



A Study on the Relative Standing of Depression and Locus Control of College Students of Agartala.

KEYWORDS

Depression, Locus of control, College students, Gender difference.

DR. ARPITA ACHARYA

H.O.D DEPTT. OF PSYCHOLOGY M.B.B.COLLEGE, AGARTALA WEST TRIPURA 799004

ABSTRACT Present study aims to know the relative standing of depression and locus control of college students of Agartala. Five colleges from Agartala and adjacent areas were selected randomly. 100 students, 50 male and 50 female were studied through two questionnaires viz. BDI-II and Rotter's locus of control scale. Result reveals significant gender difference in depression and locus of control of college students. Female students possess more depression and have a high score in locus of control which indicates that female students possess more external locus of control than male students. Also, a significant positive correlation was found between the variables under study.

Many of the lifetime mental disorders have first onset during or very shortly before the college days (Kessler, et al., 2006). These problems may be precipitated or exacerbated by the variety of stressors in college life. These may include separation from family, the formation of new social groups, intense academic pressures and the balancing of social engagements with academic and other life responsibilities (Marano, 2002). All these factors may also result in stress that precipitates the onset or recurrence of psychiatric or mental health disorders (Blanco et al., 2008). Many studies explored the cognitive factors that have been implicated in depression, and support the notion that an internal health locus of control orientation is negatively correlated with depression (Afifi, Al Riyami, Morsi & Al Kharusil, 2006; Twenge et al., 2004) and positively correlated with life satisfaction (Rapaport, Clary, Fayyad, & Endicott, 2005). Many researches on depression, with behavioral and cognitive perspectives, have focused on the relationship between individuals' 'control beliefs and depression and claimed that there is an association between depression and locus of control (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2001). Someone with external locus of control believes that outside factors, such as chance, fate or luck, determine the outcome of events, whereas internal locus of control is explained as his or her own actions and efforts have an effect on the outcome of events (Chubb, & Fertman, 1997). Increases in external locus of control among college students may be related to the concurrent trends toward increased depression and anxiety, drug abuse, and diminished academic achievement (Twenge, Zhang & Im, 2004).

About 1 in 5 women develops depression at some point in life. Women are nearly twice as likely as men to have depression. Hormone changes during puberty may increase some girls' risk of developing depression. However, temporary mood swings related to changing hormones during puberty are normal — these changes alone don't cause depression. Locus of Control as a principle was originated by Julian Rotter in 1954. People with a high internal locus of control believe in their own ability to control themselves and influence the world around them. They see their future as being in their own hands and that their own choices lead to success or failure. People with a high external locus of control believe that control over events and what other people do is outside them, and that they personally have little or no control over such things. They may even believe that others have control over them and that

they can do nothing but obey. Depression among college students is extremely prevalent and widespread problem across the country. Previous studies reported that depression in college students is noted around the world and the prevalence seems to be increasing. The individuals in the depressed clinical group appear to be significantly more external in their locus of control than normal (Murgai Sathyavathi 1988).

In the present study, a group of College Students of Agartala City, Tripura, India, irrespective of caste and religion were brought under study to assess the relative standing of depression and locus of Control. The major objectives of the study were:

- To know whether there exists any significant difference between the male and female college students in respect of their level of depression.
- To know whether there exists any significant difference between the male and female college students in respect of their depression and locus of control.
- To study the correlation between the male and female college students in respect of their level of depression and locus of control.

METHOD

Participants

The college students are the most vulnerable groups as per the depression, and external locus of control is concerned. It is the transition period of late adolescent period and youth. In total 100 college students were interviewed through predesigned standard tools irrespective of sex, caste and religion. The sex wise distribution of participants is as follows: male =50 and female =50. College students were selected from five randomly selected colleges of Agartala and adjacent areas. From each college 10 male and 10 female students were selected randomly to participate in the study. Their age ranges from 19- 21 years.

Hypotheses:

- There exists no significant difference between the male and female college students in respect of their level of depression.
- There exists no significant difference between the male and female college students in respect of their locus of control.
- There exists a high positive correlation between the male and female college students in respect of their

level of depression and locus of control.

Instruments:

Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II):

The **Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)** is a commonly used instrument for quantifying levels of depression. The BDI-II contains 21 questions, scored from 0 to 3. Score ranges from 0-63. Depression can be categorized in four levels by the score of BDI-II, viz., minimal (0-13), mild (14-19), moderate (20-28) and severe(29-63). The BDI-II positively correlated with the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale, $r = 0.71$, had a one-week test-retest reliability of $r = 0.93$ and an internal consistency $\alpha = .91$.

The Locus of Control Test:

The Locus of Control is a 29 item questionnaire developed by Rotter (1966). It measures generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. People with an internal locus of control believe that their own actions determine the rewards that they obtain, while those with an external locus of control believe that their own behavior doesn't matter much and that rewards in life are generally outside of their control. Scores range from 0 to 23. A low score indicates an internal control while a high score indicates external control.

Procedure

The selection of interviewee has been done randomly by simple random sampling technique. They were explained about the nature of test they will have to undergo. Receiving consent from them, each student was taken to the particular place where the BDI-II and LOC questionnaires were administered. The questionnaires were filled in, in presence of the assessor so that any clarification could be done immediately. In between two questionnaires, sufficient rest pause was given to the student to overcome monotony if any.

RESULT

Table:I: Mean, SD,Std.error of Mean and t value of male and female groups in respect of their Depression

MALE1		N	Mean	S.D	Std. Error Mean	df	t
FEMALE2							
BDI	1.00	50	13.3600	4.17358	.59023	98	-5.46*
	2.00	50	17.8000	3.95382	.55915		

* $p < .01$

Table I shows the Mean, SD, std. error and t value of male and female students in respect of their Depression. It reveals that male group possess a minimal level of depression but female college students Mean score fall under the category of mild depression. T value is also significant which implies that the groups have difference in respect of their depression.

Table:II: Mean, SD, Std.error of Mean and t value of male and female groups in respect of their locus of control

MALE1	FE-MALE2	N	Mean	S.D	Std. Error Mean	df	t
locus of control	1.00	50	13.9200	3.88004	.54872	98	-7.82*
	2.00	50	19.9400	3.81410	.53939		

* $p < .01$

Table II shows the Mean, SD, std. error and t value of male and female students in respect of their locus of control. It reveals that female group has a higher Mean score than the male group's level of locus of control which implies that females are externally controlled in respect of their locus of control. t value is also significant which implies that the groups have real difference in respect of their locus of control.

Table:III: Correlation of depression and locus of control of male and female groups

Correlations		Depression	LOC
Depression	Pearson Correlation	1	.263**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.008
	N	100	100
LOC	Pearson Correlation	.263**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	
	N	100	100

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation of depression and locus of control shows that the correlation is .26. This correlation is significant at .01 level and as the relation is positive, it means that the more the person is depressed the more he or she is externally controlled in their locus of control.

DISCUSSION

The hypotheses taken for the study can be verified as below:

The first and second hypotheses were rejected because significant difference between male and female group was found out. The third hypothesis is accepted because significant positive correlation was found between the variables under study. So, the female group is more depressed and they have more external locus of control. Generally, people with a high external locus of control believe that control over events and what other people do is outside them, and that they personally have little or no control over such things. They may even believe that others have control over them and that they can do nothing but obey (Rotter, 1996). It is repeatedly found in many studies that females, tend to be more external than males on most locus of control measures (Sherman et al, 1997). Benassi and his colleagues (1988) in their meta-analysis study, found strong support for the hypothesis that greater externality is associated with greater depression. Present study corroborates with the earlier findings. So, female college students of Agartala appear to have more depression and external LOC than their male counterpart. Finding also reveals a high positive correlation among depression and external locus of control.

REFERENCE

- Affifi, M., Al Riyami, A., Morsi, M., & Al Kharusil, H. (2006). Depressive symptoms among high school adolescents in Oman. *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal* 12 (Supplement n.2), S126-S137 | Benassi, V. A., Sweeney, P. D., & Dufour, C. L. (1988). Is there a relation between locus of control orientation and depression? *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 97, 357-367. | Blanco, C., Okuda, M., Wright, C. et al. Mental health of college students and their non-college-attending peers: results from the National Epidemiologic Study on Alcohol and Related Conditions. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 2008;65:1429-1437. | Chubb, N. H., & Fertman, C. I. (1997). Adolescent self-esteem and locus of control: a longitudinal study of gender and age differences. *Adolescence*, 32, 113-130. | Kessler RC, Haro JM, Heeringa SG, Pennell BE, Ustun TB. The World Health Organization World Mental Health Survey Initiative. *Epidemiol Psychiatr Soc*. 2006;15:161-166. | Marano, H.E. (2002, May 01). Lessons from college. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from <http://www.psychologytoday.com> on 4.6.2015 | Murgai, Neena; Sathyavathi, K. Personality and depressive cognitions, *Indian Journal of Clinical Psychology*, Vol 15(1), Mar 1988, 19-23. | Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (2001). Gender differences in depression. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 10(5), 173-176 | Rapaport, M. H., Clary, C., Fayyad, R., & Endicott, J. (2005). Quality-of-life impairment in depressive and anxiety disorders. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 162, 1171-1178 | Rotter, J. B. (1966). Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement: *Psychological Monographs: General & Applied* 80(1) 1966, 1-28. | Sherman A.C, Higgs G.E & Williams, R.L. (1997) Gender differences in the locus of control construct *Psychology & Health* 12, 2, 239-248 | Twenge, J. M., Zhang, L., & Im, C. (2004). It's beyond my control: A cross-temporal meta-analysis of increasing externality in locus of control, 1960-2002. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8, 308-319. | | *Dr. Arpita Acharya, Associate Professor and H.O.D., Deptt. of Psychology, M.B.B.College, Agartala, Tripura, India. Email: arpita1108@gmail.com