

Self -efficacy and locus of control as determinants of happiness in students

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Abstract: *The present research was undertaken to substantiate the role of self -efficacy and locus of control as determinants of happiness in students. The sample consisted of 60 students studying post graduate courses in Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu.. They were assessed by the Happiness Scale , General self -efficacy scale and Locus of control scale . The results of correlation coefficient indicated that all of the studied variables were positively significantly correlated with happiness. Also, the regression analysis showed that self -efficacy and internal locus of control could predict happiness significantly. The implications and limitations of the research are discussed.*

Key Words: *self –efficacy , locus of control , happiness and students*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Students are the greatest resource of the nation. They are to be given appropriate nurturance and love. The need to be happy is an urgent requirement for students. They need happiness to lead life successfully .Happiness is one of the ingredients in leading a life successfully. The present study is an attempt in making an understanding of how self - efficacy and locus of control contribute to the happiness in students.

Self-Efficacy

Self- efficacy is a learned human pattern of thinking and is not inherited. Bandura (1997) says it is the belief of people in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions. Maddux (2009) says it is what people can do with their skills under certain conditions. It begins in infancy and continues throughout life. It is based on the social cognitive theory which says human beings shape their own lives rather than accepting the environmental forces. The frontal and prefrontal lobes of human brain are centres in brain for self -efficacy. Self –efficacy is necessary for coping with various psychological problems. It influences physical health by increasing healthy behaviour. It is a common factor in various psychotherapies.

Locus of Control

According to Cecil Robinson and Sage Rose “Locus of control is a common anticipation about fundamental causes of events in a person’s life, particularly, whether causes of events are internal and influenced by personal action, or external and influenced by outside forces such as luck, fate or other people.” Internal locus of control refers to the perception of positive and/or negative events as being a outcome of one’s own actions and thereby under personal control. Internally controlled persons feel that reinforcement which they receive occur primarily because of their own purposeful behaviour. External locus of control refers to the perception of positive and/or negative events as being unrelated to one’s own behaviour in certain situations and therefore beyond person’s control. Externally controlled person believes that reinforcements are under the control of powerful others, luck, chance, fate etc. beyond their control.

Happiness

Happiness is a positive emotional state. It involves the detailed evaluation of one’s current position in the world. It is the sum total of positive effect and general life satisfaction. It is flourishing of human beings and associated with living a life of virtue. The happiness level of a person is governed by three factors which are a set point for happiness, happiness relevant circumstantial factors, and happiness-producing activities and practices. There are two traditions on happiness. They are eudemonic and hedonic.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Review of related literature is an important pre-requisite for actual planning and carrying out of any research work. The present section represents a brief review of the researches done in the area related to the present investigation.

Sonja Lyubomirsky et al. (2006) found out that happy people are able to achieve across various life divisions. The researchers suggest a conceptual model to account for these outcomes, stating that the happiness–success link exists not only because success makes people happy, but also because positive affect produce success. The results reveal that happiness is associated with and precedes numerous successful outcomes, as well as behaviours paralleling

success. Moreover, the evidence suggests that positive affect may be the cause of many of the characteristics, resources, and successes correlated with happiness.

Strack, Fritz et al. (1985) conducted 3 experiments to determine the effect of reminiscing on reported well-being. 51 students at a professional school for translators and interpreters in first experiment and 36 undergraduates in second experiment recounted events that they had experienced as positive and pleasant or as negative and unpleasant. In third experiment, 64 undergraduates wrote down a particularly positive or negative event and then asked to explain either why or how this event occurred. Subjects in all 3 experiments were then asked to rate their happiness and life satisfaction. Overall results indicate that Subject's' ratings of general life satisfaction depended not only on the hedonic quality of the life experiences they happened to recall but also on the way in which they thought about them. Specifically, the hedonic quality of present life events influenced Subject's judgments of well-being in the same direction. The hedonic quality of past events, however, had a congruent impact on well-being judgments only when thinking about them elicited affect in the present but otherwise had a contrast effect on these judgments. Two factors were found to determine if thinking about the past elicits affect: whether Subject's describe the events vividly and in detail or only mention them briefly, and whether Subject's describe how the events occurred rather than why they occurred.

Ruut Veenhoven (2006) stated that moral philosophy holds that we should aim at greater happiness for a greater number. Yet two theories about how we assess how happy we are imply that there is not much value in happiness and that happiness cannot be raised lastingly. These two theories are: (1) 'Set-point' theory, which holds that we are mentally conditioned for a certain degree of happiness, and (2) 'Comparison' theory holding that happiness results from a rational mental calculus involving comparison with standard of the good life. An alternative mental theory that fit better with utilitarian creed is the (3) 'Affect' theory that happiness depends on unreasoned emotional experience, which reflects gratification of needs.

Happiness seems to be inferred from how we feel in the first place. Hence there is no reality ground for rejecting the greatest happiness principle as a moral lead.

Gian Vittorio Caprara et al (2011) did a study in parts of a longitudinal project aimed at finding the personal characteristics and the developmental pathways necessary for successful transition from childhood to adulthood. The study examined the concurrent and longitudinal impact of self-efficacy beliefs on subjective well-being in adolescence, namely positive thinking and happiness. Positive thinking is the latent dimension underlying life satisfaction, self-esteem and optimism. Happiness is the difference between positive and negative effects, as they are experienced in a variety of daily situations. The results indicate the impact of affective and interpersonal-social self-efficacy beliefs on positive thinking and happiness both concurrently and longitudinally.

Terri M. Landon et al (2006) found out that lower self-efficacy has been linked to childhood psychological problems. This study examines the relationship between self-efficacy and self-reported anxiety in children who have been referred for an assessment and possible treatment of anxiety symptoms as well as a comparison group of non-referred children. Results indicate that the two samples differed significantly on measures of emotional self-efficacy, but not in terms of self-reported anxiety or other self-efficacy domains.

Kurt A. April et al (2012) studied the impact of locus of control on the level of happiness of an individual. The basic research procedure was the survey method. Participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire. The research results conclude that a maximum level of happiness is achieved by individuals with a balanced locus of control expectancy – a mix of internal and external locus of control, known as 'bi-local expectancy'.

Tammy Pannells & Amy Claxton (2008) studied the relationship between happiness, creative ideation, and locus of control. The study was conducted on university students. The results reveal that a significant difference on the happiness with individuals with internal locus of control, creative ideation was positively correlated with happiness and internal locus of control was positively correlated with creative ideation

3. OBJECTIVES:

- To study the relationship between self-efficacy, locus of control and happiness among students in University.
- To assess the role of self-efficacy and locus of control on happiness among students in University.

Hypotheses

- There is positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy, locus of control and happiness among students in University.
- There is positive and significant contribution of self-efficacy on happiness among students in University.
- There is positive and significant contribution of locus of control on happiness among students in University.

4. METHODS:

Sample

Participants: Sample of the study consisted of 60 students; their age range was 20 to 25. There are 30 males and 30 females. They were selected by snowball sampling technique from Annamalai University.

Tools

4.1. General Self Efficacy Scale

The General Self Efficacy Scale was developed by Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). This scale is a self-report measure of self-efficacy. The General Self-Efficacy Scale is correlated to emotion, optimism, and work satisfaction. Negative coefficients were found for depression, stress, health complaints, burnout, and anxiety.

Scoring:

Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true	
All questions	1	2	3	4

4.2. Rotter's Locus of Control Scale (Indian Adaptation)

The scale is self-administered and can be completed in 15 minutes. It has been used with adolescents and older subjects, and most frequently with college students. No upper or lower age limits have been established. The test consists of 23 items, plus six filler items (item no. 1, 8, 14, 19, 24, 27), sampled widely from different life situations. Each item would provide an adequate sampling of situations in which internal-external attitudes might be expected to affect behaviour. This is a forced-choice instrument, which consists of 29 pairs of statements, 23 of which are scored. One point is given for each statement selected. Scores can range from zero (most-internal) to 23 (most-external). Middle score is treated as median value.

4.3. Happiness Scale

The Happiness Scale was developed by Pavlov, E. D., Kathleen, Lutz McFadden in 2003, it consists of 30 items, each item has to be responded in 0-5 rank such as (0)

Does not Apply, (1) rarely, (2) occasionally, (3) some time, (4) frequently, (5) always. Each item has to be scored on the basis of rank assigned range of scores is 0-150. The higher scores, higher the happiness and vice versa.

Procedure The students were approached and asked to complete the questionnaires of general self-efficacy, locus of control and happiness. All the respondents were also told that their anonymity will be preserved and their responses will be confidential. After that questionnaires were collected from the respondents and scored manually.

Results

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlations coefficients among independent variables with dependent variable (n = 60)

Variable	M (SD)	Happiness
Self-efficacy	28.07 (7.11)	.805**
Locus of Control	8.20 (4.73)	-.481**
Happiness	119.83 (18.94)	

** p<0.001

As shown in Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of self-efficacy, locus of control and happiness were 28.07 (SD = 7.11), 8.20 (SD = 4.73) and 119.83 (SD = 18.94) respectively. The table shows the correlation coefficients of self-efficacy and locus of control with happiness. All correlations were positively and negatively statistically significant (all ps<.001).

Table 2 Effects of Self-efficacy and Locus of Control on Happiness

Variable	MR	RS	F P	B	t	P
Intercept	.807	.651	53.202 p<.001	64.646	7.129	0.000*
Self-efficacy				2.046	8.280	0.000*
Locus of Control				-.271	-.731	0.468

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

A multiple regression was run to predict happiness from self-efficacy and locus of control. The results showed that the prediction model was fitted and the variables statistically, significantly predicted happiness, F= 53.202,

$p < 0.01$, $R^2 = .651$. Furthermore, the unstandardized coefficients (B s) showed that self-efficacy and locus of control significantly predicted happiness. However locus of control failed to predict happiness significantly. Also, the general form of the equation to predict happiness from self-efficacy and locus of control is: predicted happiness = $64.646 + (2.046 \times \text{self-efficacy}) + (-0.271 \times \text{locus of control})$.

5. DISCUSSION:

This study aimed to predict happiness in terms of self-efficacy and locus of control. As expected, the results of correlation analysis showed that self-efficacy and locus of control were positively correlated with happiness. As expected, the results of correlation analysis showed that all of criterion variables were positively correlated with happiness. Self-efficacy was positively correlated with happiness. Thus a person with higher level of self-efficacy will have higher levels of happiness. There was also a significant and negative correlation between locus of control and happiness. However it failed to predict happiness significantly. Thus a person with high internal locus of control will have more happiness than a person with high external locus of control. In other words, people who have belief on their own rather than on external world will have more happiness.

6. CONCLUSION:

Consequently, it is concluded that self-efficacy and locus of control are positively and significantly correlated with happiness. It is also concluded that self-efficacy and locus of control are having significant variance on happiness of students. It means that the people having greater level of self-efficacy most probably experience better happiness and vice versa. Because, people who have high level of self-efficacy expected to tackle bad circumstances more conveniently as compare to low level of self-efficacy. So that it may inferred that people are having high self-efficacy and internal locus of control may also have excellent level of happiness.

Suggestion The findings of study show a glimpse of the impact of student's self-efficacy and locus of control on happiness. However, more researches are needed to study the moderating factors of happiness among different professions, culture as well as age groups. The findings of students could be compared with those found in other area of the world to decode similarities and differences.

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Conflict of Interests: The author declared no conflict of interests.

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