

ARE EDUCATED UNEMPLOYED YOUTH IN INDIA EXTERNALLY ORIENTED?

LAL BAHADUR SINGH, ARUN KUMAR SINGH AND ARVIND KUMAR SINGH

A randomly selected group of 400 educated youth were equally divided into professional unemployed, non-professional unemployed, professional employed, and non-professional employed and were administered Singh and Rani's (1990) Internal-External Control's Scale. This was done in order to investigate in them the degree of internal and external orientation, both at macro and micro levels. Results of a statistical comparison revealed that both the groups of professionalism and non-professionally educated unemployed youth, as compared to the same brand of their employed counterparts, were relatively less internally oriented and more externally directed. Also, the study revealed all of them as having a clear tendency to score higher on the items employed to measure external control, and thus, indicated them to be highly externally controlled, notwithstanding the fact that the unemployed, particularly the professionally educated unemployed, were found to be relatively more vulnerable to externality.

Dr. Lal Bahadur Singh is a Reader in the Department of Psychology, T.M. Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur; Dr. Arun Kumar Singh is a Lecturer in the Department of Psychology, Evening College, Bhagalpur and; Dr. Arvind Kumar Singh is Reader and Head, Department of Psychology, Evening College, Bhagalpur.

Introduction

This study was primarily designed to ascertain the degree of internal and external orientation — the significant predictors of psychological well-being (Archer, 1979; Lefcourt, 1982; O'Brien, 1984a, 1984b, 1986; Spector, 1982) in professionally and non-professionally educated unemployed youth as against the same category of their employed counterparts. A good amount of evidence accumulated from research studies over the last few years indicate that unemployed persons tended to be relatively more externally oriented (Feather and

Barber, 1983; Layton, 1986, 1987; O'Brien, 1984b; O'Brien and Kabanoff, 1979; Patton and Noller, 1984). Other recent studies, particularly those conducted by Feather and O'Brien, the Australian psychologists, also furnished a similar conclusion. For example, Feather and O'Brien (1986a; 1986b), on the basis of their longitudinal studies, revealed that the unemployed expressed an increased tendency to blame their unemployment on factors relating to economic recession and a decreased tendency to blame it on the lack of motivation on their part. In a similar vein, O'Brien and Feather (1990) found that the unemployed person had a higher external control, particularly in comparison to those who were suitably employed. Recently, Rani (1993) and Singh, Singh and Singh (1995), in their studies into the psychological well-being of the technically and non-technically unemployed and employed youth in India, also reported that both groups of the unemployed, as compared to their employed counterparts, were relatively more externally oriented. However, the employed youth were also found to have a fair amount of externality, lending support to the conclusion of Faroqi (1984) and indicating it as one of the typical characteristics of an Indian.

Contrary to the above-mentioned findings, Dumont (1977) and Liem (1988) observed the unemployed as internalising the blame for their unemployment. Tiggemann and Winefield (1984) and Winefield and Tiggemann (1985) recorded a decrease in the externality of about the same amount for school-leavers, whether they became employed or remained unemployed. The study by Linn, Sandifer and Stein, (1985) of middle-aged American men, out of work for a period less than six months showed no longitudinal change in the locus control scores after job loss. Likewise, Feather and O'Brien (1986a) found no effect of unemployment on the locus of control scores one year after school leaving. However, externality became significantly greater one year later among those who remained without a job.

Thus, a diversity of opinion exist regarding the direction of control mechanism of the unemployed persons. However, in a majority of investigations, unemployed persons were found to be more externally oriented than their employed counterparts. The view by O'Brien (1986) deserves mention here. He has indicated that unemployment does not ruin a person's capacity for self-reliance, but, instead, delimits the number of life-situations where personal control is possible. This renders him necessarily externally controlled. It was, therefore, justifiably inferred that the unemployed, as compared to

the employed, would be relatively more externally oriented. But, as was apparent, efforts to understand the pattern of control orientation in the professionally and non-professionally educated Indian unemployed youth as against the same brand of their employed counterparts being almost scarce in number, the present investigation was undertaken.

Method

Subject

Four hundred educated youth were equally divided into: professional unemployed; non-professional unemployed; professional employed; and non-professional employed. These youth served as subjects in this study. All of them were male graduates or postgraduates of 27 to 32 years of age and came from urban middle-class families having an income of Rs. 2,500/- to Rs. 3,500/- per month. Also, only those subjects who had been either registered as involuntary unemployed or employed in state enterprises situated in Patna, Muzaffarpur, Khagaria, Bhagalpur, Ranchi, Gaya and Dhanbad cities of Bihar in Eastern India for at least five years or more were approached for this study. The technique of randomisation involving the procedure of sampling with replacement was employed for the selection of the subjects.

Material

A 4-point, 26-item Internal-External Controls Scale — half of them measuring internal and the rest external controls — developed by Singh and Rani (1990) in Hindi was devised to elicit information about the extent of internal and external controls in the subjects. Subjects were asked to read each of the statements carefully, and to express their responses towards them by selecting one of the four response alternatives like fully agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) and fully disagree (1) as applicable to them. The possible score, one could achieve on either of the scales, ranged between 13 and 52 with higher scores denoting the prominence of either of the control systems in the subjects. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients and r_{ij} for the two subscales were 0.77 (0.21) and 0.75 (0.19) for the unemployed, and 0.79 (0.23) and 0.76 (0.20) for the employed youth. The coefficient of correlation between the two scale scores was found to be 0.04, indicating the internal and external dimensions as independent of each other (Singh and Rani, 1990).

Procedure

The subjects were administered the scale, either individually or in small group settings, after establishing a good rapport with them to elicit sincere and candid responses in late 1992. Before responding to the statements included in the scale, subjects were requested to go through the instructions printed at the top of the scale. They were allowed to take up the test only when they fully understood the instructions. Though there was no time limit to complete the sale, subjects were requested to finish the task within half an hour.

The subjects being convinced of the importance of the testing programme, extended their full cooperation. This was quite evident from their eagerness to participate in the study and from their sustained curiosity to know about every detail of the findings of the test as well.

Results

Table 1 reports the summary of the results of a statistical comparison among different groups of educated unemployed and employed youth in terms of the extent of internal and external orientations in them.

Consistent with the expectations, both the professionally and the non-professionally educated unemployed youth, as compared to the professionally and the non-professionally educated employed youth, were found to be relatively less internally controlled and more outwardly directed. However, both the groups of employed youth were also identified as having a higher amount of external orientation and, thus, were found to be fairly susceptible to reduced psychological well-being. On the whole, it was the job-seekers, particularly the professionally educated ones, who confronted a pathogenic state of externality (76.42 per cent). Further, the results of the statistical comparisons exclusively made between the professionally and the non-professionally educated unemployed youth, and the professionally and the non-professionally educated employed youth, in terms of the dimensions of internality and externality, evinced no marked difference between the two independent sets of the educated youth except a significant difference in the degree of internality between the professionally and non-professionally educated employed youth ($t[198] = 3.42$; $p < 0.01$), the latter being relatively less internally directed. Still, in order to be relatively precise in prediction, different groups of unemployed and employed youth were again subjected to micro analysis exclusively in terms of the measures of the dimensions

Table 1

STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GROUPS OF UNEMPLOYED AND EMPLOYED YOUTH AND THEIR RELATIVE STANDING IN TERMS OF THE EXTENT OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROLS

<i>Locus of Control</i>	<i>Professionally Educated Unemployed (N=100)</i>			<i>Non-Professionally Educated Unemployed (N=100)</i>			<i>Professionally Educated Employed (N=100)</i>			<i>Non-Professionally Educated Employed (N=100)</i>			<i>F</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Internal (13-52)	22.13	42.56	02.02	22.12	42.54	02.80	35.48	68.23	04.17	32.20	61.92	08.73	181.71
External (13-52)	39.74	76.42	02.70	39.69	76.33	02.37	35.58	68.42	02.60	35.27	67.83	06.17	37.72

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate score range on each of the scales; $df = 3, 396$; $p < 0.05 = 2.63$; $p < 0.01 = 3.83$

Table 2

STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GROUPS OF UNEMPLOYED AND EMPLOYED YOUTH AND THEIR RELATIVE STANDING IN TERMS OF DIFFERENT ITEMS OF INTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

Description of the Statements	Professionally Educated Unemployed (N=100)			Non-Professionally Educated Unemployed (N=100)			Professionally Educated Employed (N=100)			Non-Professionally Educated Employed (N=100)			F
	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	
	1. Whatever schemes I undertake, I certainly complete them.	01.38 (34.50)	0.49	13	01.36 (34.00)	0.48	11	03.00 (75.00)	0.77	04	02.88 (72.00)	0.73	
2. I firmly believe that success is achieved by those who work sincerely.	01.43 (35.75)	0.50	12	01.38 (34.50)	0.49	10	03.04 (76.00)	0.74	03	02.85 (71.25)	0.72	03	141.54
3. A capable person is never perplexed by any kind of situation. He/She always has faith in one's capability to win through.	01.69 (42.25)	0.77	06	01.90 (47.50)	0.79	04	03.31 (82.75)	0.47	02	01.74 (43.50)	0.70	13	80.66
4. I firmly believe that the current situation is sure to change sooner or later, hence, people should carry on with their duties instead of going astray.	01.80 (45.00)	0.76	05	01.14 (28.50)	0.49	13	02.84 (71.00)	0.71	06	02.71 (67.75)	0.69	05	117.37

5. An able person is bound to succeed at any cost.	01.44 (36.00)	0.49	11	01.34 (33.50)	0.48	12	03.38 (84.50)	0.49	01	02.80 (70.00)	0.70	04	260.55
6. One who labours hard must succeed.	01.52 (38.00)	0.50	08	01.44 (36.00)	0.48	09	02.70 (67.50)	0.71	10	02.63 (65.75)	0.72	07	85.21
7. Our idleness is the sole cause of our failure or unemployment and poverty.	01.64 (41.00)	0.77	07	01.78 (44.50)	0.72	05	02.83 (70.75)	0.71	07	02.60 (65.00)	0.65	08	51.65
8. I believe in doing my duty.	01.51 (37.75)	0.50	09	01.55 (38.75)	0.50	08	02.87 (71.75)	0.74	05	02.57 (64.25)	0.70	09	91.77
9. People suffer from loneliness because they are not sociable.	02.40 (60.00)	0.49	01	02.38 (59.50)	0.56	01	02.07 (51.75)	0.79	11	01.98 (49.50)	0.81	10	07.32
10. I believe that all that occurred to me was consequent upon my own deeds.	01.47 (36.75)	0.50	10	01.75 (43.75)	0.77	06.5	01.94 (48.50)	0.79	13	01.94 (48.50)	0.77	11	07.17
11. I cannot fight with the situation.	02.15 (53.75)	0.71	02	02.30 (57.50)	0.54	02	02.76 (69.00)	0.79	08	02.65 (66.25)	0.72	06	12.05
12. An individual is responsible for safeguarding one's own right.	01.83 (45.75)	0.72	04	01.75 (43.75)	0.78	06.5	02.74 (68.50)	0.72	01.90 09	0.81 (47.50)		21.67 12	
13. I believe that behaviour of a person is the sole determinant of one's destiny.	01.87 (46.75)	0.69	03	02.05 (51.25)	0.77	03	02.00 (50.00)	0.81	12	02.95 (73.75)	0.76	01	25.55

Note: Responses towards each of the statements were measured on a 4-point scale; $df = 3,396$; $p < 0.05 = 2.63$; $p < 0.01 = 3.83$.

of internal and external controls. Tables 2 and 3 report the findings obtained from the statistical comparison among different groups of unemployed and employed youth and their relative standing in terms of different items designed to measure the aforementioned two control mechanisms, respectively.

The three statements which were rated as more pronounced by the professionally educated unemployed youth in terms of their evaluation on the measures of internal control were 'People suffer from loneliness because they are not sociable' (60 per cent), 'I cannot fight with the situation' (55.75 per cent) and 'I firmly believe that the behaviour of a person is the determinant of one's destiny' (46.75 per cent) respectively, and those which received low scores were 'I complete the scheme undertaken at any cost' (34.50 per cent), 'I firmly believe that success is achieved by those who work sincerely' (35.75 per cent) and 'An able person is bound to succeed at any cost' (36 per cent) respectively.

Like professionally educated unemployed youth, non-professionally educated unemployed persons too rated themselves relatively high on the statements like 'People suffer from loneliness because they are not sociable' (59.50 per cent), 'I cannot fight with the situation' (57.50 per cent) and 'I firmly believe that the behaviour of a person is the sole determinant of his destiny' (51.25 per cent) respectively. But, they did not manifest such similarity with the former while identifying the least experienced situations by them. However, besides the statement, 'I firmly believe that the current situation will ultimately change sooner or later and, hence, people should carry on with their duties instead of going astray' (28.50 per cent), they also indicated the statements such as 'An able person is bound to succeed at any cost' (33.50 per cent) and 'I complete the scheme undertaken at any cost' (34 per cent) as having little concern for them.

On the other hand, the professionally educated employed youth scored relatively high on the statements like 'An able person is bound to succeed at any cost' (84.50 per cent); 'A capable person is never perplexed by any kind of situation. He/She always has full faith in his potentialities and capabilities to win through' (82.75 per cent); and 'I firmly believe that success is achieved by those who work sincerely' (76 per cent), and lower on the statements such as 'I believe that all happenings related to me is the outcome of my own deeds' (48.50 per cent); 'I believe that the life of a person is solely determined by one's activities' (50 per cent) and; 'People suffer from loneliness because they are not sociable', (51.75 per cent) respectively.

The statements for which the non-professionally educated employed youth scored relatively high were 'I believe that the behaviour of a person is the only determinant of his destiny' (73.75 per cent); 'Whatever schemes I undertake, I certainly complete them' (72 per cent) and; 'I firmly believe that success is achieved by those who work sincerely' (71.25 per cent). The ones for which they scored low were 'A capable person is never perplexed by the situation, he/she always has faith in one's potentialities to overcome that' (43.50 per cent); 'An individual is responsible for safeguarding one's own right' (47.50 per cent) and; 'I believe that all that occurred to me was consequent upon my own deeds' (48.50 per cent).

An inspection of the relative standing of different groups of unemployed and employed youth in terms of different statements, involved in the measure of external locus of control, revealed the following important facts.

The professionally educated unemployed youth scored fairly higher on the statements like 'Inheritance of paternal property or some unexpected gain can only enable a man to lead a happy and prosperous life' (90.50 per cent); 'Recommendation has become pertinent in order to secure a job these days' (89 per cent) and; 'Competence does not get the right recognition in these days of corruption' (88 per cent), and scored lower on the statements such as 'Often people are distracted from their aims by their friend circle' (62.25 per cent) and; 'I believe that my life, to a considerable extent, is governed by casual incidents' (65.50 per cent).

The statements which generated relatively high scores in the case of the non-professionally educated unemployed youth were 'Inheritance of paternal property or gaining of some hidden treasure can only make one's life happy and prosperous' (92.25 percent); 'The employment policy of the government is too limited to provide jobs for all' (86.50 per cent) and; 'Recommendation has gained a value in order to have an entry into the employment market these days' (85 per cent). Those which were experienced least were 'I believe that it is not possible for one to change one's destiny' (64.50 per cent); 'Nothing is possible today without gratification, (70 per cent) and; 'Often people are distracted from their aims by their friend circle' (70.75 per cent).

The statements for which the professionally educated employed youth scored higher were 'Inheritance of paternal property or an unexpected gain can only bring pleasure and prosperity in one's life' (82.75 per cent), 'The employment policy of the government is not

Table 3
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES AMONG DIFFERENT GROUPS OF UNEMPLOYED AND EMPLOYED YOUTH AND THEIR RELATIVE STANDING IN TERMS OF DIFFERENT ITEMS OF EXTERNAL LOCUS OF CONTROL

Description of the Statements	Professionally Educated Unemployed (N=100)			Non-Professionally Educated Unemployed (N=100)			Professionally Educated Employed (N=100)			Non-Professionally Educated Employed (N=100)			F
	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	Mean (%)	SD	Rank	
1. I believe my life to be greatly influenced by casual incidents.	02.62 (65.50)	0.52	11	02.91 (72.75)	0.61	08	02.54 (63.50)	0.50	10	03.17 (79.25)	0.67	02	21.47
2. The employment policy of the government is such that only a few can get jobs.	03.51 (87.75)	0.50	04	03.46 (86.50)	0.50	02	03.03 (75.75)	0.76	02	02.82 (70.50)	0.74	06	20.82
3. Recommendation has become important in order to secure a job these days.	03.56 (89.00)	0.38	02	03.40 (85.00)	0.49	03	02.98 (74.50)	0.54	04	02.65 (66.25)	0.69	09	47.85
4. Nothing is possible today without gratification.	03.02 (75.50)	0.74	06	02.80 (70.00)	0.71	12	02.02 (50.50)	0.83	13	02.10 (52.50)	0.81	12	31.11
5. Often people are distracted from their aims by their friends.	02.49 (62.25)	0.52	13	02.83 (70.75)	0.79	11	02.34 (58.50)	0.74	11	02.37 (59.25)	0.50	11	07.36

6. Lack of job-oriented education makes us worthless.	02.78 (69.50)	0.73	09	02.92 (73.00)	0.73	07	02.96 (74.00)	0.79	05	02.74 (68.50)	0.76	08	01.52
7. I believe in what is lot- ted cannot be blotted.	02.52 (63.00)	0.55	12	02.58 (64.50)	0.50	13	03.00 (75.00)	0.75	03	02.76 (69.00)	0.82	07	08.02
8. I got what I desired because I am fortunate.	02.69 (67.25)	0.70	10	03.35 (83.75)	0.54	04	02.95 (73.75)	0.74	06	02.63 (67.75)	0.77	10	17.95
9. Despite hard labour, misfortune darkens success.	03.00 (75.00)	0.82	07	02.98 (74.50)	0.78	06	02.65 (66.25)	0.98	09	02.84 (71.00)	0.56	05	02.97
10. Inheritance of pater- nal property or some unexpected gain can only make one's life happy and prosperous.	03.62 (90.50)	0.53	01	03.69 (92.25)	0.55	01	03.31 (82.75)	0.65	01	02.91 (72.75)	0.80	04	22.19
11. Nepotism has today emerged as the sole criterion for progress and prosperity in life.	03.46 (86.50)	0.54	05	02.88 (72.00)	0.47	10	02.80 (70.00)	0.79	08	03.26 (81.50)	0.52	01	26.87
12. Many a time I was not able to avert mis- fortune.	02.95 (73.75)	0.56	08	03.00 (75.00)	0.76	05	02.07 (51.75)	0.65	12	01.96 (49.00)	0.79	13	46.58
13. Competence does not get right recognition in these days of corruption.	03.52 (88.00)	0.52	03	02.89 (72.25)	0.88	09	02.93 (73.25)	0.77	07	03.06 (76.50)	1.20	03	09.05

Note: Responses towards each of the statements were measured on a 4-point scale; $df = 3,396$; $p < 0.05 = 2.63$; $p < 0.01 = 3.83$.

maintaining pace with the rapidly growing labour force' (75.75 per cent) and 'I believe in what is lotted cannot be blotted' (75 per cent), and those for which they tended to score lower were 'Nothing is possible today without gratification' (50.50 per cent); 'Many a time I was not able to avert my misfortune' (51.75 per cent) and; 'Often people are distracted from their aims by their friend circle' (58.50 per cent) respectively.

The statements which found high favour, relatively, with the non-professionally educated employed youth were 'Nepotism has today emerged as a sole criterion for getting progress and prosperity in life' (81.50 per cent); 'I believe my life as greatly influenced by casual incidents' (79.25 per cent) and; 'Competence does not get proper recognition in these days of corruption' (76.50 per cent). Those which were rated by them as least influencing were 'Many a times I was unable to avert my misfortune' (49 per cent); 'No success can be achieved today without gratification' (52.50 per cent) and; 'Often people are distracted from their aims by their friend circle' (59.25 per cent).

Thus, an overall analysis of the relative standing of different groups of unemployed and employed youth in terms of different items, devised to measure internal and external controls, indicated that they differed markedly among them in their standing in terms of almost all the items comprising the measures of the aforementioned two control mechanisms. Also, all of them exhibited a marked tendency to score higher on the items subsumed in the scale of external control, indicating them to be externally controlled to a great extent, albeit they, too, had either a moderate or higher amount of internality.

Discussion

On the whole, two main facts emerged by the analysis of the results of this study. First, both the groups of professionally and non-professionally educated unemployed youth, as compared to the same category of their employed counterparts, were fairly less internally oriented and more outwardly directed. Second, all the groups of unemployed and employed youth tended to depend largely upon external forces in explaining the happenings they came across.

In describing a relatively high amount of external orientation in the groups of educated unemployed youth, we may follow the views maintained by Feather (1990) regarding the factors influencing the causal attribution of the unemployed to one's unemployment. Depending

upon Jones and Nisbett's (1972) analysis of actor-observer differences in causal attribution, he has insisted upon the view that if a large number of people confront the problem of joblessness, it becomes less plausible to blame unemployment on the basis of internal inadequacies such as a person's lack of ability or effort and more plausible to lay the blame on the constraints in the environment such as the existing socioeconomic conditions and poor government infrastructure.

Indians, in general, whether they are unemployed, or employed, to rate themselves fairly high on the external pole of the control mechanism. However, it would be fallacious to claim an Indian to be either only externally or internally controlled. Indians, in general, as can be commonly observed, are simultaneously controlled by both internal and external forces. The study by Singh and Rani (1990), as well as our philosophy mentioned above, indicate that internality and externality are two independent poles of our control system. Thus, the findings of this study, in brief, corresponded, more or less, to the conclusion of O'Brien (1986) drawn on the basis of Bakke's (1933) study that the unemployed tended to depend both upon the external and internal controls simultaneously in ascribing the blame for their unemployment.

The study, relying both upon macro and micro analyses, indicated that while the professionally and the non-professionally educated unemployed youth were governed by a lower level of internal orientation and a higher level of external orientation, the employed, in general, quite in contrast with the general trend that appear in the research findings, especially accumulated in the developed nations, relied both upon internal and external forces simultaneously to a considerable extent. This is akin to the Indian (the Hindu) view as depicted in our cultural ethos emphasising the need to take every event as consequent upon both inside and outside forces, the *karma* and *bhagya* philosophy. It is, thus, being suggested that in a culture, particularly like that of the Indian, the two dimensions of control — internal and external — ought to be treated and measured as independent of each other. This is needed to be taken into account while analysing the impact of status of occupation (unemployed/employed) on psychological health. However, further researches involving factor analysis is being recommended in order to verify the independence of the two control mechanisms from each other. By way of suggesting a new dimension to scientific inquiry into the impact of unemployment/employment on psychological well-being, we fully agree with the views

of Feather (1990) emphasising the need for future comparative studies on the psychological impact of unemployment/employment, both within and across cultures or at different times in a culture's history. Of course, culture-specific meaning and significance of a variable is needed to be determined before including it finally in a scientific investigation.

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