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PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF ADOLESCENTS PERFECTIONISM IN RELATION TO LOCUS OF CONTROL

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Perfections may be a legacy of our evolutionary past. Hominids who were motivated for prolonged, incremental improvement (perfectionism) could create better tolls and this would provide significant survival advantages.

Perfectionism has been described as the tendency of individuals to set unrealistically high standards and them critically evaluate one's ability to achieve those standards (Frost, marten, Lahart, and Rosenblatt 1990). Although the concept of perfectionism has been investigated for more than four decades, it was the concurrent efforts of separate research teams in the 1990s that have led to the multidimensional perfectionism measures commonly utilized today. Hewitt and Flett (1991) developed and instrument (HMPS; Hewitt Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale) that measured perfectionism based on three subscales: Self-Oriented perfectionism (the setting of high expectations for oneself and the motivation to avoid failure), Other-Oriented perfectionism (the setting of high expectations for others), and Socially Prescribed perfectionism (the need to attain perceived high expectations of significant others). Independent research by Frost et al. (1990) led to the development of the Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS). The MPS measures perfectionism in sic dimensions: Concern over Mistakes (CM), Doubts about Actions (D), Personal Standards (PS), Parental Expectations (PE), Parental Criticism (PC), and Organization (O). Both the MPS and the HMPS have been used extensively in the literature (Frost, Heimburg, Holt, Mattia, and Neubauer, 1993; Frost, Trepanier, Brown, Heimburg, Juster, Leung, and Makris, 1997; Cox, Enns, and Clara, 2002).

Much of the research involving perfectionism concerns the differentiation of positive and negative aspects of the trait. Hamachek (1978) indentified individuals that set high standards and allow little leeway for mistakes as neurotic perfectionists, while those that set high standards and allow themselves some degree of latitude for not achieving these goals were labeled as normal perfectionists. Research by Enns and Cox (1999), Frost et al. (1993) and Hill, McIntire, and Bacharach (1997) isolated adaptive (healthy) and maladaptive (unhealthy) aspects of perfectionism, suggesting that some facets of perfectionism lead to higher performance and some lead to higher anxiety over performance. Frost et al. (1993) identified separate adaptive subscales

in the HMPS and the MPS, specifically lebeling subscales Personal Standards and Organization from the MPS as a "positive striving" characteristic of perfectionism. In the original research, Frost et al. (1990) also found that personal Standards and Organization were negatively correlated with the frequency of procrastination, ascribing this to the possible planning of work strategies. Flett, Blankstein, Hewitt, and Koledin (1992) and Flett, Hewitt, and Martin (1995) determined that certain aspects of perfectionism can lead to the setting of unattainable goals and procrastination. The isolation of the impact of certain aspects of perfectionism was suggested by Frost et al. (1990), who noted that in order to understand perfectionism, it is necessary to examine its dimensions separately. The individual aspects of perfectionism as measured by the MPS have been validated by Frost et al. (1990) and Frost et. al (1997).

Locus of control is a concept in psychology that originally distinguished between two types of people - internals, who attribute events to their own control, and externals, who attribute events in their life to external circumstances. For example, college students with a strong internal locus of control may believe that their grades were achieved through their own abilities and efforts, whereas those with a strong external locus of control may believe that their grades are the result of good or bad luck, and are hence less likely to work hard for high grades. (It should not be thought however, that internality is linked exclusively with attribution to effort and externality with attribution to luck, as Weiner's work (see below) makes clear. This has obvious implications for differences between internals and externals in terms of their achievement motivation, suggesting that internal locus is linked with higher levels of N-ach. Due to their locating control outside themselves, externals tend to feel they have less control over their fate. People with an external locus of control tend to be more stressed and prone to clinical depression (Benassi, Sweeney & Dafour, 1988 ; cited in Maltby, Day & Macaskill, 2007).

Although popularly associated with Julian Rotter after his publication in Psychological Monographs where he outlined his now classic "locus of control" scale (1966), work on locus of control actually predates Rotter's paper, as Lefcourt's (1966) review of the same year clarifies. Its roots can be found in the work on typical and atypical expectancy shifts carried out by psychologists.

The study used a one - way ANOVA in this present research. The effects of independent variables perfectionism (High / Low), Gender (Male / Female) were observed for mental health and locus of control.

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It is proposed to examine the male and female adolescents perfectionism in relation to locus of control and their mental health viz. Egocentrism, Alienation, Expression , Emotional instability and Social Non- conformity .

Objectives :

The main objectives of the study have been decided as follows :

(i) To examine the effects of perfectionism (high and low perfectionism group) on the basis of control scores .

(ii) To examine the effects of perfectionism (high and low perfectionism group) on the mental health of subjects .

(iii) To examine the locus of control (External and Internal effects on perfectionism scores presented .

Hypotheses :

Keeping in view the theoretical principles involved in the research the following Hypotheses are formulated and intended to be tested .

(a) High and low perfectionism scorer would significantly differ in locus of control.

(b) High and low perfectionism scorer would significantly differ in mental health.

(c) Male and female adolescent subjects would differ on perfectionism score .

(d) Internal and external locus of control of male adolescent subjects would differ on perfectionism scale .

(e) Internal and external locus of control of female adolescent subjects would differ on perfectionism scale .

SAMPLE

The sample of the present study consists of five hundred college students belonging to Darbhanga, Maduhbai, Samastipur and Begusarai districts of Darbhanga, Bihar between ages 18-22, belonging to male (N = 250) and female (N = 250) students of rural and urban background.

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Table-1

The background Characteristics of the sample is reported in Table 1.

Distribution of the sample : Characteristics

Characteristics	Rural Students	Urban Students	Overall
Sample Size	250 (125 Male / 125 Female)	250 (125 Male / 125 Female)	500
Age Mean	20.56	21.12	20.84

For studying the effects of the independent variable of perfectionism, the sample was divided into high perfectionism (HP) and low perfectionism (LP) category on the basis of scores of the perfectionism scale.

Some scholars have done good work regarding the measurement of LOC. The LOC measuring instrument helps us decide whether the person concerned feels himself as in charge of his life and exerts influence on others and the environment or he is ruled by luck and outer world, i.e., whether he is "internal" or external. Rotter (1966) and Nowicki and Strickland (1973) have developed scales to measure the above personality attribute. The present work is based on Nowickj and Strickland (1973).

The LOC scale developed by Nowicki and Strickland (1973) consists of 40 items with 'yes' and 'No' response options. It is a self - report questionnaire and, as reported by the authors, possesses good psychometric properties.

The need of preparing a Hindi version of the Nowicki and Strickland's scale on LOC was felt due to two reasons, first - the context of preparation of the original test is naturally different than ours and second - the original test is developed in English which cannot be administered on Hindi speaking persons. The process of adaptation started with preparing ten sets in Hindi of the original test by the competent scholars of psychology and the accuracy of expression and simplicity of the items being evaluated by five experts having good command over English and Hindi both. Ultimately, 40 items judged as appropriate, were selected to construct the Hindi 'version of the LOC scale.'

In order to determine the reliability of Hindi version of LOC, he scale was administered on College students, teachers and banking employees. In total 600 persons participated in this phase of testing. The scale was again administered on the same sample after a gap of 40 days to

determine test - retest reliability. However, only 500 persons could be available for the second phase of resting. The co-efficient of correlations are presented in Table 2.

Table -2

Coefficient of correlations as a index or reliability for the LOC Scale

S. No.	Method	Co-efficient of Correlations
1	Split - Half	0.86
2	Test - Retest	0.88

It is obvious from the table - 2 that the obtained co-efficient of correlation are quite high. So the Hindi Version of the scale can be used as a reliable measure to determine "internal" and "external" be of control.

The criterion validity method was used to determine the validity of the Hindi version of LOC scale. It is a describe method for the context like the present one (Guilfo 1973). The Hindi and the English version of the scale were administrated on the sample of the first phase of testing and their scores were correlated which yielded a co-efficient of correlation of 0.892. These results are clearly suggesting that the Hindi version of the Nowicki and Strickland's LOC scale is a suitable measure for Indian context also.

The LOC scale is a self - report questionnaire. It can be administered individually or in group also. The literate respondent can reply to the questions themselves and illiterate or handicapped participant's responses may he recorded by the estimator him or herself in interview form. Its administration takes about 20-30 minutes but there is no fixed time limit. However may be asked to finish the work quickly. Should be taken in full confidence and doubts if any, be clarified before starting the testing work.

Table -3

Means, SD and t - value for the main effects of Perfectionism on Locus of Control scores of male subjects.

Group	Mean	SD	t-test
HPG	**7.19**	**3.18**	**12.11**
LPG	**13.92**	**3.97**	

An inspection of table 3 indicates that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically t - value = 12.11, p <.01 for male Ss. It indicated that HP group was significantly different from

LP group in their locus of control. Inspection of mean scores in Table 4 shows that HP Ss demonstrated less locus of control scores (Mean = 7.19) than LP Ss (X = 18.37). It showed that HPG Ss attributed on internal factors in comparison to LPS Ss who attributed more on external factors.

Table -4

Means, SD and t - value for the main effects of perfectionism on Locus of control scores of Female subjects

Group	Mean	SD	t-test
HPG	8.92	4.12	10.17
LPG	12.97	3.84	

An inspection of table 4 indicates that the main effect of perfectionism was statically significant t-value = 10.17, p <.01 for female Ss. It indicated that HP group was significantly different from LP group in their locus of control scores. Inspection of mean scores in Table 5 shows that HP Ss demonstrated less locus of control scores (Mean = 8.92) than LP Ss (Mean = 12.97). It showed that HPG Ss attributed on internal factors in comparison to LPG Ss who attributed more on external factors.

Table -5

Means, SD and t - value for the main effects of perfectionism on Locus of control scores or rural subjects.

Group	Mean	SD	t-test
HPG	10.14	4.23	13.27
LPG	15.8	4.10	

An inspection of table 5 indicates that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically significant t - value = 13.27, p <.01 for rural Ss. it indicated that HP group was significantly different from LP group in their locus of control scores. Inspection of mean scores in Table 6 shows that HP Ss demonstrated less locus of control scores (Mean = 10.14) than LP Ss (Mean = 15.88). It showed that HPG Ss attributed on internal factors in comparison to LPG Ss who attributed more on external factors.

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Table- 6

Means, SD and t - value for the main effects of perfectionism on Locus of control scores of urban subjects.

Group	Mean	SD	t-test
HPG	9.97	3.20	9.18
LPG	13.55	2.94	

An inspection of table 6 indicates that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically significant t - value = 9.18, p < .01 for urban Ss. It indicated that HP group was significantly different from LP group in their locus of control scores. Inspection of mean scores in Table 7 shows that HP Ss demonstrated less locus of control scores (Mean = 9.97) than LP Ss (Mean = 13.55). It showed that HPG Ss attributed on internal factors in comparison to LPG Ss who attributed more on external factors.

Results indicated that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically significant t - value = 12.11, p <.01 for male Ss. It indicated that HP group was significantly different from LP group in their locus of control. Results indicated that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically significant t - value = 12.11, p <.01 for female Ss. It indicated that HP group was significantly different from LP group in their locus of control scores. Results indicated that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically significant t - value = 13.27, p <.01 for rural Ss. It indicated that HP group was significantly different from LP group in their locus of control scores. Results indicated that the main effect of perfectionism was statistically significant t - value = 9.18, p <.01 for ubran Ss. It indicated that Hp group was significantly different from Lp group in their locus of control scores.

In short, perfectionism can drive people to accomplishments and provide the motivation to persevere in the face discouragement and obstacles. The meticulous attention to detail necessary for scientific investigation, the commitment which pushes composers to keep working until the music realises the glorious sounds playing in the imagination, and the persistence which keeps great artists at their easels until their creation matches their conception all results from perfectionism . Locus of control is a concept in psychology that originally distinguished between two types of people - internal , who attribute events to their own control, and externals, who attribute events in their life to external circumstances.

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