

Relationship between Locus of Control and Role Efficacy: A Comparison of Manufacturing and IT Organizations

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Abstract- A locus of control orientation is a belief about whether the outcomes of our actions are contingent on what we do (internal control orientation) or on events outside our personal control (external control orientation). Julian B. Rotter (1975) defined "Locus of Control as a theory used in personality psychology that refers to causation as perceived by individuals in response to personal outcomes or other events". Locus of control is a personality trait related to a person's belief on the controlling event that causes an outcome. One may tend to believe that outcomes are beyond his/her control –external locus of control or within his/her control –internal locus of control (Alias, Akasah, & Kesot). According to Julian B. Rotter (1975) "locus of control refers to people's very general, cross-situational beliefs about what determines whether or not they get reinforced in life". People can be classified along a continuum from very internal to very external. Role efficacy refers to the ability to produce a desired result or effect. Role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization. Role efficacy can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness (Pareek, 2005). The present study attempts to find out the relationship between the locus of control and Role efficacy dimensions in selected manufacturing and IT organizations.

Index Terms- Locus of control, Role efficacy, Role making, Role centring, Role Linking

INTRODUCTION

People with a strong internal locus of control believe that the responsibility for whether or not they get reinforced ultimately lies with themselves. Internals believe that success or failure is due to their own efforts. In contrast, externals believe that the reinforcements in life are controlled by luck, chance, or powerful others. Therefore, they see little impact of their own efforts on the amount of reinforcement they receive. (Rotter, 1975)

In simplistic terms, a more internal locus of control is generally seen desirable. Having an internal locus of control can also be referred to as "self-agency", "personal control", "self-determination", etc. Research has found following trends:

- Males tend to be more internal than females
- As people get older they tend to become more internal
- People higher up in organizational structures tend to be more internal

Those with an internal locus of control generally report being happier, behave in a more independent fashion, enjoy a higher degree of occupational success, and are physically healthier (Lefcourt, 1982). Those with an internal locus are also able to wait longer to obtain gratification and cope more effectively with marital life as given by Miller, et al in 1986. Internals are less prone to depression, learned helplessness, anxiety than externals.

Earlier the external locus of control had no organization but (Levenson, 1972) challenged this clubbing of luck, chance and/or fate and powerful others into external locus of control. He went on to suggest two different aspects under externality, namely, perceived influence of luck (EL) and perceived influence of powerful others (EO). He basically used the concept of locus of control to develop locus of control in organizations inventory known as LOCO Inventory.

ROLE EFFICACY

Efficacy refers to the ability to produce a desired result or effect. Role efficacy is the potential effectiveness of an individual occupying a particular role in an organization. Role efficacy can be seen as the psychological factor underlying role effectiveness (Pareek, 2005). Bray (1998) gave that role efficacy refers to a specific form of self-efficacy relating to a

team member's confidence in his or her capabilities to carry out interdependent role functions. (Bray S. , 1998)

Role efficacy has three subsystems Role Making, Role Centering and Role Linking. An employee can make his/her role meaningful by concentrating on the following three dimensions:

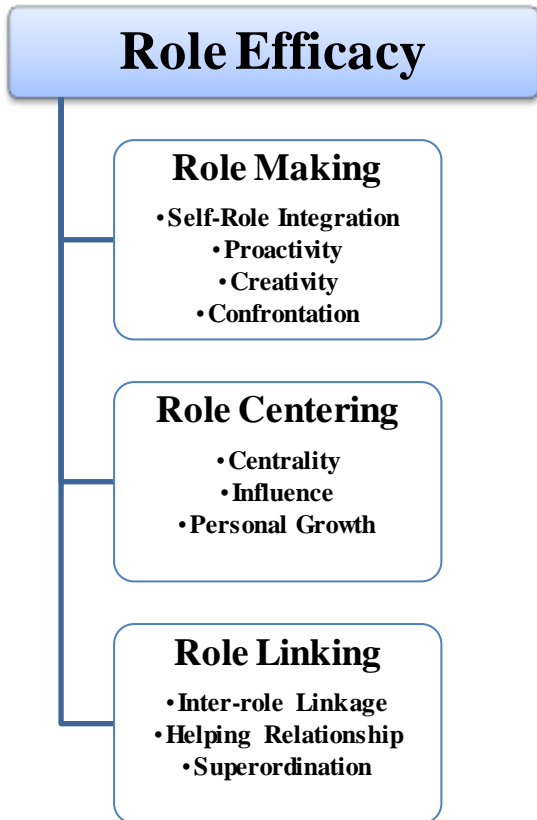


Figure 1. Dimensions of Role Efficacy

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A person may tend to believe that outcomes are beyond his/her control –external locus of control or within his/her control –internal locus of control (Alias, Akasah, & Kesot). People with internal locus of control often report higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance, and are more likely to assume managerial positions, and to prefer participative management styles. Internals and externals have similar positive reactions to being promoted, which includes high job satisfaction, job involvement, and organizational commitment. However internals remain happy long after the promotion, whereas externals' joy over promotion is short-lived. Research has found that males tend to be

more internal than females. And as people get older they tend to become more internal. Also people higher up in organizational structures tend to be more internal. Those with an internal locus of control generally report being happier, behave in a more independent fashion, enjoy a higher degree of occupational success, and are physically healthier (Lefcourt, 1982) (Ng & K.L. Sorensen, 2006).

In one of the study by (Singh S. , 2006) found role efficacy to be associated positively with emotional intelligence and internal locus of control, but negatively with external locus of control. A research conducted on university students aimed at exploring personality characteristics associated with individual differences in feeling sorry for oneself. With respect to control beliefs, the individuals high in self-pity showed externality beliefs, seeing themselves as controlled by both chance and powerful others. (Stober, 2003)

The personality differences can serve as difference in the source of managerial effectiveness. The managers who are internally controlled perform more effectively than the externally controlled managers because they feel more responsible and exercise more control over the situations. Information regarding the locus of control can be used by recruiters for ensuring proper person-job fit. (Nair & Yuvraaj, 2000)

Self belief of individual leads to high centrality of role and the individual is motivated to work hard. The performance in these roles is affected by individual's belief and the organization in which he/she is working. If he/she believes that the organizational factors are beyond his control then the effectiveness would get affected. Also the role efficacy dimensions negatively affect helplessness (Pethe & Chaudhari, 2000).

The overall perception of the job dimensions (like skill variety, task identity, feedback, autonomy) vary according to the locus of control of an individual. Employees having external locus of control perceive their jobs low in motivating potential. Moreover it was indicated that the psychological reactions of the employees to their jobs is affected by the social cues rather than their own evaluation of the task environment. (Nair S. , 1997)

Singh & Nath (1991) in the study of banking personnel explored the effects of organizational rote stress, organizational climate and locus of control on job involvement The results show that subjects with

high organizational role stress (overall as well as dimension wise) were less involved in comparison to the subjects of low organizational stress (overall and dimension wise) group.

Also there exists a high positive correlation between internal locus of control and role efficacy. Also there is a high correlation between role efficacy and managerial behaviour (measured in terms of approach (functional) or avoidance (dysfunctional) behaviour on six motivations (achievement, influence, extension, control, affiliation and dependency). (Sen, 1982).

Brownell (1981) in his study examined the role of the personality variable, locus of control, as a moderator of the relationship between budgetary participation and managerial performance. The results of a laboratory study employing two separate subject groups - undergraduate accounting students and managers from a large manufacturing company - show a statistically significant interaction between participation and locus of control affecting performance.

Studies have shown that the components like creativity, personal growth and helping relationships are strong predictors of group functioning while the components like helping relationships, creativity, personal growth, confrontation and pro-activity are strong predictors of job satisfaction. The study also depicted pro-activity, confrontation, creativity, integration, helping relationships are strong predictors of goal integration. Overall it was concluded that training in Role Efficacy should be given in order to achieve organizational and personal goals. (Kaur & Kazi, 2012).

(Waddar & Aminabhavi, 2012) in another study observed that emotional labour has been seen as major tool that can be used to improve the productivity of workers and researchers. The role based performance expectation includes high emotional labour. In other words, in order to meet the role based performance expectations, naturally the employees undergo some unique experiences and display the emotions which were conducive for the organizations, there by suppress their own feelings.

Women entrepreneurs use Role Stress to increase their Role Efficacy and Role Efficacy leads to optimization of Role Stress. Entrepreneurs with high role efficacy perceive role stress as an opportunity and not a threat. Role Efficacy can be a vehicle for

entrepreneurs to become effective in their entrepreneurial role and can help counter stress in a proactive manner (Karve & Nair, 2011).

Sayeed (2010) in his study of work attitude, role efficacy and stress analysed the work environment, the attitudes, beliefs and the opinions of the 52 ATCs from a total of 130 working at the Mumbai Airport. The role efficacy of ATCs (Air Traffic Controllers), evaluating the perceptions of their roles across the 10 dimensions showed greater influence in predicting or enhancing work attitude. The various role efficacy dimensions (role making, role centering and role linking) showed significant relationships and impact on attitude towards work, working conditions, co-workers, supervisors, and management. The *role making* and *role centering* (global dimensions) as compared with Role Linking were found to be strongly influencing positive work attitude of ATCs. The clarity of the role that is to be performed by the employee acts as a catalyst for the relationship of Role Efficacy and role performance. Individuals having more role clarity have higher role efficacy and further are more effective in performing that role. (Bray & Brawley, 2002). Bray (2002) examined role ambiguity, role efficacy, and role performance of male secondary school rugby players with sample size of 271. A multidimensional measure was used to assess 4 manifestations of role ambiguity in offensive and defensive contexts. Multiple role ambiguity dimensions explained variance in efficacy and performance. They observed negative relationships between role ambiguity and role performance were mediated by competence (role efficacy) beliefs.

The individuals with high role efficacy have less role stress. But it was also concluded that some level of stress is necessary for motivation, involvement and commitment to the job (Pandey, 1995). It has been found that people with high role efficacy seem to experience less role stress, anxiety and work related tension (Sen, 1982); rely on their own strengths to cope with problems that come their way (Sen, 1982) (Surti, 1983); persist in solving problems mostly by themselves and sometimes by taking the help of other people (Sen, 1982) (Surti, 1983) (Shingala, 1985)

NEED AND SCOPE OF STUDY

Review of literature has highlighted the impact and influence of locus of control and role efficacy on the

attitudes of people as well as work environment. Also individuals having internal locus of control take more responsibility of their work and perceive high psychological ownership of organization. Organizations that have individuals with internal locus of control are more effective as compared to other organizations. Effectiveness of an individual in an organization depends on how well the person and his role are integrated in an organization. The need for this research arises to understand the effect of personality trait on how the individual performs his role effectively. (Surti, 1983). Knowing about locus of control can prove valuable to the managers. Because internals believe they control what happens to them, they will want to exercise control in their work environment. While the externals prefer more structured work setting and don't prefer participative decision making. (Nelson, Quick, & Khandelwal, 2012) Also the information about locus of control helps the recruiters in making best decisions to ensure proper person-job fit. People with internal locus of control often report higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance, and are more likely to assume managerial positions, and to prefer participative management styles. (Nelson, Quick, & Khandelwal, 2012) The relationship between locus of control and role efficacy was investigated a long time ago by Sen (1982) , The present study proposes to study the relationship between the locus of control and the role efficacy for the manufacturing and IT firms. (Sen, 1982). The study was undertaken to study the role efficacy and locus of control for two different industries - manufacturing and information technology. The scope of the study is limited to the employees of 4 organizations in the tri-city:

- SML ISUZU
- M & M Swaraj
- Infosys
- TCS

Manufacturing organizations included were M & M Swaraj one of the India's largest manufacturer of tractors and SML ISUZU manufacturing buses. IT organizations included Infosys Ltd. and TATA consultancy services.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- a) To study the locus of control of the employees of manufacturing and IT industry.
- b) To study the role efficacy of the employees of manufacturing and IT industry.
- c) To find out the relationship between the 3 dimensions of role efficacy and the locus of control.
- d) To study the differences in the role efficacy and locus of control based on age and gender.

Conceptual Model: Constructs or dimensions to determine locus of control of the individual consists of internal, external (others) and external (chance/luck). The role efficacy of the employees will be determined by 3 dimensions i.e. role making, role centering and role linking of the individual.

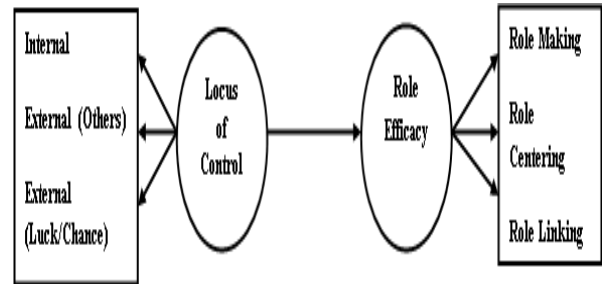


Figure 2: Conceptual Model

DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

- The independent variable was the locus of control which was measured by LOCO inventory developed by Levenson. the dimensions measured were internality, externality(others) and externality(luck/chance).
- The dependent variable was the role efficacy measured by the Role Efficacy Scale. The constructs to measure this variable were role making, role centering and role linking.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Descriptive research was conducted where the impact of locus of control on the role efficacy of an employee was observed. A descriptive study is one which is concerned with who, what, when, where and how much of the problem (Cooper, Schindler, & Sharma, 2012). Locus of control is a very important personality trait of an individual which determines the effectiveness of the individual as well as the

organization. The study was conducted to find out how the personality trait of an individual is related to how an individual performs his/her role. Snowball sampling has been used for data collection for this study. The data was collected from the references and the same process was continued further. Sample taken was the employees of 4 organizations from the tri city. Sample size taken is 120.

Data collection was done through online questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of 3 parts first part included the LOCO inventory, the second part included the role efficacy scale and the third part included the respondent details. The questionnaires used were standard instruments. Following instruments are used for data collections.

- *For locus of control:* Locus of control in organization (LOCO) inventory was used to collect responses for the locus of control. It had 30 items based on the following variables: (Levenson, 1972).
- *For role efficacy:* Role efficacy scale was used to measure the role efficacy of the employees. Role Efficacy Scale is a structured instrument consisting of 20 triads of statement in each triad which describes his role most accurately. (Pareek 2005)

DATA ANALYSIS

Data collected using the structured questionnaire was entered into SPSS data file and the analysis of the data was then done using SPSS. In this chapter we will see the results of the various tests that were applied on the data to conduct the hypothesis testing on the basis of which the hypothesis were accepted and rejected.

RELIABILITY OF SCALE

In the next step the reliability of the scale was tested, Reliability refers to the consistency of a measure. The reliability check was done for the scale used in the study. The scale taken for Role efficacy was Role Efficacy Scale and for Locus of control, it was LOCO inventory. The Cronbach's Alpha value for role efficacy was 0.760, and value for locus of control was 0.815. As indicated by the Nunally 1985, the value Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7 states that the scale is acceptable and reliable. Therefore from this section we concluded that the scale which we used for our study is reliable enough to collect the data.

Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Role Efficacy	.760
Locus of Control	.815

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

IMPORTANT FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Relationship between role efficacy and locus of control

After the analysis of responses and using the spearman' correlation it was clearly indicated that there was a relationship between role efficacy and the locus of control. Also it was found that internality was positively related with the role efficacy with $r=0.498$ but it externality (others) and externality(chance) were found to have negative correlation with role efficacy ($r = -0.278$ and -0.183 resp.) also the regression analysis showed that internal locus of control had 29.7% effect on the role efficacy (R-square value was .297). Hence the employees with the internal locus of control would likely have greater role efficacy.

			m_TRE	m_INT_LO	m_EXT_Chance_L	m_EXT_Others_L
Spearman's rho		Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.498**	-.278**	-.183*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.002	.045
		N	120	120	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Relationship between dimensions of role efficacy and internal locus of control

The 3rd dimension of role efficacy showed a positive correlation with the internal locus of control. Role making and role centering showed significant positive correlation with internal locus of control ($r = 0.433$ and $r = 0.552$). This showed that characteristics of self-role integration, proactivity, creativity and confrontation are enhanced by the internal locus of control.

			m_INT_LO	m_RC	m_RM
Spearman's rho	m_INT_LO C	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.552**	.433**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	120	120	120

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

Also for making the role central to the organization internal locus of control is desirable. Role linking also showed a positive correlation with internal locus of control ($r = 0.0252$) which indicated that an internal(person with internal locus of control) would more effectively link his role with the other employees.

Age and gender also affect the locus of control

It was found from the Kruskal-Wallis analysis for the effect of **age** on internal locus of control and desirable results were found. As the individuals grow older they tend to become more internal in their personality attributing their actions to their own abilities. This may be due to the experience that they get and the understanding that they develop in the organization. Age group of >34 years showed a great impact on the internal locus of control with a mean rank of 74.82. the age group of <26 years (58.45) showed slightly greater mean rank than the employees of age between 26 and 34(57.33). It may be due to the fact that <26 year employees have just come into the organization and tend to be internally motivated to work due to which they have internal locus of control. With time as they work in the organization and get to know about the culture and other dynamics of the organization they tend to become externally oriented.

Table 4 : Ranks on the basis of gender

	Gender:	N	Mean Rank
m_INT_LOC	Male	99	57.28
	Female	21	75.69
	Total	120	
m_EXT_Chance_LOC	Male	99	61.17
	Female	21	57.36
	Total	120	
m_EXT_Others_LOC	Male	99	59.90
	Female	21	63.33
	Total	120	

Table 5 : Test Statistics^{ab} on the basis of gender

	m_INT_LOC
Chi-Square	4.886
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.027

a. Kruskal Wallis Test b. Grouping Variable: Gender.

The hypothesis H7 that stated that males have greater internal locus of control was not accepted as the mean rank for the females (75.69) was higher than that of the males(57.28). As the proportion of females were very less as we hardly have females in the manufacturing firms the result could not be generalized as a whole.

Table 6 : Ranks on the basis of age

	Age:	N	Mean Rank
m_INT_LOC	1.0	74	58.45
	2.0	29	57.33
	3.0	17	74.82
	Total	120	
m_EXT_Chance_LOC	1.0	74	62.34
	2.0	29	71.76
	3.0	17	33.26
	Total	120	
m_EXT_Others_LOC	1.0	74	66.16
	2.0	29	58.07
	3.0	17	40.00
	Total	120	

Table 7 : Test Statistics^{ab} on the basis of age

	m_INT_LOC	m_EXT_Chance_LOC	m_EXT_Others_LOC
Chi-Square	3.402	13.726	8.057
df	2	2	2
Asymp. Sig.	.003	.001	.018

a. Kruskal Wallis Test
b. Grouping Variable: Age:

Analysis of Manufacturing and IT industry

A high score in Role Efficacy Index (>70) for M & M Swaraj is basically due to its commitment to its vision and values of continuous improvement which led to many interventions like Kaizen culture, quality circles, TQM practises, Total Productive Management(TPM) activities. it has helped its employees engage in improvement activities, promote team culture that has increased the performance of the employees in their own role as well as the overall organizational performance. SML ISUZU also has implemented the similar kind of activities with its employees but to some extent have been unable to obtain perfection and total employee engagement as compared to Swaraj which had 99.2% total employee involvement in the interventions carried out.

Table 8: Average Scores on RES., REI and LOCO Inventory

	Internality	External (Others)	External (Chance)	Role Efficacy (RES)	Role Efficacy Index (REI) ^a
TCS	29.28	23.97	20.20	22.12	70.19
InfosysLIMITED	28.28	24.69	21.40	19.58	65.97
SML ISUZU	27.27	24.46	22.35	17.71	62.85
M&M Swaraj	29.87	21.50	16.95	25.68	76.14

^aREI = (Score on RES... + 20)*100/60

On the other hand for IT companies TCS and Infosys they lack such kind of activities due to large and diverse workforce which has led to employee denied of autonomy in their tasks. Also the regression analysis also indicated that locus of control had greater impact on role efficacy in manufacturing firms than IT firms.

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