

Locus of Control as a Mediator in the Relationship Between Hope and Happiness

Pralhad Adhikari

Department of Psychology and Philosophy,

TriChandra Multiple College, Kathmandu, Nepal

Email: pralhad.adhikari@gmail.com

A peer-reviewed open-access journal

Published by National College of Computer Studies (NCCS), Paknajol Marg,

Kathmandu, Nepal

ISSN: 2822-1605

Received: March 2026; Revised: May 2026; Accepted: July 2026

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.3126/nccsrj.v5i1.99779>

Abstract

People are pursuing happiness. Being hopeful is thought to make them happy. Locus of control (LOC) is one's degree of belief in control over their life outcomes (such as fate vs. action), and is supposed to affect happiness too. This study aimed to examine whether the locus of control (LOC) and hope predicted happiness among the Nepali sample and if the locus of control mediated the relationship between hope and happiness. A cross-sectional survey was conducted by making a convenience sample of 334 persons ($M_{age}=26.4$ years) in Nepal. Participants filled out the Adult Hope Scale, Subjective Happiness Scale, and Internal-External Locus of Control Short Scale-4, along with 1-item measures of belief in fate/action, and hopefulness, and a sociodemographic questionnaire. Internal locus of control (ILOC)/belief in fate and hope positively predicted happiness. External locus of control (ELOC) negatively predicted it. Belief in action could not significantly predict happiness. Internal and external LoC mediated the relationship between hope and happiness partially. Locus of control and hope are determinants of happiness in one's life. ILOC increases happiness and ELOC decreases it. Hope directly affects happiness but it also affects happiness through ILOC and ELOC. The mediation effect of the internal locus is more than that of the external locus of control.

Keywords: Locus of control, happiness, hope, subjective well being (SWB), belief in fate (*bhagya*), belief in action (*karma*)

1. Hope and Happiness: Locus of Control as a Mediator

The Nepali are the happiest people in South Asia but the 93rd among 143 countries in the world (Helliwell et al., 2024). We are all pursuing happiness, positive emotion that reflects subjective well-being. Yet the causes are not understood well enough. Being hopeful is supposed to affect one's happiness in life. Happiness consists of purpose, enjoyment, and satisfaction (Brooks & Winfrey, 2023). Intuitively, we can claim that hopeful people are happier and hopeless people are less happy. Locus of control (LOC) is the extent of belief in control over life choices or their consequences (e.g. fate vs. action, system vs. person). It is the perception of control over one's outcomes in life. Internal LOC (ILOC) can be guessed to increase happiness and external LOC (ELOC) can be guessed to decrease it because ILOC people believe they can control life consequences but ELOC believe that external factors like God control life events.

Hope is the confident expectation of achieving goals. It is the expectation that something will turn out to be favorable in the future. Hope is the cognitive ability to set goals and have plans to achieve them (Snyder et al., 1991). Hope consists of two components: agency thinking and pathways thinking (Snyder et al., 1996). Agency thinking is about perceiving oneself as able to attain goals and pathways thinking is about perceiving oneself as capable of finding strategies to attain the goals (Nguyen & McDermott, 2023). These predicted happiness in children. These may enhance one's well-being such as increase flourishing (Belen et al., 2020) by reducing depression and anxiety (Corrigan & Schutte, 2023).

An anthropologist had claimed that the Nepali are fatalists (Bista, 1991). A qualitative study conducted on beliefs about suicide among older adults of Nepal also reiterated that the Nepali believe fate is an important determinant of life consequences (Adhikari et al., 2025). This research got inspired with the question:

are Nepali fatalists or believers of fate? Even though this study did not answer this question very well, it established the norms to decide if they are, should anyone pursue the same question in future. There is a concept in psychology closely related to fatalism: locus of control. There are two types: internal and external LOC. The internal locus of control (ILOC) is one's belief in their ability to effect life's consequences. The external locus of control (ELOC) is one's belief in the external factors (like God, fate, situation of the country) influencing most of life's consequences.

This study aimed to determine whether hope affected happiness, locus of control affected happiness, and hope mediated the relationship between hope and happiness among the Nepali. This study emerged in the backdrop of sparse availability of positive psychological studies in Nepal such as those done in the past (Adhikari, 2022, 2023b, 2023a). The findings of this study are expected to add more understanding on the knowledge of happiness. Moreover, the interventions to increase subjective well-being including happiness may be informed by the findings of this study.

Hope and Happiness

Hope consists of agency thinking, pathways thinking and goals. In other words, it is the expectation that one will be able to attain goals by using their agency and strategies. Hope had a significant effect on happiness (Khanzadeh et al., 2019). They were significantly correlated (Ghahremani et al., 2020). Hope, being a positive psychological construct, is intuitively connected with more happiness but needs an empirical exploration.

Hope and LOC

In adolescents, locus of control (LoC) was significantly associated with hope (Turan, 2021). It was found to be positively and significantly associated with two measures of external LOC -chance and powerful others (Frankham et al., 2020). Both agency and pathways components of hope correlated significantly with internal locus of control in pregnant women (Delale et al., 2021).

LoC and Happiness

LOC was not significantly associated with happiness (Ramezani & Gholtash, 2015). Internal LOC was not found significantly correlated with happiness in a study (Pannells & Claxton, 2008) but another study (Abedini & Asadi, 2015) showed that it predicted happiness significantly. Moreover, the persons with ILOC differed significantly from ELOC (Pannells & Claxton, 2008). Those with an internal locus of control reported significantly higher happiness scores compared to those with an external locus of control. Happiness may be resulted from the balance of internal and external LOC (April et al., 2012).

Belief in Fate/Action and Happiness

Negotiating with fate lets people set delimitations, act, and get outcomes in life (Au & Savani, 2019). This may not be the same as fatalism. Accepting constraints and redefining actions is a part of negotiating with fate and is likely to bring positive outcomes in life. Feeling helpless by believing in the overpowering nature of fate (fatalism) may negatively impact happiness but negotiating with fate may enhance it. Fate control is the belief that life events are decided by external factors but people have the possibility to change it by their actions (Leung et al., 2002). In Chinese teenagers, the belief in freewill had affected their happiness (Li et al., 2017). Belief in fate or action can be important determinants of happiness.

LOC as Mediator

Locus of control (LOC) has been tested as a mediator in past studies. There are two types of LOC. Internal LoC is the one in which people believe they have control over life outcomes or their actions cause the life events, and external LOC is the one in which people believe that external factors cause their life events and control their life outcomes. Internal locus of control was found to mediate relationship between emotional stability and pro-environmental behavior (Chiang et al., 2019). It also mediated the relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction (Fiori et al., 2006). Locus of control is found to mediate two psychological factors often. So, happiness as an outcome of hope can also be expected to be mediated by locus of control. We can hypothesize that internal LOC mediates and external LOC does not mediate the relationship between hope and happiness.

2. Theoretical Framework

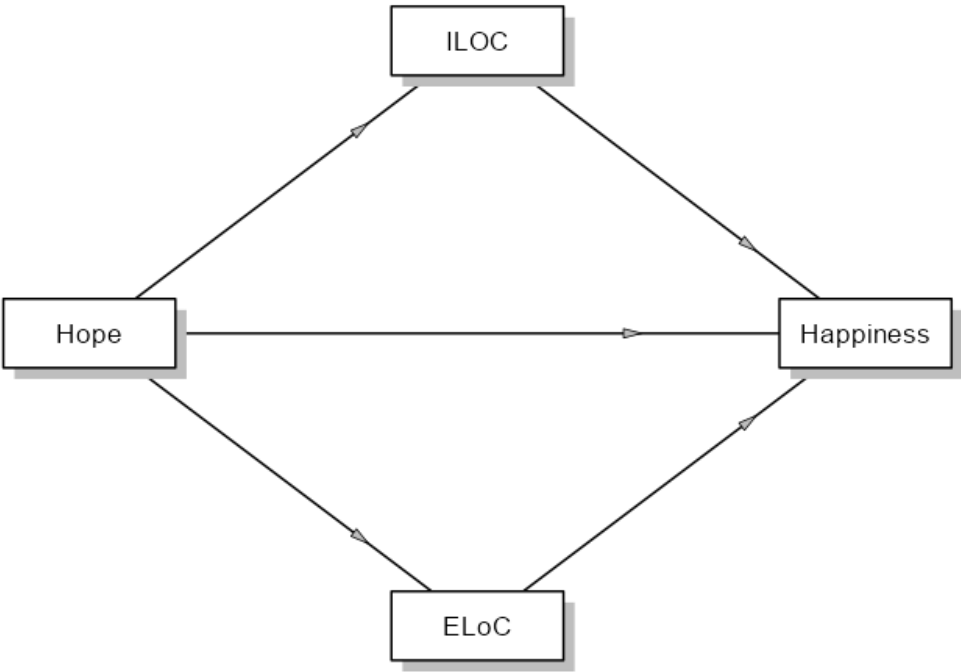
Hope theory (Snyder, 2002) says that hope is perceived capability to adopt pathways with agentic thinking to reach goals. Locus of control theory (Rotter, 1966) says that locus of control is the belief of actions affecting outcomes in life. It is of two types: internal and external. Internals believe in the role of their own efforts and externals believe in the role of external forces to affect outcomes. Subjective well-being theory (Diener, 1984) posits that happiness consists of high positive affect, low negative affect, and high life satisfaction. Hope and perceptions of control (locus of control) can be expected to directly influence subjective well-being such as happiness. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.

Research Gap

It has been established that hope and happiness are significantly related (Botor, 2019). Hope predicts happiness. However, the role of locus of control in this relationship has not been investigated. Locus of control has the potential to mediate the relationship. This study aimed to examine the mediating role of locus of control in the relationship between hope and happiness.

Figure 1

Conceptual Diagram



Note. ILOC Means Internal LOC and ELOC means External LOC

3. Methods

The study is based on the ontology of positivism and epistemology of objectivism. Here reality and concepts such as hope is assumed objective and measurable. This quantitative research had a survey design.

Participants

The mean age of 334 participants was 26.4 (SD=8.28). Participants ranged from 16 to 63 years in age. Half of participants (50.9%) were females, 48.5% were males, 0.6% belonged to the third gender. More than one-fourth (28.7%) participants reported that the district they were living in was the same district they were born in and the remaining said they lived in a different district. There were participants with 128 surnames, the most frequent being Shrestha (10), Bista (10), Magar (10), Thapa (10), Acharya (10), Adhikari (8), Rai (8), Shakya (7), Bhattarai (6), Dahal (6), Maharjan (6), Pandey (6), Gurung (5), Neupane (5), Sapkota (5), and Tamang (5). Participants belonged to more than 100 professions. In administration and management, there were positions such as administrative assistant, manager, and human resource professionals. The healthcare field included nurses, health workers, and therapists, while the IT sector featured software developers, IT specialists, and digital marketers. Other significant categories included business owners and entrepreneurs, educators, engineers, social workers, and professionals in hospitality like chefs and waiters. Additionally, there were labor roles, government service, military jobs, and creatives like artists and graphic designers, illustrating the diversity of occupations represented. Many of the participants were students

Measures

Hope was measured by the Adult Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991). It has 12 items: 4 items to measure agency, 4 items to measure pathways, and the remaining filler items. This is an 8-point Likert scale ranging from “Definitely False” to “Definitely True”. In this survey, two options– “Slightly False” and “Slightly True”– were eliminated because of being similar to the neighboring options and thus had six points. Too many similar options can make the instrument

ineffective as seen in a previous research (McLaren & Adhikari, 2023). This sample had the Cronbach's Alpha of 0.841 for this scale. The Agency Subscale had Cronbach's Alpha of 0.679 and Cronbach's Alpha of 0.795.

The Nepali translation of the English adaptation (Nießen et al., 2022) of Internal–External Locus of Control–4 (Kovaleva et al., 2014) was used to measure internal locus of control. It has two items for internal and two items for external locus of control. This is a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “does not apply at all” to “applies completely”. In this survey, an option “applies somewhat” was removed. For this sample, Cronbach's Alpha for ILOC and ELOC were 0.437 and 0.326. The cause of low values might be due to less number of items: two in each. Inter-item correlation for both ILOC $r=.288$, $p<0.01$ and ELOC $r=.195$, $p<0.001$ was significant. Even though the coefficients are small, they are acceptable for broad concepts.

Happiness was measured by the Subjective Happiness Scale that has four items (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999) and responses are collected in a 7-point Likert scale. This sample had Cronbach's Alpha of 0.369. An example of items in this scale is: “Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?”

One-item measures of fate (translation of *bhagya*), action (translation of *karma*), and hopefulness (translation of *aashabadita*) were used (as shown in appendix) and participants were allowed to rate themselves in scale of 10: 10 meant “completely” and 1 meant “not at all”. An example of the question is: How much do you believe in fate? These items combined had a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.621 for this sample.

Procedures

Both English and Nepali translations of tests were presented to participants for all the three scales. The data were collected online using Google Forms with the help of research assistants who had been trained beforehand to collect data well. They were the students studying Post-graduate Diploma in Counseling Psychology in a college. They met the participants or called them and informed them about the research. They then sent the link to the form and got it filled. There were information and implied consent in Google Forms also. The data was collected in 2023 between April and September.

Ethical consideration: Informed consent was taken. The participation was made voluntary. Confidentiality was maintained by not collecting names. Only surname, age, gender and profession were asked in the sociodemographic questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Jamovi 2.6, Excel and SPSS 27 were used to organize and analyze data. The tests such as correlation, regression and mediation analyses were applied to process data. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the characteristics of the sample.

4. Results

Table 1 shows the descriptives of hope, happiness, internal locus of control, belief in fate, action, and hopefulness about future. If future studies use the same instruments used in this study, they may use the following norms to classify the scores: Low Level for <Q1, Mild Level for Q1-Q2, Moderate Level for Q2-Q3, and High Level for >Q3.

Table 1

Descriptives of Main Variables

	Mean	SD	Mini mum	Maxi mum	Quartile (Q)		
					1	2	3
Belief in Fate	5.88	2.57	1	10	4	6	8
Belief in Action	7.92	2.27	1	10	7	9	10
Hopeful about future	7.13	2.50	1	10	6	8	9
Happiness	18.18	4.78	5	28	15	18	21
ELOC	4.13	1.30	2	8	3	4	5
ILOC	6.04	1.30	2	8	5	6	7
Agency	17.79	3.54	4	24	16	18	20
Pathways	18.71	3.72	4	24	17	19	22
Hope*	36.51	6.67	8	48	32	37	42
Age	26.39	8.28	16	63	21	24	28

Note. ELOC=External LOC, ILOC=Internal LOC. *Response options had six possibilities unlike original scale

Figure 2 shows the frequency of belief in fate and action on the scale of 10. The frequencies indicate that most of the people had higher belief in action compared to fate. While responding to belief in fate, they remained neutral indicated by average rating being the most frequent.

Figure 2

Histograms for Belief in Fate/Action

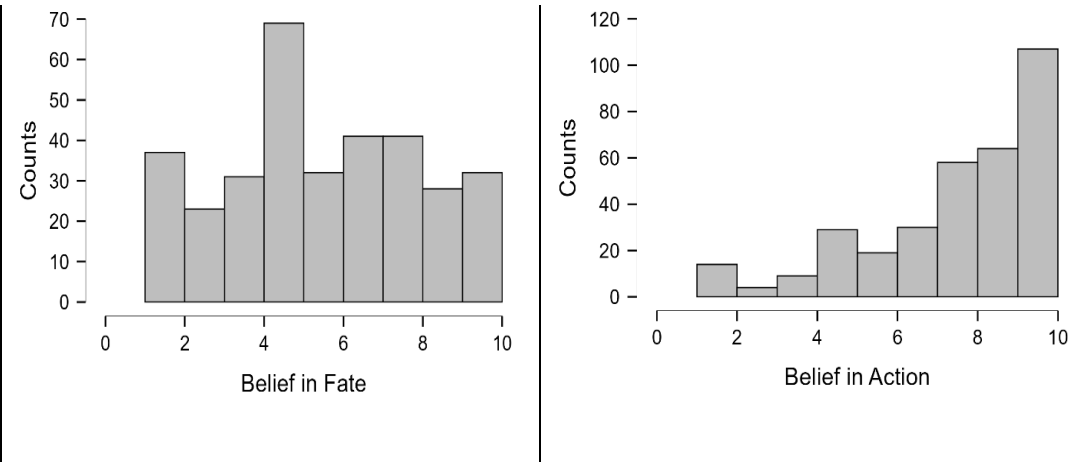
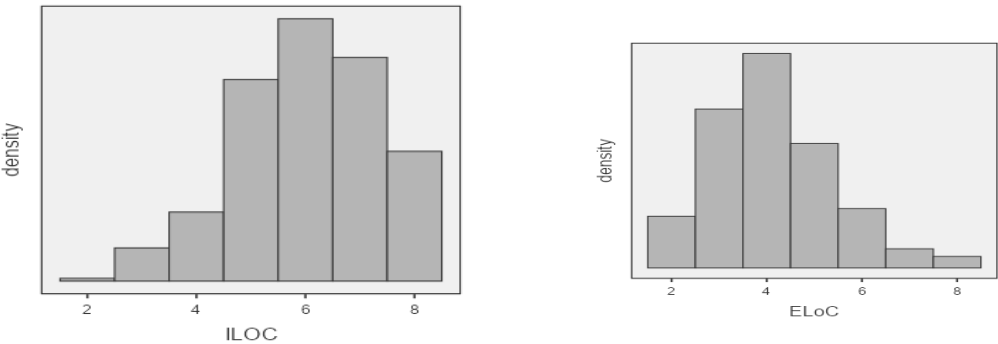


Figure 3 shows the histograms for people with internal and external locus of control. Most of the people had more internal LoC than external LOC. Shapiro-Wilk test showed that ILOC, $W=0.93, p<0.01$ and ELOC, $W=0.92, p<0.01$ did not follow normal distribution. However, their skewness and kurtosis were within ± 2 or an acceptable range. So, parametric tests have been used given a large sample size of 334.

Figure 3

Histogram for Internal/External LOC



Correlation

Table 2 shows that hope, happiness, and LoC (internal and external) are significantly correlated with each other. Hope and hopefulness both correlated significantly and positively with happiness. ELOC correlated significantly and negatively with happiness and hope (and its components), but did not correlate with belief in fate. ILOC correlated significantly and positively with them.

Table 2

Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Belief in Fate									
2 Belief in Action	0.31***								
3 Hopefulness	0.28***	0.49***							
4 Age	-0.19***	-0.15**	-0.07						
5 ILoC	0.12*	0.36***	0.25***	-					
				0.01					
6 ELoC	0.01	-0.33***	-0.24***	0.07	-0.19***				
7 Happiness	0.23***	0.30***	0.42***	0.07	0.32***	-0.28***			
8 Agency	0.19***	0.26***	0.37***	0.05	0.39***	-0.24***	0.47***		
9 Pathways	0.29***	0.32***	0.31***	-	0.39***	-0.21***	0.45***	0.69***	
				0.06					
10 Hope	0.24***	0.32***	0.37***	-	0.42***	-0.24***	0.50***	0.91***	0.92***
				0.01					

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < 1

Regression Analysis

The first regression analysis was run to examine if belief in fate/action and hopefulness about future predict happiness. As shown in the Table 3, belief in fate and hopefulness about the future significantly predicted happiness. The model was significant, $F(3, 330) = 27.5, p < .01$ and 20% variance was explained by the independent variables.

Table 3

Regression model with belief in fate/action and hopefulness as predictors

Predictor	B	SE	t	P	β
Intercept	10.69	0.94	11.36	<.01	
Belief in Fate	0.20	0.10	2.04	.04	0.11
Belief in Action	0.21	0.12	1.70	0.09	0.10
Hopefulness	0.66	0.11	6.06	<.01	0.35

Note. All independent variables were measured by 1-item scale.

The second regression analysis was run to examine if agency and pathways (components of hope), and locus of control predicted happiness. As shown in the Table 4, all of them significantly predicted happiness. The model was significant, $F(4, 329) = 33.8, p < .01$ and 29.1% variance was explained by the independent variables.

Table 4

Regression model with internal/external locus of control, agency and pathways as predictors

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	β
Intercept	7.04	1.74	4.04	<1	
ILOC	0.44	0.19	2.34	0.02	0.12
ELOC	-0.57	0.18	-3.22	01	-0.16
Agency	0.34	0.09	3.82	<1	0.25
Pathways	0.26	0.08	3.09	02	0.20

In the third model, hope (as a whole) and LoC significantly predicted happiness. The model was significant, $F(2, 330) = 67.6, p < .01$ with 29% explanation of variance as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Regression model with internal/external locus of control and hope as predictors

Predictor	B	SE	t	p	β
Intercept	7.07	1.74	4.06	<1	
ILOC	0.44	0.19	2.35	0.019	0.12
ELoC	-0.57	0.18	-3.25	01	-0.16
Hope	0.30	0.04	7.95	<1	0.41

In both the second and third models, prediction of internal LoC was positive and that of external LOC was negative. In other words, internal LOC increases happiness and external LOC decreases happiness.

Mediation

The first mediation model was run to examine if LoC mediated the relationship between hope and happiness. The Table 6 shows that both direct and indirect effects were significant. So, the mediation effect of internal locus of control on the relationship between hope and happiness was partial. So was the effect of external locus of control, but to a smaller extent, $\beta=0.038$. Positive coefficient suggests that hope increased happiness through an increased sense of internal control. To a smaller extent, hope influenced happiness through changes in external locus of control. Hope had a strong direct effect on happiness, even when controlling for the mediators

Table 6
Mediation model with internal/external locus of control as mediators in relationship of hope and happiness

Type	Effect	B	SE	95% C.I. (a)		β	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	Hope $\Rightarrow$ ILOC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.04	0.02	0.01	0.07	0.05	2.28	0.02
	Hope $\Rightarrow$ ELoC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.04	2.66	0.01
Component	Hope $\Rightarrow$ ILOC	0.08	0.01	0.06	0.10	0.42	8.48	<1

Type	Effect	B	SE	95% C.I. (a)		β	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
	ILOC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.44	0.19	0.08	0.81	0.12	2.36	0.02
	Hope $\Rightarrow$ ELoC	- 0.05	0.01	-0.07	- 0.03	- 0.24	-4.59	<1
	ELoC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	- 0.57	0.18	-0.92	- 0.23	- 0.16	-3.27	0
Direct	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.30	0.04	0.22	0.37	0.41	8	<1
Total	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.36	0.03	0.29	0.43	0.50	10.60	<1

Note. Confidence intervals computed with method: Standard (Delta method)

The second mediation model was run with components of hope as independent variables and LoC as mediator. The Table 7 shows that both direct and indirect effects were significant. So, ELoC mediated the relationship between agency and happiness significantly but the effect size was small, $\beta = 0.0288$. The direct effect of agency on happiness is much stronger, $B=0.3379$.

Table 7

Mediation model with internal/external locus of control as mediators in relationship of agency/pathways and happiness

Type	Effect	B	SE	95% C.I. (a)		β	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	Agency $\Rightarrow$ ILOC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.04	0.02	- 4.40e-4	0.08	0.03	1.94	0.05
	Agency $\Rightarrow$ ELoC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.04	0.02	0	0.08	0.03	2	0.05
	Pathways $\Rightarrow$ ILOC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.04	0.02	- 6.45e-4	0.07	0.03	1.92	0.05
	Pathways $\Rightarrow$ ELoC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.05	0.01	1.04	0.30
Component	Agency $\Rightarrow$ ILOC	0.09	0.03	0.04	0.13	0.23	3.39	<1
	ILOC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.44	0.19	0.08	0.81	0.12	2.36	0.02
	Agency $\Rightarrow$ ELoC	-0.07	0.03	-0.12	-0.02	-0.19	- 2.54	0.01
	ELoC $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	-0.57	0.18	-0.91	-0.23	-0.15	- 3.24	0
	Pathways $\Rightarrow$ ILOC	0.08	0.02	0.03	0.13	0.23	3.32	<1
	Pathways $\Rightarrow$ ELoC	-0.03	0.03	-0.08	0.02	-0.08	- 1.10	0.27
Direct	Agency $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.34	0.09	0.17	0.51	0.25	3.85	<1
	Pathways $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.26	0.08	0.10	0.42	0.20	3.11	0
Total	Agency $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.41	0.09	0.24	0.59	0.31	4.71	<1
	Pathways $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.31	0.08	0.14	0.47	0.24	3.69	<1

Note. Confidence intervals computed with method: Standard (Delta method)

The third mediation model was run with belief in fate/action as mediators, hope as independent and happiness as dependent variables. The Table 8 shows that belief in action mediated the relationship partially but belief in fate could not. Mediation effect was not very strong, $\beta=0.0422$.

Table 8

Mediation Model with Belief in Fate/Action as Mediators in Hope–Happiness Relationship

Type	Effect	B	SE	95% C.I. (a)		β	z	p
				Lower	Upper			
Indirect	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Belief in Fate	0.01	0.01	0	0.03	0.02	1.64	0.10
	$\Rightarrow$ Happiness							
Component	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Belief in Action $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.04	2.42	0.02
	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Belief in Fate	0.09	0.02	0.05	0.13	0.24	4.43	<1
	Belief in Fate $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.16	0.09	-0.02	0.34	0.09	1.76	0.08
	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Belief in Action	0.11	0.02	0.07	0.14	0.32	6.07	<1
	Belief in Action $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.28	0.11	0.07	0.49	0.13	2.64	0.01
	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.31	0.04	0.25	0.38	0.44	8.89	<1
Total	Hope $\Rightarrow$ Happiness	0.36	0.03	0.29	0.43	0.50	10.60	<1

Note. Confidence intervals computed with method: Standard (Delta method)

5. Discussion

Hope and hopefulness both predicted happiness. Internal and external locus of control predicted happiness but external LOC predicted it negatively. They mediated the relationship between hope and happiness. Internal LOC was a more effective mediator in this relationship. External LOC mediated the relationship between agency and happiness too. Belief in fate predicted happiness significantly. Belief in action mediated the relationship between hope and happiness.

Interpretation of Results

A rough indication is that the Nepali are less fatalist than believers of actions. They are more believers of action than those of fate. They believe in action more than they do in fate. However, these concepts need not be interpreted as antonymous. The believers of fate may also be the believers in action. Belief in fate predicted happiness but belief in action indirectly affected happiness caused by hope. Having hope is empirically proven to increase happiness in the Nepali sample. Being hopeful is different from being optimistic. Being optimist involves doing nothing and expecting good results to come but hope involves both agency and pathways. In other words, hope is the belief that triggers one to do the actions and adopt various strategies.

Result of mediation analysis has shown that people with higher hope experience more happiness due to an increased internal locus of control. ELOC has a weaker effect compared to ILOC. Hope contributes to happiness through both direct pathways and its effects on locus of control, with ILOC being a more influential mediator compared to ELOC. Agency thinking is motivational in nature, and related well with happiness but was mediated by external LOC feebly. This is an interesting interaction and mixes the action-orientation and fate-orientation. This also indicates that belief in fate and action should not be disjoint concepts; they

NCCS Research Journal, 5 (1), 86-116

need not be antonymous and can coexist. Result of regression analysis has pointed to the fact that ELOC may decrease happiness.

Comparison with Past Studies

Various psychological causes of happiness have been identified. Enjoyment is making pleasure with people and creating memories. Joy after struggle is satisfaction. Having purpose in life gives meaning. Happiness is made up of enjoyment, satisfaction, and meaning (Brooks & Winfrey, 2023). Meaning consists of coherence, significance and purpose. Happiness is not a destination but a direction. The happiness experts have suggested developing family, friendship, faith, and meaningful work. This study has established that hope and locus of control predict happiness. So, it has posited that cognitive factors are important to determine one's happiness.

External LOC was negatively associated with happiness in the past (Devin et al., 2012). This study also showed that it predicted happiness negatively. Internal LOC was significantly associated with subjective well-being (Kesavayuth et al., 2022). This study also showed that internal LOC predicted happiness positively. Hope and happiness were significantly related (Lonkar, 2024). This study also showed that hope and its components predicted happiness significantly. In addition, this study showed that LOC mediated the relationship of hope and happiness.

Limitations

The measures of LOC and happiness had low internal reliability. So, validity and thus accuracy of measurement may be questionable. The sample was non-probabilistic. So, we should be cautious during generalization of the findings. The demographic factors were not accounted for in the regression models. Some demographic variables like marital status, employment, and age may play an

important role in happiness. Global conclusion for all age groups or all genders may lead to overgeneralization or missing of specific patterns of happiness. This sample was dominated by emerging adults i.e. adults below 30 (Arnett, 2015). Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of this study may undermine causality claimed in it.

Implications

This study has contributed to the theory of happiness. This study has reiterated that happiness depends on both hope and locus of control (an indicator of perception of control). It also depends on belief in fate and action. The finding that locus of control mediates the relationship between hope and happiness should be helpful to understand the pathways to happiness. This study also supported the notion that belief in fate and belief in action are overlapping concepts, not contradictory ones. As predicted by hope theory, hope predicts happiness. As predicted by the locus of control theory, internal LOC leads to more happiness than external LOC does.

If the interventions are designed to increase happiness, they should account for hope and locus of control. Hope (or hopefulness) needs to be increased. So does the internal locus of control. The external locus of control needs to be checked/controlled. Belief in action (*karma*) also contributes to overall happiness indirectly. Belief in fate is also helpful but negotiating with fate may be better than considering fate as unchangeable.

There are methodological implications. One-item measure of action and hopefulness correlated well with related concepts. One-item measure of fate did not correlate well with external locus of control but correlated significantly with belief in action and internal locus of control. One-item measures show the possibility of measuring the constructs well when researchers need to assess them quickly. This

NCCS Research Journal, 5 (1), 86-116

study somewhat validated the Nepali versions of the scales used to measure hope, happiness, and locus of control.

Future Research

Future studies can investigate other predictors of happiness. Studies have concluded that happiness results from having meaning in life, helping others (Aknin & Whillans, 2020), having family, cultivating friendship, doing enjoyable work, and finding faith/spirituality, being connected to community, and developing intent to develop habit friendly to creating happiness (Brooks & Winfrey, 2023). Moreover, metacognition is helpful to cultivate happiness. Beyond these, there may be other psychological and social factors.

Happiness may not be the result of existing traits and abilities. So, the cultivation of happiness is a possibility (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2019). The future studies may focus on this aspect. However, biological factors such as genetically decided “set point” may be majorly responsible for the level of happiness one has in life (Cummins, 2012). So, exploring happiness from the biological perspective is needed too.

In addition, the mediating role of LOC was established by the current research. Future studies may figure out other mediators in the relationship between hope and happiness. For example, extraversion may be another factor. Moreover, the theories about happiness made in the developed nations may be verified in the Nepali context.

6. Conclusion

The Nepali may be less fatalist and more believers of action (karma). It may be possible that they are both at the same time. A new cross-national study is needed to confirm this conclusion. The norms developed in this study can clarify this thing

in future. Happiness is being searched by us all but many causes are unclear yet. This study showed that three cognitive factors—hope, belief in fate, and locus of control— are important determinants. Moreover, LOC mediates the relationship between hope and happiness. So does belief in action (not fate). Future studies should further identify other psychological, biological, and social determinants. Furthermore, other mediators need to be identified in the relationship between the determinants and happiness.

References

- Abedini, M., & Asadi, M. S. (2015). Study of relationships among lifestyle, health locus of control, and happiness in students. *Basic Clin Cancer Res.*, 7(4), 9–17. <https://bccr.tums.ac.ir/index.php/bccrj/article/view/191>
- Adhikari, P. (2022). Satisfaction as the moderator between discrimination and stress at work. *Tribhuvan University Journal*, 37(1), 15–29. <https://doi.org/10.3126/tuj.v37i1.48207>
- Adhikari, P. (2023a). Happiness as the predictor of life satisfaction: Job satisfaction as their mediator. *XICJ*, 5(1), 31–35. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7796711>
- Adhikari, P. (2023b). Individual work performance and job satisfaction: Life satisfaction as a mediator. *Civil Service Journal*, 43, 201–206. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8310807>
- Adhikari, P., Kitchingman, T., Lewis, C., & McLaren, S. (2025). Written in fate: Nepali older adults' understanding of suicide. *Clinical Gerontologist*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07317115.2025.2541765>
- Aknin, L. B., & Whillans, A. V. (2020). Helping and happiness: A review and guide for public policy. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 15(1), 3–34.
- NCCS Research Journal, 5 (1), 86-116

<https://doi.org/10.1111/sipr.12069>

April, K. A., Dharani, B., & Peters, K. (2012). Impact of locus of control expectancy on level of well-being. *Rev. Eur. Stud.*, 4, 124.

<https://doi.org/10.5539/res.v4n2p124>

Arnett, J. J. (2015). *Emerging adulthood: The winding road from the late teens through the twenties* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Au, E. W. M., & Savani, K. (2019). Are there advantages to believing in fate? The Belief in negotiating with fate when faced with constraints. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 464512.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYG.2019.02354/BIBTEX>

Belen, H., Yildirim, M., & Belen, F. S. (2020). Influence of fear of happiness on flourishing: Mediator roles of hope agency and hope pathways. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 72(2), 165–173. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajpy.12279>

Bista, D. B. (1991). *Fatalism and development: Nepal's struggle for modernization*. Orient Longman.

Botor, N. J. (2019). Hope predicts happiness with life, personal well-being, and resilience among selected school-going Filipino adolescents. *International Journal of Sciences: Basic and Applied Research*, 47(2), 125–141.

<https://www.gssrr.org/index.php/JournalOfBasicAndApplied/article/view/10159>

Brooks, A. C., & Winfrey, O. (2023). *Build the life you want*. ACB Ideas LLC and Harpo, Inc.

Chiang, Y.-T., Fang, W.-T., Kaplan, U., & Ng, E. (2019). Locus of control: The mediation effect between emotional stability and pro-environmental

behavior. *Sustainability*, 11(3), 820. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11030820>

Corrigan, J. A., & Schutte, N. S. (2023). The relationships between the hope dimensions of agency thinking and pathways thinking with depression and anxiety: A meta-analysis. *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology*, 8(2), 211–255. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41042-023-00099-1>

Cummins, R. A. (2012). The determinants of happiness. *International Journal of Happiness and Development*, 1(1), 86–101. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJHD.2012.050833>

Delale, E. A., Novokmet, N., Fuchs, N., Dolanc, I., Mrdjen-Hodžić, R., Karelović, D., Janković, S., Milanović, S. M., Cameron, N., & Missoni, S. (2021). Stress, locus of control, hope and depression as determinants of quality of life of pregnant women: Croatian Islands' Birth Cohort Study (CRIBS). *Health Care for Women International*, 42(12), 1358–1378. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2021.1882464>

Devin, H. F., Ghahramanlou, F., Fooladian, A., & Zohoorian, Z. (2012). The relationship between locus of control (internal – external) and happiness in pre-elementary teachers in Iran. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 4169–4173. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.220>

Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95(3), 542–575. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.95.3.542>

Fiori, K. L., Brown, E. E., Cortina, K. S., & Antonucci, T. C. (2006). Locus of control as a mediator of the relationship between religiosity and life satisfaction: Age, race, and gender differences. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 9(03), 239–263.

Frankham, C., Richardson, T., & Maguire, N. (2020). Do locus of control, self-NCCS Research Journal, 5 (1), 86-116

esteem, hope, and shame mediate the relationship between financial hardship and mental health? *Community Mental Health Journal*, 56(3), 404–415.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-019-00467-9>

Ghahremani, L., Tehrani, H., Rajabi, A., & Jafari, A. (2020). The relationship between the concepts of hope and happiness in students. *Iranian Journal of Health Education and Health Promotion*, 8(2).

<https://doi.org/10.29252/ijhehp.8.2.107>

Helliwell, J. F., Layard, R., Sachs, J. D., Neve, J.-E. De, Aknin, L. B., & Wang, S. (2024). *World Happiness Report*. <https://happiness-report.s3.amazonaws.com/2024/WHR+24.pdf>

Kesavayuth, D., Binh Tran, D., & Zikos, V. (2022). Locus of control and subjective well-being: Panel evidence from Australia. *PloS One*, 17(8), e0272714. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0272714>

Khanzadeh, M., Aminimanesh, S., Hadian, S. A., & Aliasgari, R. (2019). Role of locus of control on students' happiness with the mediating of optimism and hope. *Positive Psychology Research*, 5(3), 29–38. <https://doi.org/10.22108/ppls.2020.113941.1569>

Kovaleva, A., Beierlein, C., Kemper, C. J., & Rammstedt, B. (2014). Internale-Externale Control Generation-4 (IE-4) [in German]. *Zusammenstel-Lung Sozialwissenschaftlicher Items Und Skalen*. <https://doi.org/10.6102/zis184>

Leung, K., Bond, M. H., de Carrasquel, S. R., Muñoz, C., Hernández, M., Murakami, F., Yamaguchi, S., Bierbrauer, G., & Singelis, T. M. (2002). Social axioms: The search for universal dimensions of general beliefs about how the world functions. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 33(3), 286–302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022102033003005>

- Li, C., Wang, S., Zhao, Y., Kong, F., & Li, J. (2017). The freedom to pursue happiness: Belief in free will predicts life satisfaction and positive affect among Chinese adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7(JAN), 223145. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FPSYG.2016.02027/BIBTEX>
- Lonkar, V. A. (2024). Association of hope and resilience with happiness among young adults. *IJCRT*, 12(2), 268–277. <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2402261.pdf>
- Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. S. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46(2), 137–155. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006824100041>
- McLaren, S., & Adhikari, P. (2023). Hope and suicidal ideation among older adults living in the rural mid-hills of Nepal. *Clinical Gerontologist*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07317115.2023.2274049>
- Nguyen, S. P., & McDermott, C. (2023). Positive future expectancies: When hopeful thinking contributes to happiness in children. *Journal of Cognition and Development*, 24(4), 459–485. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15248372.2022.2159962>
- Nießen, D., Schmidt, I., Groskurth, K., Rammstedt, B., & Lechner, C. M. (2022). The Internal–External Locus of Control Short Scale–4 (IE-4): a comprehensive validation of the English-language adaptation. *PLoS One*, 17(7), e0271289. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0271289>
- Pannells, T. C., & Claxton, A. F. (2008). Happiness, creative ideation, and locus of control. *Creativity Research Journal*, 20(1), 67–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10400410701842029>
- Ramezani, S. G., & Gholtash, A. (2015). The relationship between happiness, NCCS Research Journal, 5 (1), 86-116

self-control, and locus of control. *International Journal of Educational and Psychological Researches*, 1(2), 100–104. <https://doi.org/10.4103/2395-2296.152222>

Rotter, J. B. (1966). Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of reinforcement. In *Psychological monographs: General and applied* (Vol. 80, Issue 1, pp. 1–28). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0092976>

Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2019). Revisiting the sustainable happiness model and pie chart: Can happiness be successfully pursued? *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 16(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2019.1689421>

Snyder, C. R. (2002). Hope theory: Rainbows in the mind. *Psychological Inquiry*, 13(4), 249–275. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327965pli1304_01

Snyder, C. R., Harris, C., Anderson, J. R., Holleran, S. A., Irving, L. M., Sigmon, S. T., Yoshinobu, L., Gibb, J., Langelle, C., & Harney, P. (1991). The Will and the ways: Development and validation of an individual-differences measure of hope. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60(4), 570–585. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.60.4.570>

Snyder, C. R., Sympson, S. C., Ybasco, F. C., Borders, T. F., Babyak, M. A., & Higgins, R. L. (1996). Development and validation of the State Hope Scale. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(2), 321. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.70.2.321>

Turan, M. E. (2021). The relationship between locus of control and hope in adolescents: The mediating role of career and talent development self-efficacy. *Australian Journal of Career Development*, 30(2), 129–138. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10384162211008888>

Appendix

Fate, Action & Hope Scale भाग्य, कर्म र आशा जाँच

Indicate by tick mark in a scale of 10. ठीक चिह्न लाएर १० को स्केलमा आफूलाई उपयुक्त ठाउँमा राख्नुहोस्	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
How much do you believe in fate? तपाईं भाग्यमा कति विश्वास गर्नुहुन्छ?	Not at all ठ्याक्कै गर्दिन 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely पूरे गर्हु 10
How much do you believe in action? तपाईं कर्ममा कति विश्वास गर्नुहुन्छ?	Not at all ठ्याक्कै गर्दिन 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely पूरे गर्हु 10
How hopeful are you about future? तपाईं कति आशावादी हुनुहुन्छ?	Not at all ठ्याक्कै छैन 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Completely पूरे छु 10