

# *The Facilitating Role of Healthy Habits for Perceived Control in Learning*

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**Abstract:** While many studies have explored the relationship between health behaviors and various factors such as attitudes, beliefs, and social support, fewer studies have specifically focused on perceived control as an interaction effect that affects the adoption and maintenance of healthy habits. For instance, those who perceive control as having a high degree are more likely to make healthier choices, while those with low levels of perceived control may struggle to initiate or maintain healthy habits. This paper aims to find out the association between healthy habits and perceived control in learning. It suggests that perceived control can significantly impact individuals' motivation and ability to engage in healthy behaviors. There is a strong connection between a person's life and his or her perceived control, which could affect their study performance. Perceived control has significant implications for student learning and achievement, including motivation, self-efficacy, coping with stress and autonomy. In the discussion section, this paper would give some suggestions to students, schools, and institutions to improve the ability of learning and long-term health outcomes.

**Keywords:** perceived control, lifestyle, locus of control, learning

## 1. Introduction

Many kinds of research have shown that perceived control is a robust predictor of people's behavior, thought, emotion, motivation, performance regulation, temptations, and responses in many domains of life [1-5]. The internal and external locus of control vary from difference, and the general expectations of enhanced internal controls and external controls may also be different [6]. Perceived control is typically viewed in contemporary conceptualizations as a variable collection of interconnected ideas that are structured around interpretations of previous encounters in certain domains [7].

The degree to which people think they have control over how their lives turn out is referred to as locus of control. It is a concept that was originally introduced by psychologist Julian Rotter in the 1950s and has been widely studied in psychology [6]. There are some different descriptions of the locus of control. Internal and external locus of control reinforcements are different. Expanded on Rotter's concept of locus of control, three dimensions of control were proposed: internal control, change control, and powerful others control [8]. In addition, a health-specific version of the locus of control scales was developed, called the Multidimensional Health Locus of Control scale [9]. And

the other scale was also developed, called the Children's Locus of Control Scale to measure the locus of control in children [10]. Then, the concept of 'learned helplessness' was introduced, which is related to locus of control and suggests that people can learn to be passive and helpless in response to negative events [11].

However, the concept of 'radical behaviorism' was proposed, which includes the idea that behavior is determined by external factors, rather than internal factors like beliefs or attitudes [7]. But both internal and external locus of control is highlighted in this essay. Individuals who have an internal locus of control think they can impact their own lives and the world around them through their actions [12]. They tend to take responsibility for their successes and failures and believe they can change their circumstances through their efforts. Contrarily, those who have an external locus of control think that other forces like luck, fate, or other people's behavior mostly determine their life [6]. People frequently believe that they have little control over their lives and that their actions have little chance of changing how things turn out.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. The Difference Between Perceived Control and the Sense of Control**

Perceived control and sense of control are related concepts, but they are not exactly the same. Perceived control refers to the extent to which individuals believe that they can influence or control events in their environment. It is a subjective evaluation of the level of control that individuals believe they have over their lives. Perceived control can be influenced by various factors such as past experiences, cultural beliefs, and personality traits [6].

Sense of control, on the other hand, refers to the psychological experience of feeling in control of one's environment. It is a subjective feeling of empowerment that individuals experience when they believe they can influence or control events in their lives [13]. Achievement, societal support, and personal mastery are just a few examples of the variables that can affect one's sense of control.

In summary, perceived control refers to a cognitive evaluation of the level of control that individuals believe they have over their environment, while the sense of control refers to the subjective feeling of empowerment that individuals experience when they believe they have control over their environment.

### **2.2. Locus of Control**

The locus of control can significantly affect behavior and mental health. People who have an internal center of control are frequently more proactive, persistent, and stress tolerant. They also have greater degrees of well-being and are more apt to succeed in their goals. People who have an external center of control, on the other hand, might be more passive, reliant, and prone to helplessness and anxiety [6].

Some theoretical frameworks, such as self-determination theory, suggest that having a sense of autonomy and control over one's life is an important psychological need that contributes to well-being and motivation [14]. For students to learn effectively, a significant amount of schoolwork necessitates self-regulation and volition on their behalf [15]. Students are more likely to participate in learning activities, persevere in the face of difficulties, and set and work toward objectives when they believe they have control over their education. When someone has a regular lifestyle that includes habits and routines that support their learning, they may feel more in control and autonomous, which can enhance their motivation and engagement in learning activities.

Students who have perceived control are better able to cope with stress and setbacks [16]. Students who felt in charge of their learning were better equipped to handle setbacks like receiving poor grades or unfavorable comments [17]. Thus, they are more likely to view challenges as opportunities for

growth and to adopt problem-solving strategies when faced with obstacles. Endurance in the face of difficulties is one of the factors of motivation to learn, and this long-term persistence will become a healthy habit, thus turning into a virtuous circle [18].

One theory that may be relevant to the external locus of control is the concept of learned helplessness. According to learned helplessness, individuals who experience a sense of helplessness or lack of control over their environment may develop a belief that their actions have little impact on their outcomes, leading them to become passive and unmotivated [19]. This could manifest in behaviors such as smoking and excessive alcohol consumption as a means of numbing oneself and feeling a sense of control, even if it is illusory [20].

Understanding the locus of control can help develop a sense of agency and empowerment in your life [6]. And it can also help you identify areas where you may need to work on building more internal control and developing coping strategies for situations that may be outside of your control [14].

### 2.3. Healthy Habits and Learning

Health and lifestyle factors were favorably correlated with perceived control [13]. Self-control and self-discipline are closely related [21], and extremely self-disciplined adolescents outperformed their impulsive peers on every measure of academic achievement [22].

Firstly, habit plays the role in changing one's behavior, as the indicator of the automaticity of the response [23]. A study found that routines and habits can help people feel more in control of their lives, and habits are a crucial tool for helping people self-regulate and accomplish long-term objectives [24]. People who have strong habits and routines tend to experience less stress and have better psychological well-being than those who don't have strong habits and routines [25]. Healthy habits like diet and exercise cause more positive behavioral changes than bad habits like smoking, according to a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of various health behavior interventions [26].

Secondly, healthy lifestyle habits, such as regular exercise and good sleep hygiene, can improve cognitive function and enhance learning. Adults should engage in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity each week, plus muscle-strengthening exercises twice a week, as part of a balanced exercise regimen [27]. A study found that regular exercise can improve memory, attention, and cognitive flexibility [28], while a review found that adequate sleep is essential for optimal learning and memory consolidation [29]. Regularly getting good sleep lowers the likelihood of developing chronic conditions including type 2 diabetes and heart disease, which promotes long-term growth [27].

Thirdly, individuals who reported eating a healthy diet had higher levels of perceived control over their health and well-being [30]. A general sense of self-efficacy, or confidence in one's capacity to complete tasks, may be influenced by healthy eating habits [31]. However, weight loss behaviors and perceptions are influenced differently in different contexts and can also be influenced by gender, macro-level beliefs or values [32]. It is therefore important to promote healthy eating habits as a means of enhancing overall health outcomes and improving individuals' perceived control over their lives.

Furthermore, unhealthy habits are detrimental to perceived control, and individuals who engaged in unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and poor dietary habits had lower levels of perceived control over their health outcomes [33]. For instance, smokers need to increase their perceived control over their withdrawal symptoms to improve their success in quitting [34].

Thus, having healthier habits can help people feel more in control of their learning [35]. When students have a regular routine, they can better anticipate when they will have time to study or engage in learning activities, which can help them feel more prepared and focused [36]. These studies

highlight the importance of developing interventions that target perceived control as a means of promoting healthy behaviors and improving overall health outcomes.

#### **2.4. The Interaction of Perceived Control and Healthy Habits**

Interventions aimed at increasing perceived control can lead to improvements in health behaviors because they help individuals to feel more confident and empowered in their ability to take action and make positive changes in their lives [37]. Those who felt more in control of their eating behaviors were more likely to follow a healthy diet and keep a healthy weight than people who felt less in control [38]. The authors suggest that interventions aimed at increasing perceived control overeating habits may be effective in promoting healthy behaviors and reducing the risk of obesity and other chronic diseases [39]. Developing and maintaining healthy habits can be an effective strategy for changing behavior and promoting long-term health and well-being [40].

The study found that individuals who reported higher levels of perceived control over their physical activity habits were more likely to engage in regular exercise than individuals with low levels of perceived control [41]. The authors suggest that interventions aimed at increasing perceived control and self-efficacy may be effective in promoting physical activity and improving overall health outcomes in young adults [42].

Interventions aimed at increasing perceived control can help to shift individuals' beliefs about their ability to influence their health outcomes by providing education, skills training, and social support [43]. By helping individuals to feel more confident and empowered in their ability to make positive changes, these interventions can contribute to long-term improvements in health and well-being [44].

### **3. Discussion**

The study found that students who engaged in healthy habits, such as regular exercise, sleep hygiene and healthy eating, reported a greater sense of perceived control over their learning outcomes. These healthy habits can improve cognitive function and enhance learning and have long-term health outcomes. Additionally, developing better habits might increase a person's perceived control over their learning, and this kind of perceived control would provide long-standing healthy habits in their lives.

The results of this study might suggest that healthy habits could be a useful strategy for improving students' sense of control over their academic performance. It also suggests that educational institutions could benefit from promoting healthy habits among students as a means of improving academic outcomes.

There are some limitations of some factors in this study. It is significant to remember that many factors can influence perceived control over learning, and having healthy habits is just one of them. Other factors like self-efficacy, motivation, and support from teachers, peers, and family members can also play a significant role in how in control someone feels over their learning. The predictive effects of control and self-efficacy on well-being outcomes point to a possible role for control and self-efficacy-focused health interventions [45].

Furthermore, it is crucial to remember that the locus of control is not always stable and can be affected by several things like experiences, social support, and cultural ideas. Also, it can change depending on the spheres of life. For example, someone may have an internal locus of control in their academic pursuits but an external locus of control in their relationships.

### **4. Results**

While there may be some individual differences in how people respond to having healthy habits, there is some evidence and theory to suggest that having healthy habits facilitate perceived control in

learning. In terms of internal and external locus of control, students could cope with academic learning clearly, and schools and institutions could help them understand the cause of perceived control easily. Since healthy habits not only improve cognitive function and enhance learning but also produce increased control in learning, they can have a long-term positive impact on people in learning and life. Conversely, unhealthy habits can lead to a false sense of control and thus prevent a person from truly having perceived control. The interaction between control and healthy habits can have a more lasting and positive effect on a person's life.

## 5. Conclusion

Having a regular and healthy habits plays a positive role on perceived control in learning, including motivation, self-efficacy, coping with stress and autonomy. There is an interaction between perceived control and the adoption and the maintenance of healthy habits. Moreover, perceived control has positive effects on healthy habits, including motivation and competence. In addition, one of the factors that can affect one's academic performance and achievement in the long term is healthy habits. Meanwhile, maintaining healthy habits also improves perceived control. On the contrary, unhealthy habits have a negative influence on the development of the academic performance of students.

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