Original Research Paper

Locus of Control in Millennial Females

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ABSTRACT

Students are the future of the country. They are the people who would be joining the corporate world very soon. Hence it becomes imperative for the Managers to understand the mindset of the younger generation to help them become effective for organizational change. The current study focuses on Locus of Control and the difference in it among different variables such as course of study, Science, and Arts, among Higher Secondary School students (HSc.) and college students. It is a promising area of inquiry and a critical context for studying personality. The study was conducted on 90 students studying in HSc. and University/ College of some of the cities of Gujarat. The survey was conducted by using Levenson's Locus of Control Scale (1981). It was found out that Millennial females scored more on 'Individual Control' compared to the other two variables i.e. Powerful Others and Chance Control describing that Millennial Females can effectively control most of the situations on their own.

The concept of locus of control was structured within the framework of social learning theory and was first defined as a personality attribute and used by Rotter (1966). It refers to the perception the extent to which people believe that they can control the events that affect them, thus causing them to believe that they are the source of what happens in their life. These attributes can be made to luck, powerful acquaintances, fate and similar factors beyond their control as well as their own behavior (Solmuş, 2004: 196). In brief, locus of control refers to one's belief in his or her abilities to control life events (Strauser et al., 2002). According to the theory developed by Rotter (1966), people's perceptions about the underlying main causes of events in his/her life differ. This difference in locus of control belief also leads to dissimilarities in people's perceptions and assessments of events that happen to both themselves and others. In a sense, in cases where environmental circumstances fail to bring a certain explanation to individual's successes or failures or his or her other experiences, locus of control belief comes out as a method to explain these and is basically divided into two categories (Taylor et al., 2006).

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External locus of control

It refers to the individual perceiving that fate, luck, or other external circumstances beyond his/her control guides his/her own reinforcement or outcome. Besides, an individual may see big and complex forces surrounding him/her as causes of events. Individuals, who believe that his/her behavior or events happen to him/her, are mainly determined by external forces rather than himself/herself are defined as people with external locus of control (Rotter, 1990).

Internal locus of control

It can be defined as an individual's belief that events result primarily from their own behavior or relatively permanent traits and actions (Rotter, 1990; Küçükkaragöz, 1998). Individuals with internal locus of control are more responsive to environmental stimuli or changes, which they believe will be helpful in determining their future behavior, compared to individuals with external lotus of control; They are more enthusiastic in changing environmental conditions and they ascribe more importance to their abilities, achievements, or failures (Solmuş, 2004: 196). While individuals with internal lotus of control believe that they can change their dissatisfaction with any dimension of their life with their own efforts, individuals with external lotus of control tend to suffer from despair in determining the direction of their life. They believe that some rewards in their life path are not the outcomes of their efforts. In their belief, these are merely coincidences, being in the right place at the right time and (Solmuş, 2004: 196). Many studies have revealed that individuals with internal locus of control have less difficulty in expressing their feelings; they have more self-confidence and are less in need of others' approval; they take more care of their physical and mental health than those with external locus of control do. It was also found that compared to those with internal locus of control, people with external locus of control experience more anxiety, stress and depression, thinking that they cannot prevent favorable events from happening (Ashby et al., 2002; Solmuş, 2004: 196).

Numerous studies that focused on internal and external locus of control as a personal trait indicate that the effects of internal locus of control orientation on the personality are more positive compared to external locus of control orientation. On the other hand, external locus of control belief refers to low self-esteem, depression, headaches, other psychophysiological disorders and psychopathology (Küçükkaragöz, 1998). Strickland (1989) maintained that individuals who attribute outcomes of events to their behavior are more determined to change unpleasant events that happen to them, while those attributing to external forces such as luck or fate are less insistent and less striving (Küçükkaragöz, 1998). Individuals with an External LOC attribute a high probability to luck as a determinant for significant events also set goals that are more difficult for themselves (Bernardi, 2001). Another difference between these two different locuses of control manifests itself in their causal attributions to successes and failures (Solmuş, 2004: 196). Internal LOC people accept responsibility for events and external LOC individuals blame their environment for failures (Bernardi, 2001). While Anderson (1977) asserts that internal LOC individuals display more active behavior against problem-solving, Silvester et al.

(2002) state that individuals, who attribute the causes of their failures to themselves and controllable behavior have a higher level of job motivation and development.

The concept "Locus of Control" was first developed by Julian B. Rotter. Locus of Control according to Rotter, refers to a personality dimension that helps explain one's behavior. Locus of control is defined as a person's tendency to see events as being controlled internally or externally (Rotter, 1966; Lloyd & Hastings, 2009; French &Shojaee, 2014). This tendency characterizes a person's perspective about self-independence and control by others (Corsini,1999).

Locus of Control also determines the likelihood of a particular behavior as well as the outcomes of engaging in the behaviors (Lefcourt, 1976; April, Dharani, & Peters, 2012). People with internal locus of control feel that they can influence the outcomes of their work with their own efforts, skills and characteristics. People who perceive that outcomes are determined by external forces like luck, chance and fate have an orientation towards external locus of control (Schultz & Schultz, 2011).

Organizational change

In today's dynamic world, no organization is immune to organizational change. Organizational change is defined as attempts to modify an organization's structure, goals, technology, or work task (Carnall, 1986). Merger and acquisition are one form of organizational change and can be further characterized by the clash of cultures that are generally considered to be more stressful than most of other changes. The emotional responses to change that an individual can experience during change process may be equilibrium, denial, anger, bargaining, chaos, depression, resignation, openness, readiness, and re-emergence (Perlman and Takacs, 1990). Negative attitudes among these responses may have negative consequences for the organization. Increased pressure for change is associated with increased stress, low job satisfaction, and increased intention to withdraw (Rush et al., 1995). The change process involves going from the known to the unknown. This brings not only a stressful experience, but also new possibilities for individuals. Managers generally take two approaches in implementing the change progress. The approach used determines the level of change in the organization and its impact on individuals involved in the progress. The first approach is absorption, which aims at a high level of change for the acquired firm and little or no change for the acquiring firm. The second approach is integration, which implies change for both firms and for all their employees (Steuer and Wood, 2008).

Locus of control

Locus of control is one aspect of personality that describes the extent to which individuals believe they can exercise control over their environment. Externals believe that they have very little control over the events in their life. The association of personality and psychological or behavioral outcomes is supported by many previous results. Job-related variables may be

psychological or behavioral outcomes. Internals perform at a higher level in unstructured firms than in structured firms, while externals perform at a higher level in structured firms than in unstructured firms. This implies that locus of control may interact with characteristics of the work environment and affect job-related variables. Employees' locus of control would influence their psychological reactions to organizational change. Internals believe that their own behavior can affect what happens to them (Hung & Hsu, 2011).

In general, Positive characteristics of an Internal LOC:
- Engages in activities that will improve their situation
- Emphasizes strive for achievement
- Works hard to develop one's own knowledge, skills and abilities
- Are inquisitive and try to figure out why things turned out the way they did
- Take note of information that they can use to create positive outcomes in the future
- Have a more participative management style
- In general, benefits of External LOC:
- Usually humble and agreeable
- Acknowledges and shows praise to others
- Laid-back and easy going
- Usually stay with a job that they are dissatisfied with longer
- Tend to like and follow detailed directions

Internals generally look to themselves for direction and externals look to others, externals have been found to be more compliant followers or subordinates than internals. It is important to keep in mind however that those with a strong internal LOC tends to control everything and as such can be perceived as arrogant. With a tendency to greater compliance, externals would probably be easier to supervise and more likely to follow direction. However, externals can also tend to be compliant with social demands of co-workers which may sometimes have conflict with management. Externals seem to prefer supervisors who are directive and they themselves rely more on coercion with their subordinates. Internals prefer participative approaches from their supervisors, rely more on personal persuasion with their own subordinates and seem more task oriented and less socially oriented. When placing employees in positions and to insure success, organizations should be conscious of the fact that roles which require more initiative and independence of action are better suited for the internal employees and when the role requires more routine compliance, the external employees would be the more appropriate fit.

Managing the drawbacks of an employee with a strong internal LOC:
Employees with internal LOC are generally more successful, for very good reason. However, there can be times when having an external LOC can be an advantage, especially in situations where employees need to be more considerate and easy going. Employees with a strong internal LOC tend to be very strong minded, achievement-oriented, over ambitious and can leave some

around them feeling a little trampled on or inferior. Regular reminders should be given to the stronger internal LOC's to remember to be considerate to the feelings of others around them. A person with an internal LOC can also push themselves to the point of being over stressed or anxious.

Managing the drawbacks of an employee with a strong external LOC:
Those with an external LOC are many times described as whiny and tend to excuse bad behavior by pointing to and blaming outside influences. A person who is late to a meeting, for example, may blame the weather, traffic, road-construction, family or any number of external factors. Individuals with an external LOC also exhibit lower levels of self-motivation and are not as likely to achieve the same levels of success as those with an internal LOC. Externals are best managed when they are given clear and detailed directions and timelines (Chatfield and Allison Wooten, 2012).

There is an effect on performance in the workplace due to an employee's Locus of Control (LOC). They operate from an internal or external LOC transcending to different levels of self-accountability behavior and performance results, across employees would vary. LOC in the workplace differentiates employees who are self-reliant and believes that they can exercise control over their work and their environment through their own actions. This distinguishing difference in the belief of personal control between internals and externals, affects performance levels. Studies support the direct impact of LOC on individual behaviors that impact job performance and job satisfaction in the workplace. Timothy Judge of The University of Iowa had conducted a study in 1997 that supported his hypothesis that Internal LOC is positively related to job satisfaction. Similarly, in 1982, Spector suggested that individuals with internal LOC should be more satisfied in their jobs because they are less likely to stay in a dissatisfying job and are more likely to be successful in an organization. Recognizing that job satisfaction is predictor of job turnover, it should come as no surprise that internals take action and would be expected to look for other opportunities (either internally or with another company) if in a dissatisfying job. While externals on the other hand, avoid taking action and therefore even if they are dissatisfied they may stay on the job until they are forced by environmental factors itself them to leave. One could predict that because of the value placed on expectancies (effort leading to good performance to reward) and the seeking out of information to achieve more, that internals would perform better. There have been a few studies that support this notion – Heisler (1974), Valecha (1972) and Nestel (1976). The existing evidence suggests that internals do perform better than externals. We must keep in mind that internals will only display better performance if they perceive their effort will lead to valued rewards, whether those rewards are intrinsic or extrinsic. According to research gathered from a study conducted by Weiss and Sherman in 1973, when individuals with an internal LOC are faced with discrepancies between acceptable standards of performance and actual performance, they tend to increase their efforts to match their actual performance to the standards. Internals perform better in learning and problem solving situations,

in part due to their use of information. In an attempt to control their environment, collecting relevant information is a vital part of the process. Conversely people who are externals tend to lower their standards or completely withdraw from the task or blame someone/something else when given negative feedback.

OBJECTIVE

- To examine and determine roles or factors of LOC in personality of Millennial females and study how that kind of personality might help in organizational change.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Some studies report that activists are Internals, while others claim they are Externals, holding a belief in chance, fate, and powerful others. Three new scales were constructed in order to measure belief in chance (*C*) as separate from expectancy for control by powerful others (*P*), and perceived mastery over one's personal life (*I*). Two studies are reported. (1.) As predicted, responses from 96 adults indicated that only a belief in chance was differentially related to involvement and information on anti-pollution activities. (2.) In factor analyzing the responses of 329 college males to the 24 items of the new scales, three main factors were identified — *I, P*, and *C*. The validity and usefulness of the tripartite division in clarifying past findings regarding the multidimensionality of I-E were discussed **(Levenson, 2010).**

The questions whether self-esteem and locus of control change during the high school years and whether gender differences exist in these variables were considered in the study. A significant main effect for gender with lower self-esteem scores for girls were found. Adolescence being a tumultuous age according to a recent research by Powers, Hauser and Kilner,1989; hence personality variables such as self-esteem and locus of control would change as the teenagers move towards adulthood **(Chubb, Fertman, Ross, 1997)**

This study examines variations in employees' Locus of Control (LOC) across the demographic variables of gender, educational background, and respondents' age. The study is based on data collected from 565 employees, using an adapted version of the Rotter Internal–External Locus of Control Scale. Based on a survey of literature, three hypotheses were formulated relating the demographic variables of gender, educational background, and age with LOC. The results of this study yielded evidence of variations based on all the three demographic parameters. T-tests and analyses of variance suggest that there is no uniform LOC across different groups of employees. Men, 'Gen X' and people with higher educational levels (postgraduates) demonstrate higher internal LOC when compared with counterpart demographic groups. Implications of the findings for organization and management practice are discussed **(D'souza, Upasna, Usha, 2014).**

It has been found that a synthesis of research in the last two decades that has explored the relationship of gender to locus of control measures. In the main, this search suggests that both

males and females are becoming more external. Females, however, tend to be more external than males on most locus of control measures. There are also gender differences in perceptions of control across behavioral domains. Factor analyses of locus of control measures indicate that males and females are relatively similar in primary factors but may differ substantially in some secondary factors. Two areas in which males and females appear to differ are perception of control over interpersonal relationships and perception of control over essentially uncontrollable life events. Gender differences also emerge in how locus of control relates to comparison variables. Internality, for example, appears to be more related to achievement for males than females and a better predictor of social adaptation for females than for males **(Sherman, Higgs & Williams, 1997).**

METHODOLOGY

Tools

Each of the Internal, Powerful Others, and Chance scales consists of eight items in a Likert format which are presented to the subject as a unified attitude scale of 24 items. The statements (item nos.) of

- P- Powerful Others: 3, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 20 and 22
- C- Chance Control: 2, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 24
- I-Individual Control: 1, 4, 5, 9, 18, 19, 21 and 23

In this five-point scale, the scoring of the response was done according to the weight given to responses from 1 to 5 as shown below:

5 Strongly Agree
4 Agree
3 Undecided
2 Disagree
1 Strongly Disagree

This is a standardized test hence it is reliable and valid.

Sample

49 female students, in total, from HSc. Arts and Science and 41 female students, in total, are the undergraduates of Arts and Science. In total, 90 samples of millennial females are collected.

Sampling Technique

The survey was conducted using Convenience sampling and Simple Random Sampling method.

Test applied

Levenson's scale of control which is a modified version of Rotter's 13 item questionnaire measuring locus of control.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1The following tables comprise of the number of people who had rated on a Likert type scale from 1 to 5 on their respective item number.

POWERFUL OTHERS									
Item nos.									
Scale	**3**	**8**	**11**	**13**	**15**	**17**	**20**	**22**	**Total**
1	9	10	18	9	10	17	4	8	85
2	41	31	58	44	36	43	41	29	323
3	17	18	8	11	17	10	20	16	117
4	16	21	3	23	23	13	19	31	149
5	7	9	3	3	4	7	6	6	45
Mean	**2.7**	**2.9**	**2.1**	**2.6**	**2.7**	**2.4**	**2.8**	**3**	**21.2**
S. D.	**1.1**	**1.2**	**0.9**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**1.2**	**1**	**1.1**	**8.7**

Item no. 3, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 20 and 22 indicates the perspectives on Powerful others which has an average of 21.2 and standard deviation is 8.7.

Table 2

CHANCE CONTROL									
	Item nos.								
Scale	**2**	**6**	**7**	**10**	**12**	**14**	**16**	**24**	**Total**
1	4	10	18	6	11	8	10	10	77
2	47	36	47	32	29	35	28	42	296
3	12	16	6	8	11	4	16	8	81
4	21	21	14	36	35	37	32	20	216
5	6	7	5	8	4	6	4	10	50
Mean	**2.8**	**2.8**	**2.3**	**3.1**	**2.9**	**3**	**2.9**	**2.8**	**22.6**
S. D.	**1.1**	**1.2**	**0.9**	**1.1**	**1.1**	**1.2**	**1**	**1.1**	**8.7**

Item no. 2, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 24 indicates the perspectives on Chance Control which has an average of 22.6 and standard deviation is 8.7.

INDIVIDUAL CONTROL									
Item nos.									
Scale	**1**	**4**	**5**	**9**	**18**	**19**	**21**	**23**	**Total**
1	1	6	0	7	8	1	1	0	24
2	2	34	10	15	20	12	4	2	99
3	2	8	5	5	21	4	3	5	53
4	57	35	46	39	31	61	46	43	358
5	28	7	29	24	10	12	36	41	187
Mean	**4.2**	**3**	**4**	**3.6**	**3.2**	**3.8**	**4.2**	**4.4**	**30.4**
S. D.	**0.7**	**1.2**	**0.9**	**1.3**	**1.2**	**0.9**	**0.8**	**0.6**	**7.6**

Item no. 1, 4, 5, 9, 18, 19, 21 and 23 indicates the perspectives on Individual Control which has an average of 30.4 and standard deviation is 7.6.

CONCLUSION, DISCUSSION, AND SUGGESTIONS

The mean of the answers given by the millennial females to the items measuring the millennial's locus of control is (=74.2). The mean of the answers given by the millennials to the items measuring their external locus of control: Powerful Others (=21.2); Chance Control (=22.6). When Table 1 is analyzed, the item that is at the highest level in terms of their external locus of control (Powerful Others) is "22" (=3). When Table 2 is analyzed, the item, among the items of external locus of control (Chance Control) of the millennials perceived at the highest level is "10" (=3.1). The mean of the answers given by the millennials to the items measuring their internal locus of control: Individual Control (=30.4). When Table 3 is analyzed, the item, among the items of internal locus of control (Individual Control) of the millennials perceived at the highest level is "23" (=4.4).

According to the results gathered from the quantitative findings of the research, among the internal locus of control perception levels of the millennial females, the item that is perceived at the highest level is "My life is controlled by my own actions", the item perceived at the lowest level is "Whether I will be involved into an accident depends on how good driver I am" and this finding is similar to the study of Akkaya1 & Akyol (2016). Among the external locus of control's (Powerful Others) perception levels of the millennial females, the item that is perceived at the highest level is "In order to have my plans work, I make sure that they fit in with the desires of people who have power over me", the item perceived at the lowest level is "My life is controlled by powerful others". Among the external locus of control's (Chance Control) perception levels of the millennial females, the item that is perceived at the highest level is "I have found out that what I think is going to happen will happen", the item perceived at the lowest level is "When I get what I want, it's because I am lucky".

Majority of the population believed that in order to have their plans work, they must make sure that their desires fit in with the desires of people who have power over them. Also, if the Millennial females need some leadership responsibilities, they have to make themselves appealing to those in positions of power, even if they have a good ability to take up leadership responsibilities.

Conflict of Interests

The author declared no conflict of interests.

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