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Introduction

- Previous studies have mixed results about the relationship between locus of control (LOC) different types of stress.
- External LOC, which is the belief that an individual's life events are influenced by an outside force, is linked to more stress^{1,2,3,4}
- Internal LOC, which is the belief that an individual's life events are due to their own behavior, is linked to more stress^{5,6}
- No relationship between LOC and stress⁷
- The current study aims to examine the relationship between LOC and chronic stress

Hypothesis

Those with a more external LOC will experience more chronic stress than those with an internal LOC

Method

- 81 Participants (M_{age} 30.09; 20 males) from the University of Missouri – St. Louis were recruited as a part of a larger study.
- Online measures included:
 - Locus of Control Scale⁸ : A 29-item questionnaire used to assess whether an individual has a more internal or external locus of control [Table 1]
 - Higher scores indicate more external LOC. Lower scores indicate more internal LOC
 - Life Stressors Checklist (LSC-R)⁹: A 30-item questionnaire that measures exposures to chronic and traumatic stress [Table 2]

LOC scale sample question

- Many of the unhappy things in people's lives are partly due to bad luck (external)
- People's misfortunes result from the mistakes they make (internal)

Table 1: LOC scale sample question

Results

- A linear regression was run to predict the relationship between LOC and chronic stress
- LOC was not a predictor of chronic stress ($R^2=.001$, $F(1,79)=.049$, $p>.05$) [Figure 1]

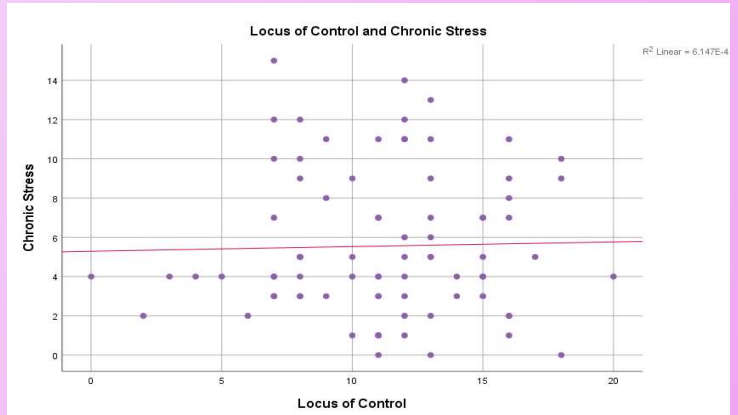


Figure 1: LOC vs chronic stress

Discussion

- Results were aligned with one of the previous studies⁷, but not the others^{1,2,3,4,5,6}
- Findings imply that there is not a significant relationship between LOC and chronic stress
- Future research can examine if an individual's coping style in response to stress is a more important factor when paired with LOC type

Limitations

- Experimental measures used
 - Trait LOC was measured, which may not be a strong predictor of chronic stress

Future Studies

- Conduct a cohort longitudinal study
- Examine the relationship between state LOC and chronic stress

LSC-R sample question

- Have you ever been in a serious disaster (for example, an earthquake, hurricane, large fire, explosion)?

Table 2: LSC-R sample question

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