

The Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Locus of Control: Empirical Study on Lithuanian Youth

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Abstract : The qualitative methodology based study is designed to reveal a connection between emotional intelligence (EI) and locus of control (LC) within the population of Lithuanian youth. In the context of emotional problems, the locus of control reflects how one estimates the causes of his/her emotions: internals (internal locus of control) associate their emotions with their manner of thinking, whereas externals (external locus of control) consider emotions to be evoked by external circumstances. On the other hand, there is little empirical data about this connection, and the results in disposition are often contradictory. In the conducted study 1430 young people, aged 17 to 27, from various regions of Lithuania were surveyed. The subjects were selected by quota sampling, maintaining natural proportions of the general Lithuanian youth population. To assess emotional intelligence the EI-DARL test (i.e. self-report questionnaire consisting of 75 items) was implemented. The emotional intelligence test, created applying exploratory factor analysis, reveals four main dimensions of EI: understanding of one's own emotions, regulation of one's own emotions, understanding other's emotions, and regulation of other's emotions (subscale reliability coefficients fluctuate between 0,84 and 0,91). An original 16-item internality/externality scale was used to examine the locus of control (internal consistency of the Externality subscale - 0,75; Internality subscale - 0,65). The study has determined that the youth understands and regulates other people's emotions better than their own. Using the K-mean cluster analysis method, it was established that there are three groups of subjects according to their EI level - people with low, medium and high EI. After comparing means of subjects' favorability of statements on the Internality/Externality scale, a predominance of internal locus of control in the young population was established. The multiple regression models has shown that a rather strong statistically significant correlation exists between total EI, EI subscales and LC. People who tend to attribute responsibility for the outcome of their actions to their own abilities and efforts have higher EI and, conversely, the tendency to attribute responsibility to external forces is related more with lower EI. While pursuing their goals, young people with high internality have a predisposition to analyze perceived emotions and, therefore, gain emotional experience: they learn to control their natural reactions and to act adequately in a situation at hand. Thus the study unfolds, that a person's locus of control and emotional intelligence are related phenomena and allows us to draw a conclusion, that a person's internality/externality is a reliable predictor of total EI and its components.

Keywords : emotional intelligence, externality, internality, locus of control

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