



## Research Paper

# Locus of Control among College Students

\*Ramya S., & \*\*Prof. (Dr.) T.V.Thulasidharan

\*Research Scholar School Of Pedagogical Science Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam

\*\*Faculty Of Education, School Of Pedagogical Science, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam

Corresponding author: Ramya S.

**ABSTRACT** :The study focuses on the locus of control among college students and the extent to which the various dimensions of locus of control, namely Internal Control, External Control, and Powerful Others Control differ with regard to different demographic variables such as Gender and Course of study ( Under graduates, post graduates). The age of college students is the age of developing their personality and is a vital context for studying personality. 120 college students from Kottayam District were selected by convenient sampling method. The tools used for the study consists of a Personal Data Sheet and Locus of Control Scale constructed and standardised by the investigators. Descriptive statistics and Inferential statistics were used to analyse the data. The study reveals that there exists difference in the Powerful Others Control dimension of the locus of control scale among male and female college students and under graduate and post graduate college students. The results could not find significant difference in the Internal Control and External Control dimensions of locus of control scale among male and female college students and under graduate and post graduate college students.

**Keywords:** Locus of Control, Dimensions of locus of control

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The term ‘Locus of Control’ was first coined by Julian B. Rotter. According to Rotter, “Locus of control refers to a personality dimension that helps explain one’s behaviour. Locus of control is defined as a person’s tendency to see events as being controlled internally or externally” (Rotter, 1966). People who perceive that outcomes of their work are determined by external forces like luck, chance, and fate have an external locus of control orientation. People with internal locus of control believe that they can influence the outcomes of their work with their own efforts, skills, and characteristics. (Schultz, & Schultz, 2011). The degree to which you believe that other people control events in your life is Powerful Others Control. (Levenson, 1981).

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is vital because it can provide an idea about the personality traits of youth. It can also help to improve their existing traits and develop new ones to help the youngsters have more control in an environment where they usually feel out of control. Our locus of control describes how much responsibility we take for the outcomes in our life. Someone with an internal locus of control will be prone to take credit for their successes, as well as to take the blame when something goes wrong. A person with an ‘external’ locus of control will be more likely to blame their current situation on outside factors – the circumstances, other people or luck. The influence of powerful others (such as doctors, the police, or government officials) is a belief that the world is too complex for one to predict or successfully control its outcomes. One can learn to predict their behaviour and possibly change some of their behavioural faults. It also helps in self evaluation.

## III. DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS

### Locus of control

Locus of control is a general term used to refer to the perceived source of control over one’s behaviour. It is an individual’s perception about the underlying main causes of events in his or her life (Rotter, 1966).

In the present study locus of control means the total score obtained by college students in the different dimensions of locus of control scale.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To study the extend of Locus of Control among college students based on the demographic variable Course of Study with respect to different dimensions, Internal Control, External Control, and Powerful Others Control.
2. To study the extend of Locus of Control among college students based on the demographic variable Gender with respect to different dimensions, Internal control, External control, and Powerful Others Control.

**Hypotheses of the study**

1. There will be no significant difference in the dimension of locus of control among college students based on the Course of Study.
2. There will be no significant difference in the dimension of locus of control among college students based on the Gender.

**Sample of the study**

The present study consists of students studying in colleges of Kottayam district affiliated to the Mahatma Gandhi University. The sample of the study consists of B.A., B.Sc., B. Lis., B. com., M.A., M.Sc., M. Lis., M. Com. Students with the age group of 18-23 years.

**Variables used in the study**

The variables used in the present study are Locus of control , its dimensions including, Internal locus of control, External locus of control, and Powerful others control and the demographic variables including , the Course of Study and Gender.

**Methodology**

The study attempts to understand the dimensions of locus of control among college students based on demographic variables including gender and course of study. The methodology adopted in the study is Normative survey method. By keeping in mind the various objectives of the study the investigator decided to use the following tools for the present study ,Personal Data Sheet, Locus of Control Scale. The locus of control scale was constructed in the Likert Scale method. The scale for measuring locus of control was prepared on the basis of three dimensions. Internal Control, External Control, and Powerful Others Control were the dimensions selected for the preparation of the present scale.The important statistical techniques used in the study are the significance of difference between means and unpaired sample t- test.

**IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA**

**Table 1**Test of significance of difference between mean in the internal locus of control based on Course of study

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t Value
U.G.	60	73.15	11.20	0.11
P.G.	60	72.90	12.23	

Table 1 reveals that the obtained t value of significance of difference between mean is 0.11 which is lesser than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. So the inference is that there will be no significant difference on locus of control among college students in the dimension internal control based on the demographic variable Course of Study.

**Table 2**Test of significance of difference between mean in the External Locus of Control based on Course of study

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t Value
U.G.	60	72.26	11.41	0.72
P.G.	60	73.80	11.99	

Table 2 reveals that the obtained t value of significance of difference between mean is 0.72 which is lesser than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. So the inference is that there will be no significant difference on locus of control among college students in the dimension external control based on the demographic variable Course of Study.

**Table 3** Test of significance of difference between mean in the Powerful others control based on Course of study

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t Value
U.G.60		19.82	5.27	5.93
P.G.60		26.04	6.18	

Table 1 reveals that the obtained t value of significance of difference between mean is 5.93 which is greater than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. So the inference is that there will be significant difference on locus of control among college students in the dimension powerful others control based on the demographic variable Course of Study. The hypothesis 1 is accepted.

**Table 4** Test of significance of difference between mean in the Internal Locus of Control based on Gender

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t Value
Male	50	9.62	2.55	1.40
Female	50	10.35	2.63	

Table 4 reveals that the obtained t value of significance of difference between mean is 1.40 which is less than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. So the inference is that there will be no significant difference on locus of control among college students in the dimension internal locus of control based on the demographic variable gender.

**Table 5** Test of significance of difference between mean in the External Locus of Control based on Gender

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t Value
Male	50	20.61	5.34	0.43
Female	50	20.14	5.55	

Table 5 reveals that the obtained t value of significance of difference between mean is 0.43 which is less than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. So the inference is that there will be no significant difference on locus of control among college students in the dimension external locus of control based on the demographic variable gender.

**Table 6** Test of significance of difference between mean in the Powerful Others Control based on Gender

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	t Value
Male	50	20.03	5.26	4.7
Female	50	25.42	6.13	

Table 6 reveals that the obtained t value of significance of difference between mean is 4.7 which is greater than the set value at 0.05 level of significance. So the inference is that there will be significant difference on locus of control among college students in the dimension powerful others control based on the demographic variable gender.

## V. FINDINGS

1. Male and female college students do not differ in their locus of control based on the dimensions :Internal, External.
2. Under graduate and Post graduate students do not differ in their locus of control based on the dimensions :Internal, External.
3. Male and female college students do differ in their locus of control based on the dimension, Powerful others Control.
4. Under graduate and Post graduate students do differ in their locus of control based on the dimension, Powerful Others Control.

The research of locus of control among college students concludes a statistically significant difference on the locus of control among male and female college students, and course of study based on the dimension powerful others control. There existed no significant difference on the locus of control among male and female college students, and course of study based on the dimensions of internal and external locus of control. The investigators believe that the following reasons would be responsible for such an observation : Stress caused by assuming too much responsibility, anxiety, feeling of guilt in case of non-achievement of any goal, and high levels of self-criticism, loneliness experienced due to a lack of compassion in internals, which can lead to a lack of commitment , feeling, and belonging.

### Implications of the study

In reference to Locus of Control, the optimal level is achieved by a balanced locus of control expectancy which is a combination of Internal, External, and Powerful Others Control of the locus of control, known as Shared Responsibility. (Torun & April, 2006, Wong, & Sproule, 1984). This highlights the importance of recognising an individual's own ability to influence his/her life and the environment, while having regard for the fact that certain aspects may be uncontrollable by the individual and may be impacted by the powerful others control. (Lefcourt, 1976).

### **SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The investigator could not find any studies related to the relationship between locus of control with engineering and medical students and rural and urban college students so it is suggested to do further research on such topics.

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