# Locus of Control and Sense of Happiness: A Mediating Role of Self-esteem?

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**Abstract** This study recruited 182 participants (126 female, 56 male) to complete a survey consisting of three scales examining the relationship between self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control (LOC) among high school students in Kuwait. It is recognized that the relationship between self-esteem, happiness, locus of control is complex: Internal LOC is related to rather high self-esteem; self-esteem is a powerful and important psychological factor in mental health and well-being; the feeling of being empowered is associated with significant achievements and high self-esteem; and strong and appropriate self-esteem is correlated with more internal LOC. A plenty of various empirical studies results have been analyzed in order to establish theoretical basis for empirical study. Data were collected using Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and Locus of Control Scale (T. Petti). The purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating role of self-esteem, exploring the relationships between self-esteem and happiness, and self-esteem and LOC.

**Keywords** Self-esteem · Happiness · Locus of control · Mediator

## 1 Introduction

Positive psychology has demonstrated increasing interest in recent years (Seligman & Csikszentmihaly, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2002). In order to understand the positive aspects of psychological achievements, researchers have explored individual differences analyzing constructs such as self-esteem, happiness, self-efficacy, hope, optimism, life satisfaction, and positive affect. Those scientific concepts are examined by researchers independently within specific field, with only occasionally comparatively study the connections between them. That is why

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there are assumptions stating these constructs are to some degree truly conceptually and empirically distinct. Some theoretical models and definitions of happiness are definitely different from theoretical models and definitions of self-esteem, and the various models of locus of control are distinct from the various definitions of self-esteem and happiness. However, the fundamental empirical distinctions among the constructs are less clear, what makes it combinative analysis more challenging. For instance, to what level do happiness, locus of control and self-esteem overlap, relate or occur in cause-effect relationships, and do they have significantly different sets of correlates? The few studies that have examined such overlap clearly demonstrate that many of the constructs within positive psychology are strongly intercorrelate.

The theoretical and empirical studies in the last 20 years have indicated that self-esteem is a significant and powerful psychological factor in the quality of life, health, and well-being. It is identified that the feelings of being worthy and empowered are related to strong, high self-esteem which can result in positive changes such as more efforts to gain success, achievements, being hard-working, and tendency to have a better health status (Mann, Hosman, & Schaalma, et al., 2004). Howard Mumford Jones once said that "happiness…belongs to that category of words, the meaning of which everybody knows but the definition of which nobody can give" (Freedman, 1978 in Lyubomirsky, 2006).

The main objective of current study is to examine the relationship between all three concepts (happiness, locus of control, and self-esteem) from theoretical and empirical perspectives. In particular, this study addresses the following broad research questions:

- Is self-esteem just an index of global happiness?
- May happiness be possible or realizable without a healthy self-confidence and self-acceptance?
- To what extent does self-esteem influence on the level of happiness?
- Is high self-esteem a sufficient condition for happiness?
- Is self-esteem is a strong predictor of internal locus of control maintenance?
- Is high self-esteem related to internal LOC, while low self-esteem to external LOC?

## 2   Relationship Between the Basic Constructs

In many empirical studies, researchers from different fields were working on examining the relationship between various variables significant for positive psychology, including self-esteem, well-being, feeling of control, need for achievement, personality, social support, and personal experience. The majority of studies were searching for correlation between mentioned variables. Collected data in this matter provided possibilities to create many assumptions related to the connection between self-esteem, happiness, optimism, mindfulness, locus of control, etc. However,

many studies provided controversial results, what makes difficult generalizing the relationship between those variables and creates many research questions for further studies.

In the following paragraphs, the most significant data attempting to describe the relationship between happiness and self-esteem, happiness and locus of control, happiness and self-esteem and locus of control are discussed. One of the milestone issues is the role of self-esteem in human being's life.

## 2.1 Relationship Between Self-esteem and Happiness

Intuitively, researchers associated happiness and self-esteem, considering them as inextricably linked through the life experience, personal achievements or failures, social support, etc. In everyday experience, happy individuals tend to consider themselves as a worth empowered people, while people who experience deficit of self-respect or self-worth consider themselves as unhappy. This assumption was proved in many empirical studies, revealing moderate to high correlations between measures of happiness and self-esteem (Campbell, 1990; Diener & Diener, 1999; Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999; Schimmack, Oishi, Furr, & Funder, 2004). Whereas few researchers would state that happiness and self-esteem should be considered as synonymous, self-esteem is often used as an indicator of psychological well-being or global happiness (Ryff, 1989).

Nonetheless, happiness and self-esteem are so intimately related that it is extremely difficult to disconnect them conceptually. Actually, happiness may not be recognized or achieved without a high but appropriate level of self-acceptance and self-confidence. Furthermore, Ryff (1989) deduced that the most iterative criterion for positive well-being is the individual's feeling of self-esteem or self-acceptance (Myers, 2002; Diener, 1999). On a contrary, happiness and self-esteem are considered as discriminable and distinct constructs. Albeit, some models conceptualized self-esteem as adaptive and crucial construct for happiness, they do not provide a congruent characterization of happiness and may be dissimilar to many of the individual's happy or unhappy experiences (Parducci, 1995). However, indicators such as a high income, a prestigious job, or a good marriage do not guarantee happiness (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999), as well as high self-esteem is not an adequate condition for happiness. Consecutively, this approach may help justify why the relationship between self-esteem and life satisfaction (as a happiness index) fluctuates in collectivist versus individualist cultures (Diener & Diener, 1999). Additionally, Lucas, Diener, and Suh (1996) conducted a complex study aiming systematical analysis of the association between self-esteem and psychological well-being, applying multitrait-multimethod matrix analyses to demonstrate that life satisfaction is empirically recognizable from self-esteem (Diener & Diener, 1999).

Discussing the differentiation between happiness and self-esteem, a study by Hermans (1992) has to be analyzed. Hermans provides some insight into the nature of the distinction between the two constructs, underlining that although self-esteem

and happiness are positively correlated with each other, the correlation is not perfect. That is why some individuals have relatively low levels of happiness but relatively high levels of self-esteem (and vice versa).

Hermans' (1992) findings suggest that the difference between happiness and self-esteem might be related to the two fundamental interpersonal dimensions of agency and communion (Wiggins & Trapnell, 1996). Agency refers to individuation, with one end of the dimension representing submissiveness and the other end reflecting dominance and ambition. Communion refers to the affiliative nature of individual's behavioral patterns and motivations, where one end of the dimension represents a tendency to be hostile, aloof, and cold, while the other end reflects an orientation toward social acceptance and warmth (Wolfe, Lennox, & Cutler, 1986). Furthermore, these two core dimensions have consistently appeared in gender comparative research, including studies of gender differences in happiness, well-being, and self-esteem. Admittedly, Hermans' findings imply that self-esteem is aligned with agency, while happiness is aligned with communion.

Despite special attention paid to happiness and self-esteem among modern studies, there are only a few include analyses of self-esteem as a significant mediator in relationship to happiness. In this terms, extremely interesting was discovered in study by Baron and Kenny (1986), in which self-esteem and self-criticism are examined as mediator variables between parenting style and happiness. Unfortunately, not too many studies have been conducted on the relationships between self-esteem and happiness, what indicates the necessity of futher attempts to examine that relatioship.

## 2.2    Relationship Between Self-esteem and Locus of Control

Basically, locus of control and self-esteem are contemplated as socially learned and self-developed life attitudes. Subsequently, internal locus of control is characterized as a belief that events are dependent on one's own permanent traits or behavior, while external locus of control is defined as a belief that outcomes are the result of luck, fate, chance, or control of powerful others or are unpredictable due to the complexity of situations (Rotter, 1990). Moreover, individuals with an internal locus of control consistently engage in adaptive and proactive behaviors (Rothbaum, Weisz, & Snyder, 1982).

In addition, Rotter (1990) advocated that this perception of personal control could be best conceptualized as the extent to which an individual develops the expectancy that one's behavior is associated with either external or internal reinforcements. Consequently, he argued that individuals with an internal locus of control were more likely to believe that they had control in most situations or influence on their own behavioral outcomes. On a contrary, Rotter advocated that individuals who are possessing an external locus of control tended to believe that situations were controlled by external factors.

Contrariwise, high self-esteem demonstrates strong association with internal locus of control, or in other words, the highly confident individual perceives that

own outcomes are determined by own actions (Whisman & Kwon, 1993). Additionally, person with high confidence level and control over own life is associated with the ability to adjust to repeated psychosocial stress, while individuals with low confidence and external locus of control create a relationship with continuous high cortisol stress responses (Kirschbaum, Bartussek, & Strasburger, 1992).

## 2.3 Relationship Between Self-esteem, Happiness, and Locus of Control

Judge and Bono (2001), Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoreson, (2002) investigated the empirical overlap among self-esteem, locus of control, self-efficacy, and emotional stability, and they conclude that "these traits are indistinct measures of the same core trait," which they refer to as core self-evaluations (Judge & Bono, 2001, p. 108; Judge et al., 2002). Similarly, Furr and Funder (1998) proved that measures of happiness, life satisfaction, depression, and self- esteem are significantly correlated with each other and laden on a single factor.

Consequently, acknowledging the significance of empirical overlap among the miscellaneous constructs related to positive psychology, researchers have recently admitted the need to explore the differences among those constructs. Subsequently, in a theoretical review of individual differences in happiness, Lyubomirsky (2001) declared that an important question for researchers to consider is whether the empirical findings in the happiness literature "reflect the role of chronic happiness, rather than that of self-esteem, optimism, extraversion, feeling of control, sensitivity to reward, or other individual difference constructs … related to happiness" (p. 244).

Despite the recent attention paid to self-esteem, locus of control, and happiness, independently, both empirical and theoretical equivocations within each resource make many clear impossible predictions about the nature of their empirical distinction. Furthermore, in terms of theoretical framework, no model has reached consensus as a definitive theoretical approach for either locus of control, happiness, or self-esteem.

# 3   Methodology

## 3.1   Hypothesis

This study examined the relationships between self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control, accenting on mediating effects of self-esteem.

$H_1$:   Self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control are significantly interrelated.
$H_2$:   Self-esteem is positively related to locus of control.

H$_3$:  Self-esteem is positively related to happiness.
H$_4$:  Gender has a significant influence on the relationships between self-esteem and happiness, self-esteem and locus of control.

## 3.2  Measures

Participants were asked to complete all of the following scales: Locus of Control Scale, Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

To measure Locus of control, I used the self-rating scale developed by Terry Petti John test based on Rotter's original idea. Rotter (1966) devised a locus of control personality test to assess the extent to which an individual possesses internal or external reinforcement beliefs. The response format of this measure is a true or false scale. The 20 items of this test measure two types of locus of control: internal and external.

Feeling of happiness was measured using the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ), a 29-item questionnaire, based on a seven-point rating scale from (7) agree through to (1) disagree. It has a test–retest reliability of 0.78 and a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of between 0.64 and 0.87. It has a reported validity of 0.43 with friend's ratings of happiness on a 10-point scale. It also correlates with positive affect, life satisfaction, and depression at $r = 0.40$–$0.60$. High scores indicate high state happiness.

To measure self-esteem, I used Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg 1965), a 10-item scale designed to measure adolescents' global feeling of self-worth or self-acceptance. It has claimed a test–retest reliability of 0.85. It rated on a four-point scale from (1) strongly agree through to (4) strongly disagree, for ten statements designed equally to be positive and negative. Interpretation: a higher score = External Locus of Control; a lower score = Internal Locus of Control. It is one of the most well-used measures to assess self-esteem because of the proven construct, concurrent, and predictive validity (Blascovich and Tomaka 1991). Rosenberg (1979) reported that the scale is correlated modestly with mood measures.

## 3.3  Participants

Data were collected among high school students of 18–19 years old in Kuwait. The survey was distributed to 221 students; subsequently, 182 usable replies were received.

## 3.4 Procedure

Participants were invited to participate in study on a voluntary basis. The questionnaires delivered to the participants were in English language. The whole process of answering took about 30 min to complete. There were no problems with neither understanding the purpose of survey nor instructions and questions of each scale.

## 4 Results

In this part, the most significant results are going to be presented, including descriptive statistics, correlation, partial correlation, and ANOVA. For statistical analysis, SPSS was applied. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics on gender: 126 female and 56 male.

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics on the basic constructs, respectively, self-esteem, locus of control, and happiness, including mean and standard deviation. Based on the presented data, it is possible to have a general conclusion regarding the following gender differences:

**Table 1** Descriptive statistics of the main study

|  |  | Frequency | Percent | Valid percent | Cumulative percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Female | 126 | 57.0 | 69.2 | 69.2 |
|  | Male | 56 | 25.3 | 30.8 | 100.0 |
|  | Total | 182 | 82.4 | 100.0 |  |
| Missing | System | 39 | 17.6 |  |  |
| Total |  | 221 | 100.0 |  |  |

**Tables 2** Descriptive statistics for each of the measured construct with gender differentiation

| Construct | Gender | Mean | Std. deviation | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-esteem total | Female | 20.03 | 3.974 | 126 |
|  | Male | 18.59 | 3.855 | 56 |
|  | Total | 19.59 | 3.983 | 182 |
| LOC total | Female | 60.87 | 11.209 | 126 |
|  | Male | 60.89 | 15.554 | 56 |
|  | Total | 60.88 | 12.660 | 182 |
| Happiness— total | Female | 4.152 | 0.5434 | 126 |
|  | Male | 3.851 | 0.5882 | 56 |
|  | Total | 4.059 | 0.5731 | 182 |

- There is no difference between groups in LOC (male group M = 60.89, female group M = 60.87),
- there is a difference in sense of happiness—in male group, the level of happiness is lower (male group M = 3.851, female group M = 4.152), and
- there is a difference in self-esteem—in male group, the level of happiness is lower (male group M = 18.59, female group M = 20.03).

Table 3 demonstrates correlation results between self-esteem, locus of control, and happiness in two different gender groups.

The relationships between self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control were investigated using Pearson correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The strong positive correlation was discovered in both female and male groups. Among women, the positive correlation is discovered between happiness and self-esteem ($r = 0.389$, $n = 126$, $p < 0.01$), happiness and locus of control ($r = 0.392$, $n = 126$, $p < 0.01$). In a male group of participants, self-esteem

**Table 3** Correlation of self-esteem, locus of control, and happiness among male and female

| Gender | | | Self-esteem total | LOC total | Happiness—total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | Self-esteem total | Pearson correlation | 1 | 0.167 | 0.389** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.061 | 0.000 |
| | | N | 126 | 126 | 126 |
| | LOC total | Pearson correlation | 0.167 | 1 | 0.392** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.061 | | 0.000 |
| | | N | 126 | 126 | 126 |
| | Happiness—total | Pearson correlation | 0.389** | 0.392** | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | |
| | | N | 126 | 126 | 126 |
| Male | Self-esteem total | Pearson correlation | 1 | 0.525** | 0.642** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| | | N | 56 | 56 | 56 |
| | LOC total | Pearson Correlation | 0.525** | 1 | 0.477** |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | | 0.000 |
| | | N | 56 | 56 | 56 |
| | Happiness—total | Pearson correlation | 0.642** | 0.477** | 1 |
| | | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | |
| | | N | 56 | 56 | 56 |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed)

was positively correlated with locus of control ($r = 0.525$, $n = 126$, $p < 0.01$) and happiness ($r = 0.642$, $n = 126$, $p < 0.01$), locus of control with happiness ($r = 0.477$, $n = 126$, $p < 0.01$).

To be able to answer the question of how much variance those constructs share, the coefficient of determination was calculated. In case with women group, self-esteem helps to explain nearly 15% of the variance in respondent's scores on perceived happiness and locus of control, and locus of control explains nearly 15% of the variance in respondent's scores on perceived happiness and self-esteem. In group of male participants, self-esteem allows to explain nearly 23% of the variance in respondent's scores on perceived happiness and locus of control. Additionally, in male group, locus of control helps to explain nearly 42% of the variance in respondents' scores on perceived happiness and self-esteem. Finally, happiness helps to explain nearly 28% of the variance in respondent's scores on perceived self-esteem and locus of control.

Table 4 shows partial correlation between self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control investigating the role of each in controlling the relationships between the other two variables.

Partial correlation was used to explore the relationships between each pair of three basic constructs with controlling role of each of them over the other pair of

**Table 4** Partial correlation between self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control

| Control Variables | | | LOC total | Happiness —total | Self-esteem total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| -None-[a] | LOC total | Correlation | 1.000 | 0.410 | 0.292 |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | . | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| | | df | 0 | 180 | 180 |
| | Happiness - total | Correlation | 0.410 | 1.000 | 0.489 |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.000 | . | 0.000 |
| | | df | 180 | 0 | 180 |
| | Self-esteem Total | Correlation | 0.292 | 0.489 | 1.000 |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | . |
| | | df | 180 | 180 | 0 |
| Self-esteem total | LOC total | Correlation | 1.000 | 0.320 | |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | . | 0.000 | |
| | | df | 0 | 179 | |
| | Happiness— total | Correlation | 0.320 | 1.000 | |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.000 | . | |
| | | df | 179 | 0 | |

[a]Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations

variables. There was a strong positive correlation between locus of control and happiness ($r = 0.320$, $n = 182$, $p < 0.000$), self-esteem and happiness ($r = 0.424$, $n = 182$, $p < 0.000$), and locus of control and happiness ($r = 0.115$, $n = 182$, $p < 0.000$). An inspection of the zero-order correlation ($r = 0.410, 0.489, 0.292$, respectively) suggested that controlling for locus of control has very low effect on the strength of the relationship between happiness and self-esteem, while self-esteem has a moderate effect on the relationships between happiness and locus of control, and finally happiness has quite high effect on the relationships between self-esteem and locus of control.

In order to investigate the interrelation between self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control, hierarchical multiple regression was performed. Tables 5, 6 and 7 show the ANOVA results, where dependent variable is self-esteem, and the independent variables were happiness and LOC.

Table 5 shows model summary of the regression for measured variables. It shows that model as a whole explains 49.9% of variance (Pearson $R = 0.499 \times 100\%$). Happiness and LOC explain additional 24.9% of variance ($R^2 = 0.249 \times 100\%$) even when the effects of self-esteem are statistically controlled for.

Table 6 shows the relationship between dependent variable that is self-esteem and two independent variables that is happiness and locus of control (LOC). According to findings related to regression, residual value calculated. The results show that self-esteem depends on level of happiness, but LOC does not depend on happiness level (F: $p$-value $< 0.05$). The hypothesis $H_1$ accepted because of the significance of relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Table 7 shows the measurement ratio (B/Std. Error) of coefficient and standard error in the given data set (above table). It shows the level of each variable's contribution to the final equation. According to the findings of $t$-value for self-esteem found by calculating the B/Std. Error equation which is

**Table 5** Model summary[b]

| Model | R | $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ | Std. error of the estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.499[a] | 0.249 | 0.241 | 3.471 |

[a]Predictors: (constant), happiness—total, LOC total
[b]Dependent variable: self-esteem total

**Table 6** ANOVA[a]

| Model | | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 715.511 | 2 | 357.756 | 29.694 | 0.000[b] |
| | Residual | 2156.582 | 179 | 12.048 | | |
| | Total | 2872.093 | 181 | | | |

[a]Dependent variable: self-esteem total
[b]Predictors: (constant), happiness—total, LOC total

**Table 7** Coefficients

| Overall | | B | Std. error | Beta | T | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.958 | 1.923 | | 2.579 | 0.011 |
| | LOC total | 0.034 | 0.022 | 0.110 | 1.543 | 0.125 |
| | Happiness—total | 3.087 | 0.494 | 0.444 | 6.255 | 0.000 |

4.958/1.923 = 2.579, respectively, other values would be 1.543 for LOC and 6.255 for happiness. Only happiness is significant (0.000 < 0.005); LOC is not significant (0.125 > 0.005). The significance of measured variables is demonstrated as $y = 4.958 + 0.034$ (LOC) $+ 3.087$ (happiness). To sum up, there is only one variable that makes a statistically significant contribution—happiness, while LOC did not make a unique contribution.

## 5 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between self-esteem, perceived happiness, and locus of control. The current research study can relate to other studies, which supports the relationships between three constructs. This study stands out from others in that it sought to examine the correlation between self-esteem and happiness, self-esteem and LOC among male and female in Kuwait, trying to identify whether self-esteem is playing a mediating role.

While significant results and correlations were found, limitations were present as well. One of the limitations of the study that may have affected the results was small sample of male participants, which did not allow for a full representation of all high school students. Additionally, the survey should include more demographic information, such as age, education profile, and family status for descriptive statistical purposes.

The first prediction was that self-esteem, happiness, and locus of control are significantly interrelated. The results showed that there was a statistically significant correlation between all three constructs: Those who reported higher self-esteem also reported higher sense of happiness rather internal LOC. However, stronger relationships are noticed between self-esteem and happiness in comparison with self-esteem and LOC. There is high correlation between happiness and LOC, as well as happiness and self-esteem. Results of previous research studies (e.g., Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge et al., 2002; Furr & Funder, 1998) investigated the empirical overlap among self-esteem, locus of control, and happiness and concluded that these constructs are significantly correlated with each other and combined in a single factor.

Another hypothesis that was presented prior to research was that self-esteem is positively related to locus of control. The results indicated a statistically significant relationship between self-esteem and LOC among male participants, where students reported having high self-esteem and rather internal or both internal and external

LOC. Results of other studies (e.g., Whisman & Kwon, 1993; Kirschbaum et al., 1992) demonstrated strong relationship between high self-esteem and internal locus of control, as well as person with high confidence level and control over own life is associated with the ability to adjust to repeated psychosocial stress. Alizadeh (2004) discovered a positive significant correlation between self-esteem and internal LOC, but no significant relationships between self-esteem and external locus of control. This hypothesis was proved partly. This could be because of society in Middle East has more gender-based differences.

Next prediction was that self-esteem is positively related to happiness. The results showed that there was a statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and happiness in both male and female groups. Results of previous studies (e.g., Argyle, 2001; Myers, 2002) showed that traits such as self-esteem and personal control were associated with happiness, what suggests considering these features as elements of happiness. Other similar studies (Hermans, 1992; Diener et al., 1999) conceptualized self-esteem as a component of overall satisfaction with life and sub-component of subjective well-being. The Oxford Happiness Inventory contains also self-esteem as the major dimensions of well-being (Argyle, 2001). This prediction was supported positively.

The last hypothesis was that gender has a significant influence on the relationships between self-esteem and happiness and between self-esteem and locus of control. Other studies (e.g., Heatherton, 1991; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) stated that self-esteem is indissoluble from social environment and influenced by cultural and social norms and values in which people are raised, and some people may experience collective self-esteem because they are tended to establish their self-esteem on their social identities. Furthermore, some studies (e.g., Hermans, 1992) showed that gender has differentiating influence in comparative research on happiness and self-esteem.

Discussion about the mediating role of self-esteem can be extended on theoretical and empirical background. A number of studies that have been discussed in this paper were analyzed the self-esteem as the dependent variable rather than the independent or classification one. Consequently, these studies assume that self-esteem can be temporarily affected. As a result, fluctuations in state of self-esteem are related to reliance on social judgments, increased sensitivity, and concern about how others view the self and even hostility and anger. Besides, those with a weak sense of self-esteem respond extremely favorable to positive feedback, while extremely protective to negative feedback. It could be said that social perception and judgments are extremely influential in such a small country like Kuwait, Middle East Region.

# 6  Conclusion

This study was an attempt to examine the currently most widespread research areas —happiness, self-esteem, and locus of control—and to find the possible answer to the question of the mediation or determination of self-esteem in relationship to happiness and locus of control. It was expected that there is a strong correlation between all three analyzed concepts with attributing a special mediating role to self-esteem.

Regardless the lack of consensus agreement in general model of happiness, it is commonly conceptualized in terms of pleasant affective experience that can appear as a relatively stable individual difference or as an emotional state. Similarly, no single model of self-esteem has been accepted, and none occurs to integrate self-esteem with happiness.

It is recognized that the relationships between locus of control, happiness, and self-esteem are complex. There are plenty of researches conducted on each of those variables separately but in relationship to some other variables like personality, job satisfaction, creativity, and mental health, which provided a background for the basic hypothesis of this study: Self-esteem performs as a mediator in relationship to happiness and locus of control. Analyzed data allowed to find answers for the research questions. Examined findings indicated that there are different relationships between mentioned constructs, among which the most significant are listed below:

- Self-esteem can be defined as an attitude or belief about own abilities and importance, as a global feeling of self-worth, as an indicator of involvement into significant groups and relationships, and as an indicator of psychological well-being or global happiness;
- self-esteem is considered as most iterative criteria for positive well-being, performing as adaptive and crucial construct for happiness; however, high self-esteem is not an adequate condition for happiness;
- self-esteem and happiness are positively correlated with each other, but that correlation is not perfect, meaning in reality some individuals have relatively high self-esteem but relatively low level of happiness;
- self-esteem demonstrates strong association with internal locus of control;
- significant correlation between internal locus of control and happiness might be influenced by other variables; and
- gender demonstrates significant differences in well-being, happiness, and self-esteem.

Discussed theories and analyzed data indicate important research areas; requiring focusing on formulation of research questions for the future studies is related to the following statements:

- are self-esteem dimensions (global, social, performance, and physical) make measurement of its role in mediating feeling happy and self-powerfulness more precise;

- to which extent personality and social context are variables influencing self-esteem, happiness, and LOC;
- to which extent locus of control is correlated with person's well-being, emotional happiness, and ability to cope with stress;
- if the difference between happiness and self-esteem can be strictly related to the two fundamental interpersonal dimensions of communion and agency, respectively.

To be able to state more precisely about mediating role of self-esteem, the further studies have to be conducted in a way that results will be applicable in a larger social practice with considering more variables influencing that role.

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