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Social Sciences Research
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka Nigeria

INFLUENCE OF LOCUS OF CONTROL AND EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research examined the effect of Locus of Control and Educational Level on Emotional Intelligence among young students. Three hypotheses were tested. 200 participants were selected using convenience sampling technique from Queens College Enugu; Union Secondary School Awkunanaw and Caritas University Enugu all in Enugu South East, Nigeria. The participants comprised 100 females and 100 males with age ranging from 15 – 30years with a mean age of 20.46 years and a standard deviation of 4.7. The participants were administered with Locus of Control Scale developed by Nowicki and Strickland (1973) and Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Schutte et al (1998). Cross sectional design was adopted and two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze data collected. Results showed that locus of control significantly influenced emotional intelligence $F(1, 196) = 103.50$, $P<.05$; educational level did not significantly influence emotional intelligence $F(1,196) = 6.76$, $P>.05$; while locus of control and educational level did not significantly have an interaction influence on emotional intelligence $F(1,196) = 3.65$, $P>.05$, among students. Recommendation and suggestions were made based on the implications of the finding.

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Introduction

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in determining the success of an individual in his work place, family and social life. It allows an individual to effectively manage his/her relations effectively within his/her environment. Emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotion, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior. The term "emotional intelligence" was first used by Mayer and Salovey in the first half of 1990's and they were trying to develop a way of scientifically measuring the difference between people's ability in the area of emotions. They found out that some people were better than others in things like identifying their own feelings, identifying the feelings of others and solving problems involving emotional issues. Mayer and Salovey defined emotional intelligence as the ability to process emotional information particularly as it involves the perception, assimilation, understanding and management of emotions.

Salovey and Mayer also initiated a research program intended to develop a valid measure of emotional intelligence and to explore its significance. For instance, they found in one study that when a group of people saw an upsetting film, those who scored high on emotional clarity (which is the ability to identify and give a name to a mood that is being experienced) recovered more quickly. In other study, individuals who scored higher in the ability to perceive accurately, understand and appraise other's emotions were better able to respond flexibly to changes in their social environments and build supportive social networks. One important characteristics of emotionally intelligent individuals is that they can control themselves efficiently (Goleman 1998).

Emotional intelligence is using the emotions wisely by doing so individuals can manage their behavior through their emotions and acquire positive results. Emotional intelligence can also be defined as the ability of an individual to understand his/her emotions, motivate the people around and manage his/her relations successfully (Weisigner 1998). Emotional intelligence represents a set of dispositional attributes for monitoring one's own and others feelings, beliefs and internal state in other to provide useful information to guide one's and others thinking and actions (Carson, Carson & Bikemmeier, 2000 Goleman 1998).

Goleman (1996) defined emotional intelligence as an array of emotional and social competences that contribute to managerial performance. He further described emotional intelligence as being able to read others emotions effectively. He argues that it is a key social skill and that it can be linked to some personality constructs like locus of control, and self efficiency. Some recent research suggests that the level of every person's emotional intelligence

can be determined by the person's educational level and locus of control. The internality or externality of an individual's locus of control has a powerful effect on his/her level of emotional intelligence. And also does the level of educational attainment.

Locus of control on the other hand is defined as an individual generalized expectancies regarding the forces that determines reward and punishment. It means the extent to which individuals believe that they can control events and causes of their actions. Locus of control is a personality construct which refers to an individual's perception of the locus of events as determined internally by his/her own behavior versus fate, luck or external circumstances. That is, it refers to individually perceived sources of control over certain behavior or events (Ogunkola 2008). Rotter (1966) established two loci as internal and external individuals who make choices primarily on their own are considered having internal locus of control. Such individual see themselves as the main course of what happens to them and their success in their environment or profession whether positive or negative. According to Bush (2005) individuals who exhibit high degrees of internal locus of control tend to be more confident in themselves are self aware; they are also good in managing their own emotions and are also empathetic to the emotions of others. They are also more activated in their work and exhibit higher level of participation in the society. Perkins supported that people with internal locus of control are considered less susceptible to social influences. This indicates that persons with internal locus of control are more emotionally intelligent than those with external locus of control. Igwe (1991) state that external locus of control refer to the perception of positive or negative events as being unrelated to self-behavior and accordingly beyond personal control. Hans (2005) emphasized that people with external locus of control believe that their own behavior or success is guided by fate, luck or other external circumstances such people believe that their own behavior does not matter much and that rewards in life are generally outside their control. Vanger (2006) observed that individuals with external locus of control have predisposition to believe that they have no control over their environment that others, thus they have low understanding of their emotions and that of others, they also lack self awareness and social skills. Often times, people have neglected the importance of emotional intelligence in our everyday lives as they underestimate its effect on our relationship with others, the environment and on ourselves. People most times confuse emotional intelligence with rational intelligence-IQ. Also, some are not aware that one's level of education may affect his/her level of emotional intelligence and that the internality and externality of their locus of control could determine their level of emotional intelligence. Due to the fact that the existence and importance of emotional intelligence is not widely known, the effect of some of these variables (locus of control and educated level) on emotional intelligence

is neglected. It is against this backdrop that the researcher wonders if locus of control and educational level will influence emotional intelligence. The researchers want to know if there will be any significant difference between persons with higher educational level and low educational level on emotional intelligence. Will there be any significant difference between external and internal locus of control oriented individuals in emotional intelligence. Will there be any significant interaction effect between educational level and locus of control on emotional intelligence.

Theoretical Background
The concept of emotional intelligence has been theorized by many psychologists like David Goleman, Salovey and Mayer and also Bar-On, it has also received some criticisms by Hein. Salovey and Mayer defined emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's and others feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. They (Salovey & Mayer) see emotional intelligence as "ability" to reason with and about emotions; it combines feelings with thinking and thinking with feeling. Goleman (1998) developed a set of emotional intelligence competencies to help familiarize both the public and private sectors with the idea of emotional intelligence. He also outlined four main emotional intelligence constructs - self awareness, self management, social awareness, relationship management. Goleman pointed out also that E.I is a good predictor of job performance. Bar-on referred to emotional intelligence as the potential for performance and success in as the potential for performance and success in one's life, he outlined five components of emotional intelligence intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood. Bar-On (2002), posits that emotional intelligence develops over time and that it can be improved through training programming and therapy. Hein (2005) pointed out the lapses in the assumptions of emotional intelligence and claims that Goleman's models on emotional intelligence made wide exaggerations and premature claims about what emotional intelligence is and what it means. Hein's assumptions to the over-estimations of emotional intelligence have given rise to questions and also the drive to look for answers.

Julian Rotter (1954) did an extensive work on locus of control, he defined locus of control as a generalized expectancy of perceived internal or external control or the degree to which an individual perceives events as being contingent upon his or her own behavior. He pointed out that locus of control is a major aspect of human personality. Rotter (1954) classified human beings as having two kinds of locus of control-internal and external locus of control. Different researches has been conducted on the effect of locus of control and level of education on emotional intelligence, these studies includes the study done by persons like Abisamara (2000), Harrod and Scheer (2005), Furman (2000) on

the relationship between educational level and level of emotional intelligence on an individual. Some other researches on the relationship between locus of control and emotional intelligence include the Kobasa, Maddim, Kahn and Lefcurt studies on the internal locus of control beliefs and emotional intelligence, and Chris et al (1979) study on external located teachers and their level of emotional intelligence.

Schule, Malouff and Babik(2001) conducted a series of studies on university students to demonstrate that emotional intelligence was associated in several important way with interpersonal relationship and one's level of education. They concluded that qualities expected to facilitate more successful relationship such as empathic perspective taken, self monitoring, good social skills and co-operation were related to emotional intelligence further more higher emotional intelligence scores were associated with confidence and optimism which are common characteristics of persons with internal locus of control. Furman (2000) conducted a study where 200 participants completed a measure of emotional intelligence, 100 participants were from Kingsknox High School while the other 100 participants were from a College Downtown. He found that those participants from college scored higher than the high school participants clearly suggesting that educational level affects one's emotional intelligence. In another study Carvellas & Brenza (2002), using the emotional competence inventory, found that college graduates scored higher than freshmen on emotional self awareness, conscientiousness, developing others, tenure orientation and communication.

Stein (2005) administered emotional intelligence assessments to 4560 12th grades and 3200 freshmen. His findings later was that both the 12th grades and freshmen scored high marks on measures of empathy and social responsibility in other words, the participants educational level did not affect their scores on emotional intelligence assessment. Similarly Abisamara (2000) reported that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and educational level and academic achievement, he therefore said that the higher one goes in academic achievements i.e. his/her educational level, the more emotionally intelligent he becomes because these general knowledge he/she acquired in years of studentship boots the awareness the individual has of his emotions and that of others as well.

Harrod and Schear (2005) measured emotional intelligence of 200 youngsters between the age of 16 to 19 and who are in the high school. The emotional intelligence scores were compared with demographic qualities (sex, age, place of residence) of the individuals. The findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between levels of emotional intelligence and educational level. There were no significant relationship between levels of emotional intelligence

and educational level. There was significant relationship between emotional intelligence and place of residence during adolescence. There are significant differences between emotional intelligence scores of women and men. Women have higher levels of emotional intelligence. There was no significant difference between emotional intelligence score and place of residence. The important note to be taken is that the level of emotional intelligence improves with the increased level of education in conclusion the study shows that one's emotional intelligence moves in accordance with his/her educational level, the higher your educational level the higher your chances of being emotionally intelligent. Chris et al (1979) carried out a study on 130 teachers of 2 schools in England. The data was collected through an emotional intelligence questionnaire and Rotter's I-E locus of control questionnaire. The results showed that the externally controlled teachers scored lower in the emotional intelligence questionnaire suggesting the persons with external locus of control have lower emotional intelligence. Dawney et al (2008) posit that the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievements can be moderated through some personality variables like locus of control. For example high emotional intelligence contributes to increased motivation, planning and decision making which positively influences academic performance.

Also, Kulshrestha and Sen (2006) reported a significant relationship between subjective well-being, emotional intelligence and locus of control. More specifically subjects scoring high on E.I and internal locus of control scored high on positive affect, low on negative affect and significantly high on all three dimensions of life satisfaction. In another study of locus of control and gender as predictors of emotional intelligence was researched by Ayodeji (2001) at the end of the study, result showed that locus of control did not predict emotional intelligence while gender predicted emotional intelligence as males were found to score higher than their female counterparts on emotional intelligence. Ariama (2004) investigated the influence of personality, domicility and educational level on emotional intelligence, one hundred and thirty one (131) people participated in the study which included fifty nine (59) females and seventy two (72) males. Results revealed that personality and domicility did not determine emotional intelligence, however, educational level did.

Hypotheses
1. There will be a significant difference between internally and externally oriented individuals on emotional intelligence.
2. There will be a significant difference between individuals with higher educational level and individuals with lower educational level on emotional intelligence.
3. There will be a significant interaction influence of educational level and locus of control on emotional intelligence.

METHOD
Design/statistic
Cross sectional design was employed for the study because samples were drawn from different populations (2 government single sex Secondary Schools and a private owned University). 2-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used as statistic because the study had two independent variables (educational level and locus of control) and the dependent variable (emotional intelligence).

Participants
200 students participated from the study from Queens College Enugu, Union Secondary School Awkunanaw and Caritas University Enugu. The participants comprised 97 females and 103 males. Their ages ranged from 14- 32 and a mean age of 25.16 years

Measures
Two instruments were used in the study namely; Nowicki Strickland Locus of Control Scale developed by Nowicki and Strickland (1973) and Emotional Intelligence Scale by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998).

The Nowicki Strickland Locus of Control Scale contains forty (40) items scored on a yes/no nominal format. Nowicki and Strickland (1973) provided the Psychometric properties for American samples while Jaiyeoba (1992) provided the properties for Nigerian samples. Nowicki and Strickland (1973) reported a six-week interval test-retest reliability coefficient of .63, .66 and .71 for 3rd grade, 7th grade and 10th grade students respectively. Jaiyeoba (1992) obtained a concurrent validity coefficient of .25 by correlating locus of control scale with index of self-esteem developed by Hudson (1982). The Nigerian norm for males is 30.52 while females are 30.77. Scores higher than the norms indicate external locus of control while scores lower than the norms indicate internal locus of control.

The second instrument is Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden and Dornheim (1998). It contains thirty three (33) item scored on a five(5) point likert format ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA)

A series of studies by Schutte et al (1998) revealed adequate internal reliability estimates for the scale at .87 and above and two weeks test-retest reliability of .78. Emotional intelligence scale was revalidated in Nigeria by Yahaya (2011) obtained a Cronbach's Alpha reliability of .89. The norm for the scales is 58.64, scores higher than the norm indicate high emotional intelligence while scores lower than the norm indicate low emotional intelligence. The instrument has a

demographic section that enabled the researcher to find out participants educational level, gender and age.

Procedure

Before data were collected, the researchers obtained written permissions from the Principals of Queens College Enugu, and Union Boys Secondary School Awkunanaw respectively for their students to be involved in the study. SS2 and 3 participated in the study after rapport was created and those who indicated interest volunteered and were given the questionnaires to fill. The researchers involved undergraduate students of Psychology at Caritas University Enugu, the Psychology students (200 - 400 levels) participated in the study as part of class assignment. 52 students were drawn from Queens College Enugu; 53 from Union Secondary School Awkunanaw and Caritas University Enugu and 95 students of Psychology drawn from Caritas University.

Results

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Showing Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of the Independent Variables (Locus of Control, and Level of Education)

LOCUSOFCONTROL	LEVELOFEDUCATION	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
	HIGH LEVEL	83.60	11.13	50
INTERNAL	LOW LEVEL	82.60	13.54	50
	Total	83.10	12.34	100
	HIGH LEVEL	71.62	5.71	50
EXTERNAL	LOW LEVEL	65.08	8.96	50
	Total	68.35	8.17	100
	HIGH LEVEL	77.61	10.67	100
Total	LOW LEVEL	73.84	14.42	100
	Total	75.73	12.79	200

From table 1 above, participants with high educational level obtained a group mean (M = 77.61) in comparison to participants with low educational level who obtained a lower group mean (M =73.84). Also, the table indicates that participants who are internally controlled obtained a group (M = 83.10) in comparison to participants who are externally controlled who obtained a lower group mean (M = 68.35).

Table 2. A 2-Way ANOVA Summary Result of the influence of locus of control, level of education on emotional intelligence

Dependent Variable: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11972.42[a]	3	3990.81	37.98	.000
Intercept	1146855.125	1	1146855.13	10915.29	.000
LOCUSOFCONTROL	10878.13	1	10878.13	103.53	.000
LEVELOFEDUCATION	710.65	1	710.65	6.76	.010
LOCUSOFCONTROL * LEVELOFEDUCATION	383.65	1	383.65	3.65	.06
Error	20593.46	196	105.07		
Total	1179421.00	200			
Corrected Total	32565.88	199			

a. R Squared = .368 (Adjusted R Squared = .358)

From table 2 above, hypothesis one which states that there will be a significant difference between internally and externally oriented individuals on emotional intelligence was accepted ($F_{(1, 196)} = 103.53$, $P < 0.5$). Participants who are internally oriented and their externally oriented counterparts differ significantly on emotional intelligence. This means that participants who are internally oriented express higher emotional intelligence ($M = 83.10$) in comparison to participants who are externally oriented who obtained a lower group mean ($M = 68.35$).

The second hypothesis which states that there will be a significant difference between high educational level and low educational level on emotional intelligence was rejected. ($F_{(1,196)} = 6.76$, n.s). Participants who are of high educational level and those who are of low educational level did not differ significantly on emotional intelligence. Moreso, the third hypothesis which states that there will be a significant interaction effect between locus of control and educational level on emotional intelligence as rejected. ($F_{(1,196)} = 3.65$, n.s).

Discussion

This study found that there is a significant influence of locus of control on emotional intelligence among students. The studies of Kobasa et al (1981) and Lefcurt (1982) corroborate the finding of this study because their various results showed that locus of control had significant influence on emotional intelligence while the study of Ayodeji (2001) does not fall in line with the finding because locus of control was found not to have influence on emotional intelligence. Internally oriented students tend to take blame and credit for whatever happens to them, this makes them to work hard not to fail and they believe in their competence which propels them to score higher in emotional intelligence than their counterparts.

The second hypothesis showed that educational level does not influence emotional intelligence amongst students. The study of Ariama (2004) and Stein (2005) supported the finding of the study. On the other hand, the study of Abisamara (2000) found significant influence of educational level on emotional intelligence which did not corroborate the findings of this study. The combination of educational level and locus of control did not influence an individual's expression of emotional intelligence. If an individual is internally oriented and has attained a high educational level, the existence of both constructs in the individual does not influence his/her emotional intelligence. The level of one's emotional intelligence is largely dependent on locus of control.

Implications of the Study

Internals obtained a higher group mean than the externals in emotional intelligent, which also observed to be significantly remarkable. The implication of this outcome showed that internals tends to explain the cause of their behaviour by looking inwards and hence making dispositional attribution. This means that they will be more predisposed to understand and interpret emotional expressions because they are intrinsic and are apportioned on self.

The second finding of this study implies that educational level did not influence emotional intelligence among young people. Emotional intelligence as a variable is not influenced by educational level of young people. The implication is that level of education does not significantly influence ones understanding and interpretation of emotional expression. Hence, the quest for knowledge has nothing to do with the way we look at event around us. However, a typical emotional intelligent person appears not to be an individual of high level of education. The third result implies that locus of control and educational level did not interact to influence emotional intelligence among young people. In conclusion, this study implies that emotional intelligence is influenced more by personality disposition than educational level. This may explain why

uneducated people in the remote areas can understand and interpret emotional expressions. This suggests that with formal or no formal education, an individual can manifest emotional intelligence

Limitations of the Study
The first challenge encountered by the researchers was the fact that many students were reluctant to participate in the study, this affected the number of participants used and it could influence the generalization of the result of this study. The second limitation was also the fact that school environment was not conducive for students who were willing to participate in the study as there were noises around; these distractions could have affected the way they responded to the items in the questionnaires. Another possible limitation emanates from the use of self report questionnaires which gives room for a respondent to exaggerate or under report his/her true feelings; this may confound the research result.

Suggestions for Further Studies
The researchers are of the opinion that future studies on this area will involve increase in sample size. Moreso, other variables such as self esteem, gender, marital status, socio-economic status in relation to emotional intelligence among young people should be studied.

Conclusion
Based on the findings of this study, the researchers want to recommend that individuals seek to improve their emotional intelligence by believing more in themselves and taking blames and credit for what happens to them. This will make them work harder so as to not fail. Secondly, school authorities could employ psychologists to help students to boost their emotional intelligence and locus of control. Thirdly, parents and guardians should stop setting unrealistic standards for their child or children as when not realized could lower the emotional intelligence of the child. The finding of the study was that locus of control yielded a significant influence on emotional intelligent while educational level did not yield a significant influence on emotional intelligence among students. However, based on the outcome the study the researchers conclude that emotional intelligence of young people is highly influenced by locus of control and not educational level.

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