The findings, based on a sample of 100 university students, revealed a very weak positive correlation of 0.0698 between self-actualization and locus of control. However, the correlation was not statistically significant ($p = 0.4903$). These results suggest

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that, within the specific population of university students aged 14 to 24, there is no clear linear relationship between self-actualization and locus of control.

The study's findings indicate that there is no meaningful relationship between locus of control and self-actualization. Although earlier studies have hinted at a possible connection between these concepts, the results of this investigation demand more research. It is crucial to comprehend the elements influencing locus of control and self-actualization in order to advance psychological health and personal growth.

Future Direction

Despite the non-significant correlation found in this study, further research is warranted to explore potential moderating variables that may influence the relationship between self-actualization and locus of control. Longitudinal studies and diverse samples could provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics between these psychological constructs. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods may offer insights into the subjective experiences that quantitative measures might not capture.

The present study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the nuanced relationship between self-actualization and locus of control. While no significant correlation was observed in this specific context, the exploration of these constructs remains valuable for advancing our understanding of human behavior and personal development.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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