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Adjustment among Adolescents in Context of Intelligence, Emotional Maturity and Inhabitation

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Abstract

The study was conducted on 50 boys and 50 girls of high schools of Patna. Locus of control was measured using locus of control scale by Hasnain and Joshi, the patterns of adjustment were measured using Mohsin-Shamshad Bell's Adjustment Inventory (Hindi Adaptation), the academic achievement was measured on the basis of academic records in terms of results of the last two successive examinations at school by the respondents. Scatter diagram method of correlation was employed for the analysis of the obtained data. In the light of the results, a significant and positive correlation was found between internal locus of control and academic achievement and also between internal locus of control and overall adjustment of the respondents. Similarly, significant and negative correlation was reported between external locus of control and academic achievement and also between external locus of control and overall adjustment of the respondents. In the light of the results, it was concluded that internal locus of control is conducive to both academic achievement on the one hand and adjustment pattern on the other whereas external locus of control is hinders or interferes with both to academic achievement and overall adjustment.

Key Words

Academic, Achievement and Adjustment, Adolescents, Locus of Control.

Introduction

Adolescence is a pivotal developmental stage characterized by significant physical, emotional, and psychological changes. This period is not only important for the establishment of personal identity but also for the development of academic and social skills. During this time, individuals are increasingly exposed to complex academic challenges, peer pressures, and the development of personal and social identities. Understanding how adolescents adapt to these pressures and achieve success in their academic lives has been a central focus in the field of developmental psychology. One psychological concept that has proven crucial in understanding academic outcomes and personal adjustment during adolescence is locus of control.

Locus of control, a concept initially developed by Julian Rotter in the 1950s, refers to an individual's belief about the extent to which they have control over the events affecting their lives. People with an internal

locus of control believe that they are responsible for their own success or failure, attributing outcomes to their own efforts, abilities, and actions. Conversely, individuals with an external locus of control perceive that their outcomes are determined by external forces, such as luck, fate, or other people's actions, rather than their own decisions. This distinction plays a pivotal role in shaping the behavior, coping strategies, and psychological outcomes of adolescents.

Academic achievement and adjustment in adolescents are strongly influenced by the way they perceive their control over outcomes. For example, adolescents with an internal locus of control are more likely to take personal responsibility for their academic progress, show higher levels of motivation, and employ effective strategies to cope with academic challenges. In contrast, those with an external locus of control may struggle to maintain motivation, feeling that their efforts are futile in the face of overwhelming external forces, which can lead to lower academic performance and feelings of helplessness.

The relationship between locus of control and academic achievement is well-documented in psychological research. Studies have shown that adolescents who believe they have control over their academic outcomes are more likely to set realistic goals, persist in the face of challenges, and engage in behaviors that lead to academic success. Conversely, adolescents with an external locus of control may exhibit lower academic achievement, as they may not believe in the value of hard work or may perceive their efforts as ineffective. Moreover, an external locus of control can contribute to academic disengagement, a pattern seen in students who fail to develop effective study habits or who lack the resilience to overcome academic setbacks.

In terms of adjustment, adolescents with an internal locus of control tend to have better emotional regulation, higher self-esteem, and better social functioning. They are more likely to actively solve problems and seek out support when faced with challenges, which leads to healthier adjustment in both academic and social realms. On the other hand, those with an external locus of control may struggle with feelings of powerlessness, anxiety, and depression, which can negatively impact their overall adjustment. Such adolescents may be more vulnerable to stress and less likely to engage in proactive coping strategies.

The implications of locus of control are far-reaching, affecting not only academic performance but also mental health, social relationships, and career aspirations. Therefore, understanding how adolescents develop their locus of control beliefs is essential for educators, parents, and psychologists who aim to support the academic and emotional growth of young people. Interventions that help shift adolescents from an external to an internal locus of control, through teaching self-efficacy, goal-setting, and resilience, can lead to improved academic performance and better overall adjustment during this crucial developmental stage.

In summary, the concept of locus of control plays a fundamental role in determining how adolescents perceive and respond to the challenges they face in academic and social settings. Adolescents with an internal locus of control tend to display better academic performance and overall psychological adjustment, while those with an external locus of control may struggle with academic motivation and adjustment. Understanding the dynamics of this relationship is essential for creating supportive environments that foster resilience, personal responsibility, and success among adolescents.

Review of Literature

A meta-analysis by Robinson[9] et al. (2018) examined 40 studies exploring the relationship between locus of control and academic achievement across various age groups. The findings indicated a consistent positive correlation between an internal locus of control and higher academic performance. Adolescents with an internal locus of control were more likely to engage in self-regulated learning, set academic goals, and exhibit greater perseverance when faced with academic challenges. This study concluded that fostering an internal locus of control in adolescents may lead to enhanced academic outcomes. In a study by Smith and Jones[10] (2020), the role of locus of control in school adjustment was examined among 300 high school

students. Results showed that adolescents with an internal locus of control reported better emotional adjustment, fewer behavioral issues, and greater academic motivation. These students were also more likely to seek help from teachers and peers when facing academic difficulties, contributing to better overall school adjustment. A study by Harris et al.[4] (2017) investigated the negative effects of an external locus of control on academic disengagement among adolescents. The study found that students with an external locus of control were more likely to attribute their academic failures to external factors such as bad luck or teacher bias. This belief system contributed to lower motivation, poor study habits, and academic procrastination, ultimately leading to lower academic achievement. In their study, González and Pérez[3] (2016) examined how locus of control influences academic self-efficacy in adolescents. They found that students with an internal locus of control were more likely to believe in their own capabilities, which contributed to higher academic self-efficacy. These students were also more resilient in the face of academic setbacks and were more likely to persevere through challenges, thereby achieving better academic outcomes. A study by Kumar and Choudhary[5] (2019) explored the relationship between locus of control and peer relationships among adolescents. They discovered that adolescents with an internal locus of control were more likely to develop positive relationships with their peers, as they perceived themselves as active participants in shaping their social environment. On the contrary, adolescents with an external locus of control tended to experience more conflicts and difficulties in peer interactions, contributing to poorer social adjustment. Levine and Ball[6] (2021) examined how locus of control affects coping strategies in adolescents dealing with academic stress. The study found that adolescents with an internal locus of control were more likely to employ active coping strategies such as problem-solving and seeking support, while those with an external locus of control often relied on passive coping mechanisms, such as avoidance and denial. The former group exhibited better academic performance and psychological well-being, while the latter group demonstrated higher levels of stress and anxiety. A study by Patel et al.[8] (2015) looked at gender differences in locus of control and academic performance. They found that male adolescents were more likely to develop an external locus of control, particularly in subjects they found difficult, which negatively affected their academic achievement. Female adolescents, in contrast, exhibited a more balanced distribution of internal and external locus of control, but those with a stronger internal locus of control tended to achieve better academic outcomes. In a longitudinal study conducted by Liu and Wang[7] (2022), researchers tracked the academic performance and locus of control of 500 adolescents over a period of three years. They found that adolescents who initially exhibited an internal locus of control showed consistent improvements in academic achievement, while those with an external locus of control experienced a steady decline in performance. The study suggested that early interventions to promote internal locus of control could have long-term benefits for academic success. A cross-cultural study by Chen et al.[2] (2014) examined locus of control in adolescents from different cultural backgrounds. The results indicated that Western adolescents, who generally value individual autonomy and self-reliance, were more likely to have an internal locus of control, leading to higher academic achievement. In contrast, adolescents from collectivist cultures, such as East Asian societies, often exhibited a more external locus of control, attributing success or failure to group dynamics or familial influence. These differences were found to influence academic motivation and performance in culturally specific ways. Anderson and Morris[1] (2018) explored the relationship between locus of control and emotional adjustment in adolescents. Their study found that adolescents with an internal locus of control reported better emotional regulation and fewer symptoms of anxiety and depression. They were more likely to adopt adaptive coping strategies, such as seeking social support and engaging in positive self-talk. In contrast, adolescents with an external locus of control exhibited higher levels of emotional distress and were more prone to feelings of helplessness in the face of adversity. A study by Williams and Carter[11] (2020) examined educational interventions aimed at promoting an internal locus of control among adolescents. The study involved a group of high school students who underwent a program designed to foster self-efficacy, goal setting, and problem-solving skills. The intervention led to significant improvements in students' academic performance, as well as their belief in their ability to control academic outcomes. The authors concluded that such interventions could be effective

tools for improving academic achievement and promoting positive adjustment in adolescents. The reason of conducting the study is lack of studies conducted in Patna (Bihar) relating to the variables selected in the study.

Purpose

(i) Firstly, to examine the relationship of academic achievement with internal as well as external locus of control in case of both boy and girl respondents.

(ii) Secondly, to examine the relationship of locus of control with adjustment among the respondents.

Hypotheses

(i) There will be significant correlation between academic achievement and locus of control in case of both boy and girl respondents.

(ii) There will be significant correlation between overall adjustment and locus of control of the respondents.

Method of Study

Sample: The study was conducted on an incidental-cum-purposive sample of 50 boy and 50 girl respondents of high school of rural areas of Patna district. Other than the conditions required for research they were matched as far as practicable.

Research Tools

(i) A Personal Data Sheet prepared by the researcher herself was used to collect the necessary informations relating to the respondents.

(ii) Rotter's Locus of Control Scale developed by Hasnayan and Joshi was used to measure locus of control of the respondents.

(iii) Beel's Adjustment Inventory adapted in Hindi by Mohsin and Shamshad was used to measure the adjustment of the respondents.

(iv) The school examination records of the respondents in their last two successive examinations were taken as the measure of academic achievement.

Procedure: The researcher personally approaches to the respondents and collected information about them by administering PDS, Locus of Control Scale, Mohsin-Shamshad Adjustment Inventory Scale to them. The data were obtained as per the directions of the manuals of the scales concerned. The results based on school examination records of two successive years were also taken as the academic achievement of the respondents.

(d) Data Analysis : Scatter diagram method of correlation was employed for the analysis of the obtained data. The results were recorded in the following tables.

Table 01: r-showing the relationship between academic achievement and locus of control of the respondents

Variables	Boys	Girls
	N = 50, df = 98	N = 50; df = 98
Academic Achievement Vs Internal locus of control	0.521*	0.554*
Academic Achievement Vs External locus of control	–0.473*	–0.442*
* P = 0.01		

The results displayed in table - 1 showed significant positive correlation between academic achievement and internal locus of control both in cases of the boy respondents (r = 0.521; df = 98; P<.01) and girl respondents (r = 0.554; df = 98; P<.01). Further, the results of the same table showed significant negative correlation between academic achievement and external locus of control in cases of both boy respondents (r = –0.473; df = 98; P<.01) and the girl respondents (r = –0.442; df = 98; P<.01). However, in case of internal locus of control the correlation is significant as well as positive whereas in case of external locus of control case the correlation is significant but negative. Academic achievement is positively correlated with internal locus of control because students who believe that their success depends on their own efforts, abilities, and decisions tend to be more motivated, goal-oriented, and persistent in overcoming challenges. In contrast, a negative correlation with external locus of control exists because students who attribute outcomes to fate, luck, or external factors often lack initiative and responsibility, leading to lower academic engagement and achievement.

Girls often excel over boys in both cases—academic achievement versus internal locus of control and academic achievement versus external locus of control—due to several factors. Girls typically show higher self-discipline, stronger intrinsic motivation, and better time management, aligning well with an internal locus of control, which enhances achievement. Additionally, girls are less likely to attribute failure to external causes like luck or bias, maintaining focus and responsibility, which reduces the negative effects of external locus of control.

Table 02: r-showing the relationship between overall adjustment and locus of control of the respondents

Variables	**Boys**	**Girls**
	N = 50, df = 98	N = 50; df = 98
Overall Adjustment		
Vs	0.492*	0.467*
Internal locus of control		
Overall Adjustment		
Vs	–0.398*	–0.425*
External locus of control		
* P<.01		

The results displayed in table - 02 clearly indicated the significant positive correlation between overall adjustment and internal locus of control in case of boy respondents (r = 0.492; df = 98; P<.01) and also in case of girl respondents (r = 0.467; df = 98; P<.01). Similarly a significant negative correlation was reported between overall adjustment and external locus of control in cases of both in boy respondents (r = – 0.398; df = 98; P<.01) and girl respondents (r = –0.425; df = 98; P<.01). Adjustment is positively correlated with internal locus of control because individuals who believe they control their life outcomes tend to actively solve problems, manage stress effectively, and adapt well to changes. Their sense of agency promotes emotional stability and healthier coping strategies. In contrast, those with an external locus of control often feel helpless or victimized by circumstances, leading to passive coping, anxiety, and poor adjustment across personal, social, and academic domains.

Girls often excel over boys in both cases adjustment vs internal locus of control and adjustment vs external locus of control because they tend to develop emotional maturity, self-regulation, and interpersonal sensitivity earlier. Girls with an internal locus of control are more likely to take responsibility for their emotions and environment, enhancing adjustment. Even in external control contexts, girls may rely more on social support and constructive coping, helping them adjust better than boys, who may externalize stress.

Conclusions

(i) Internal Locus of Control is positively and significantly correlated with academic achievement both in case of boy and girl respondents.

(ii) External Locus of Control is negatively and significantly correlated with academic achievement both in case of boy and girl respondents.

(iii) Internal Locus of Control is positively and significantly correlated both in case of boy and girl respondents.

(iv) External Locus of Control is negative and significantly correlated both in case of boy and girl respondents.

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