



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SELF-MOTIVATIONAL ATTRIBUTES: SELF-EFFICACY, LOCUS OF CONTROL AND GOAL SETTING AMONG STUDENTS PURSUING GENERAL DEGREE AND PROFESSIONAL COURSES.

Psychology

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ABSTRACT

Self-efficacy is the belief of an individual in succeeding specific situations, events, and tasks. Locus of control means the ability of an individual to have power exerted over the events and influence those events and their outcomes. Self-efficacy and locus of control are considered to be the motivational factors for goal setting and reaching goals. Students pursuing a normal degree and the students pursuing profession courses were administered with General self-efficacy scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1979) to measure self-efficacy and 'Levenson's locus of control scale' to measure locus of control. Their previous grades and future goal grade points were also gathered to find the influence of self-efficacy and locus of control on their grades (previous grades and future goal grades). Self-efficacy was positively related to previous grade points and future goal grade points. Factors of locus of control including chance factor and external locus of control mainly contributed to their academic achievement and future goal grade points. Internal locus control does not show any contribution to academic achievement and future goal grade points in this study.

KEYWORDS

motivation, self-efficacy, the locus of control, previous grade points, and future goal grade points.

Introduction

In recent years, enrolments of students in professional courses in India are markedly very high when compared to the student's enrolment in general courses (All India Survey on Higher Education, 2011-12). Indian educated citizens are mostly considering employment as their major occupation rather than preferring any other sources due to disguised unemployment. Unemployment is a major problem in India which was shot up from 3.8% (2011-12) to 5% in 2015-16. The rate of unemployment is significantly higher for women at 8.7% when compared to men i.e., 4.3% (Indian Express, 2016). To overcome this, one has to acquire knowledge and skills by motivating themselves through continuous efforts, in face of challenges to reach the targeted goal.

During the late 70s, a number of researchers initiated their research to study self-belief in a more task-specific manner, rather than paying attention to the role of environmental influences (Zimmerman, 2000) (Ferrari & Parker, 1992). Self-efficacy was one of the most important efforts focused during that time. Self-efficacy is indicative of one's belief in succeeding specific situations, events, and tasks. Educators recognize that student's self-belief about their capabilities plays a vital role in enhancing self-motivation to succeed and to achieve high academic performance (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman, Bandura & Pons, 1992). Human motivation is a core key component to attain goals or specific expected outcomes. The concept of self-efficacy reflects both self-perceived ability and the motivational component that was proposed by the Kanfer (1987) as "intentions for effort allocations." Individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy would tend to set higher goals (Wood & Locke, 1987; Locke & Latham, 1990) and face challenges by acquiring knowledge and skills to reach them. They could easily overcome threatening situations by exercising control over them and thus self-efficacy enhances personal well-being and human accomplishment (Bandura, 1994). An individual with a strong sense of efficacy can rebound easily during hardship or failure and are able to sustain their effects at hard times.

Locus of control generally related to the personality that affects a person to the degree to which one perceives events to be in their own control is said to be having an internal locus of control. If the events are under the control of others that who exerts power on them is said to be having an external locus of control. An individual with higher internal locus of control was proposed to have greater environmental controllability and it was found to be related to higher self-efficacy. At the same time, external locus control is related to learned helplessness and passivity and is found to be associated with lower self-efficacy (Rotter, 1992).

METHODOLOGY

AIM: Objective of the study was to find out the influence of self-

efficacy and locus of control on goal setting and also their influence on their previous grade points.

The second objective was to compare the influence of self-efficacy, the locus of control on their goal setting among graduate degree female students and professional graduate students.

Participants: Participants involved in the study were 84 females in which 41 were pursuing B-tech with the mean age of 19 years and the remaining 43 were pursuing B.A with the mean age of 19.5 years.

Procedure: Students pursuing a graduate degree (B.A) and the students pursuing profession graduate course (BTECH) were administered with General self-efficacy scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1979) to measure self-efficacy and 'Levenson's locus of control scale' to measure locus of control. Their previous grades and their future goal grade points were also taken to find the influence of self-efficacy and locus of control on their grades (previous grades and future goal grades).

General self-efficacy scale consists of total 10 questions with 4-point rating scale from 'not at all true', 'hardly true', 'moderately true' and 'exactly true'.

'Levenson's locus of control' questionnaire consists of 24 question and 3 factors in which 8 questions are included under each factor. These factors include 1) External locus of control. 2) Chance and 3) Internal locus of control. This questionnaire consists of 7 point rating scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'.

Hypothesis:

1. Self-efficacy is positively related to previous grade points and future goal grade points.
2. There is a positive relationship between locus of control and goal setting.
3. Students pursuing professional graduate course will have higher levels of self-efficacy and goal setting.

Results & Discussion:

Table-I	Descriptive Statistics	B.A			BTECH		
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
AGE		40	19.43	.958	42	19.29	.708
Previous Grade Points		40	2.33	.997	42	3.79	.813
Future goal grade points		40	3.53	1.037	42	4.60	.828
self efficacy		40	27.03	5.456	42	31.64	3.695

internal locus of control	40	7.23	2.731	42	7.60	4.559
Chance	40	9.15	3.620	42	11.93	4.199
external locus of control	40	7.00	2.708	42	11.95	4.345
Valid N (listwise)	40			42		

From table 1, it can be seen that the mean age of students pursuing general graduate course is 19.53 and the professional graduate course is 19.29. Students pursuing professional courses are higher in self-efficacy scores with a mean of 27.03 (S.D=5.456) when compared to general graduate students with a mean of 31.64 (S.D=3.695). Previous grade points and future expected grades points of the students pursuing professional courses (i.e., with mean 2.33 (S.D = .997) and 3.53 (S.D =1.037) respectively) are higher than general graduate students (with a mean of 3.79 (S.D=0.813) and 4.6 (S.D=0.828) respectively).

Hence hypothesis (3) “Students pursuing professional graduate course will have a higher level of self-efficacy and goal setting” is proved.

The reason for higher scores of self-efficacy and goal setting among the students pursuing professional graduate courses might be because these students may join the professional courses with higher aspirations and goals. There is no significant mean difference between internal locus of control scores among B.A and B.Tech students (i.e., 7.23 and 7.60 respectively). The mean score of a chance factor among B.Tech students (i.e., 9.15) is higher than BA students (i.e., 11.93). The mean score of external locus of control is high among B.Tech students (i.e., 11.95) when compared to the BA students (i.e., 7.). The External locus of control score is probably higher among B.Tech students because of external pressure exerted on them, due to higher expectations from their parents and lecturers when compared to general graduate students.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to find the correlation values for self-efficacy, locus of control, previous grade points, and future goal grade points. Table-2 shows the Pearson correlation among the general self-efficacy and previous grade points.

Table-II Correlations

		PGP	NGGP	SE	ILOC	CHAN CE	ELOC
PGP	Pearson Correlation	1	.875(* *)	.450(**)	-.001	.350(* *)	.420(* *)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.990	.001	.000
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82
NGGP	Pearson Correlation	.875(* *)	1	.413(**)	.057	.317(* *)	.402(* *)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.614	.004	.000
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82
SE	Pearson Correlation	.450(* *)	.413(* *)	1	.110	.048	.286(* *)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.323	.670	.009
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82
ILOC	Pearson Correlation	-.001	.057	.110	1	-.012	.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.990	.614	.323		.913	.314
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82
CHAN CE	Pearson Correlation	.350(* *)	.317(* *)	.048	-.012	1	.333(* *)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.004	.670	.913		.002
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82
ELOC	Pearson Correlation	.420(* *)	.402(* *)	.286(**)	.113	.333(* *)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.009	.314	.002	
	N	82	82	82	82	82	82

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

PGP=previous grade point, NGGP= next goal grade point. SE= self-efficacy, ILOC= Internal locus of control and ELOC = External locus of control.

The correlation coefficient is 0.450 and the p-value for the two-tailed test is less than 0.005, from these figures we can conclude that there is a strong positive correlation between general self-efficacy and previous grade points. Similarly, there is also a strong positive correlation between self-efficacy and future goal grade points with the correlation coefficient being 0.413 and the p-value < 0.005 and significant at 0.01 level. Hence the hypothesis (1) “Self-efficacy is positively related to previous grade points and future goal grade points” is proved. This finding is also supported by Bandura’s study in 1992, where he found that the student’s self-efficacy was related to their academic achievement and grade goals.

Coming to hypothesis no. 2, there will be a positive relationship between locus of control and goal setting it can be seen that Internal locus of control is not significantly related to previous grade points and next goal grade points, in contrary to the previous studies. Chance factor is showing significant positive relationship with previous grade points and future goal grade points with r = 0.350, p-value is 0.001 (p < 0.005) and r = 0.317, p-value is 0.004 (p < 0.005) respectively and r is significant at 0.01 level. External locus of control was also found to have a strong positive correlation with previous grade points and future goal grade points at a significant level of 0.01 with r value 0.420, p-value 0.000 (p < 0.005) and 0.402, p-value 0.000 (p < 0.005) respectively. From the figures, we can indicate that chance factor and external locus of control or the external pressures exerted on them have mainly contributed to their previous grade point and future expected grade points. From the results, internal locus of control did not prove to be a reason for their previous grade marks and their future goals. Either pressure from their home or college is successful in gaining their previous scores and the goal setting for their future examinations. Chance factor also appears to be one of the reasons for their scores and goals.

Conclusion: Students pursuing profession graduate course were found to have higher scores on self-efficacy, three factors of locus of control, previous grade points and their future goal grades than compared to general graduate students because probably these students join in these courses with higher aspiration and goals. Self-efficacy is a perceived self-belief of an individual to succeed a specific situation, event or task. Self-efficacy has a significant strong positive correlation with their academic achievement and goal setting. Factors of locus of control including chance factor and external locus of control mainly contributed to their academic achievement and future goal grade points. Internal locus control does not show any contribution to academic achievement and future goal grade points in this study. Pressure from external environment such as from their parents and their lecturers is probably a major contribution to success in gaining their previous grade marks and future goal grade

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