

Modification and Standardization of PGI Locus of Control Scale (in English)

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Abstract

The original scale developed by Menon, Wig and Verma during 1980's and some parts of the language seemed little outdated especially on urban population. In fact the original scale made in Hindi, was pretested with illiterate male subjects belonging to lower socio economic status. Later on, norms were developed on individuals belonging to lower socio economic status as such strata of people were more frequently seen in the psychological OPD. Although the test LOC became quite popular back during 1990's and early 2000's, there was certainly a felt need to modify it to suit the present Indian conditions especially the urban populace too. Hence the test was translated, modified and standardized as will be discussed in the present article in detail.

Keywords: Locus of Control; Norms; Standardization

Introduction

Locus of control refers to the way the individuals perceive life and environment [1]. Hiers and Heckel (1977) and Anderson and Schneier [2]. As per individual's perception and social learning, this control may be internal or external. Ashbridge and Pegg (1994) found in their study that successful leaders evinced greater locus of control than the less successful leaders who had low internal locus of control. It was highlighted that the individuals with higher internal locus of control evinced more faith in their ability to achieved their desired objectives [3] and in controlling their environment [3,4]. They take ownership for their work and when a task backfires, they attribute it to inadequate preparation on their part [3]. The internal locus of control is also related to the happiness quotient of the leaders too.

On the other hand, the external locus of control is known to show positive correlation with higher levels of psychological distress [5], vulnerability to developing depression [6] and lesser responsiveness to anti-depressants (Reynaert, Janne, Vause, Zdanowicz and Lejeune, 1995).

Researches have also indicated that the cultures which foster external locus of control also have high rates of suicides (Marks, 1998). While researches have highlighted that internals are more happy in their jobs, evince less absenteeism, adapt to their work settings and are more involved in their jobs [7].

Review of Literature

The construct 'locus of control' was first developed by Julian Rotter in 1966 [7,8].

Reinforcement, experienced by an individual, acts directly to strengthen anticipation that a particular behaviour, or event, will be followed by similar reinforcement in the future [8]. This anticipation of reinforcement is regarded as expectancy. With development of this expectancy, individuals learn to discriminate behaviours and outcomes, and generalise these anticipations for the future. This generalisation of expectancies of control of reinforcements defines and formulates one's locus of control [9].

On this basis, Lefcourt [1] generated a predictive formula where he defined behavior potential (the likelihood of engaging in a particular behaviour) as a function of expectancy (the probability that a given behaviour will lead to a particular outcome) and reinforcements (outcomes of our behaviour).

A belief of individuals about controllability over what happens to them in life is a core element of their understanding of how they live in the world [10].

Locus of control is a personality construct that reflects one's belief or perception about who controls life and the environment [1]. The belief can exist in varying levels, reflecting the degree to which one perceives personal control in life and over the environment [11]. Locus of control has been described as a dimension with two opposing differentiates [12]. The dimensions reflect the extent to which individuals believe that what happens to them is within their control, or beyond it [7].

Thus Internal - External control (I - E) has been found related to a wide range of behavior/variables like entrepreneurship, anxiety, introversion/extraversion, hostility, modernity, upward influence tactics, life stress, persistence, perceptual defense, field dependence, probabilistic orientation, religiosity, alienation, self-esteem, psychological morbidity, achievement motivation, socio cultural deprivation etc. just to name a few of them [13].

This construct seems to have great relevance in Indian cultural set up. First, the "karma" theory, one of chief tenets of Hindu philosophy requires an individual to work through his life span to attain Detached Action (Internal Attitude) and at the same time it is believed that human destiny binds each individual in his specific circumstances (external attitude). Therefore, man is regarded as the channel of consciousness and coordination between inner and Total Design. This is the deepest message of Gita that has influenced the Hindu way of life for ages.

Second, India is still a developing country where the age old traditional values, though are greatly admired, yet are gradually giving way to the Western mores of life. The western culture with rigid technological advances believes in achieving mastery over nature and reshaping human destiny (internal control) whereas traditional oriental values regard man to be subjugated to nature (external control). In the present circumstances, where there is flux of social changes, the measurement of the concept of locus of control seem to arouse academic interest.

The measurement of this dimension is likely to prove useful in throwing light on as well as in predicting certain aspects of human behavior that have so far been puzzling us [13,14].

Modification of the scale

PGI locus of control has 7 items with maximum score as 14 and minimum score as 0. However, some of the items were modified and added to make the total items as 9. The final scale

- Uses simple popular conversational language which pertains to the content with which people of present day generation can relate to as compared to the original scale which was developed in 1988.
- Each item contains a suitable example from commonly shared experiences.
- Like the original scale too, the Modified scale too, the subjects are encouraged to express their opinions rather than forced to choose between the two statements.
- Also similar to the original scale, middle category in responses were also given so that the subject had the choice not to select the extreme positions if they wished to do so.

Standardization

From these efforts emerged the present PGI Locus of Control (M). The scale was standardized on 50 adults in the age range 25 to 45 years with a mean age of 32 years. The distribution of scores was found to be normal with a mean of 9.07 and SD of 3.12.

Reliability

The test retest reliability after an interval of 7 to 10 days was found to be .812 and inter score reliability was found to be .89 All these correlations were found to be statistically significant and satisfactory.

Validity

The test was shown to five experts in the field for face and content validity which was found to be quite high. No significant correlations were found with neuroticism and social desirability. This also confirms the independent status of I - E dimension.

Thus, PGI Locus of Control (M) is a quick simple, objective, reliable and valid scale to measure the internal/external (I-E) control for Indian population.

Description of the Scale

It is a short, simple, nine item scale in easy conversational language in English. The instructions are simple and explicit:

I need your suggestion on some of these issues. Please pick the first choice which comes spontaneously to you.....

The final scale is as follows

PGI- Locus Control Scale (M)

Instructions: I need your suggestion on some of these issues. Please pick the first choice which comes spontaneously to you.

1. Once a man got stuck in such a problem that he did not know what to do? Somebody told him that he knew a renowned astrologer and that he should seek advice from him by showing his birth chart, kundli or through palmistry?

What do you think - Will it benefit him to meet an astrologer?

- a) No: 2
- b) Quite a lot: 0
- c) Somewhat/little bit: 1

2. Two persons were talking about the importance of saving for children's marriage. One person said that it's important to start saving right now. The other person was of the opinion that it is useless to worry right now. He said that when the time comes, some ways and means always opens up to facilitate these events.

What do you suggest?

- a) One should wait for the event to happen and then start working on it: 0
- b) Savings should begin right from the start: 2
- c) Some savings should be done prior and some at the time of the event: 1

3. Have a look at these two statements.
- a) Having a good friend is all a matter of chance/luck: 2
 - b) This all depends on an individual's nature. If you are good, you get good friends, if not then you get bad friends.
- What do you believe in
- a) When the person is good, then: 2
 - b) If he is lucky then: 0
 - c) It all depends on one's own luck and one's own nature: 1
4. Some people say that if a person works hard he will definitely get success. But some people disagree. They feel that it's a person's duty to work hard but it's not necessary that this hard work will be translated into success because success also depends on one's luck.
- What do you think success depends on
- a) Luck: 0
 - b) Hard work: 2
 - c) A balance of luck and hard work: 1
5. Once a man lost Rs. 2000 and he did not realise how it got lost.
- What do you think?
- a) This money was not in his destiny: 0
 - b) He lost due to his carelessness: 2
 - c) His carelessness and his luck- both need to be blamed: 1
6. Some people say that one has to take care of one's health oneself if one has to have a healthy life. But some people disagree. They believe that it's all in the hands of Nature whether you are healthy or not.
- What do you say?
- a) It depends on Nature: 0
 - b) It's in the individuals control: 2
 - c) It depends on Nature as well as individual: 1
7. Having 2 or more children depends on:
- I. Destiny: 0
 - II. It depends on the person whether he wants more or less children: 2
 - III. Something depends on one's wish and something on one's luck too: 1
8. To have a successful marriage one should or
- What is your opinion to have a successful marriage?
- i. It depends on a person's willingness to adjust: 2
 - ii. It all depends on destiny: 0
 - iii. It's a blend of one's willingness to adjust and destiny: 1

9. Children these days are having this feeling that parental affection is directly proportional to marks obtained. This perspective arises due to
- a) Generation gap between parents and children: 0
 - b) Parents are too busy in their respective work: 1
 - c) It's a blend of parental willingness to find quality time from their busy schedule and diminishing the gap which will facilitate children perception of parental affection: 1

Administration

The format of this scale follows simple conversational pattern for the subjects to be made more comfortable while they are answering.

The scale takes about 5 - 7 minutes only, to administer it.

Scoring

Scoring may conveniently be done during administration or immediately after it. The scale is scored in the direction of internal attitude i.e. greater the score, higher is the belief in internal control. The other end (lower) of the dimension suggests external orientation.

Norms

The scale was primarily developed for adults, however, it can be tried on children as well as aged persons. Separate norms for these groups need to be worked out.

Conclusion

From clinical point of view too, to know about locus of control is important particularly with regard to the understanding of attitudes held by different people towards psychiatric illness and psychiatric patients, towards various treatment facilities available, the help seeking patterns of the population and in determining the likelihood of acceptance of the innovations in any areas and the intended therapeutic interventions by the mental health agencies in the community in general. Thus it is likely to help in planning community mental health services as well. In counseling and psychotherapy also, a proper and adequate understanding of the individual client's relative position on this dimension is likely to prove useful.

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