Journal An-Nafs
Kajian Penelitian Psikologi
ISSN (Cetak) : 2528-0600
ISSN (Online): 2549-6166
https://ejournal.iai-tribakti.ac.id/index.php/psikologi
https://doi.org/10.33367/psi.v8i1.3580

Personal Growth Initiative in Students in The Post-Pandemic Transition: Optimism, Internal Locus of Control, and General Self-Efficacy

Ria Wardani[1]*, Jacqueline Mariae Tjandraningtyas[2]
Universitas Kristen Maranatha Bandung, Indonesia
[1]ria.wardani@psy.maranatha.edu, [2]jacqueline.mt@psy.maranatha.edu
*Correspondence

Article Information:
Received February 28, 2023
Revised May 22, 2023
Accepted May 30, 2023

Keywords:
Self-efficacy
Internal locus of control
Optimism
Personal growth initiative

Abstract

Personal Growth Initiative (PGI) refers to the change process done on purpose and reflects how a person changes and develops himself throughout his life span. University students, who are in the phase of emerging adulthood, will face many demanding and challenging events, so this is inevitably an opportunity for them to develop their potential to become fully functioning people. Various factors can encourage personal growth, namely optimism, internal locus of control, and general self-efficacy; besides, socio-demographic factors such as age, birth order in the family, parent's education, parent's occupation, and the semesters already attended at university. The instrument used is the Personal Growth Initiative Scale, the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) to measure optimism, the Internal Locus of Control scale, and the New General Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSE). Through hierarchical regression analysis, the research findings show that general self-efficacy is the strongest predictor of personal growth initiatives, followed by locus of control and optimism. In addition, the socio-demographic data that consistently shows the role of personal growth initiatives is the participants' attended semesters with a negative orientation. The participants' decreasing motivation likely caused the finding due to the increasing number of attended semesters.

INTRODUCTION

The global pandemic that hit the world more than three years ago due to the coronavirus emerged policies for keeping distance and social restrictions for all activities that made many people feel psychologically uncomfortable and often impacted individual mental health, without exception. School and work activities carried out using the network have limited intimate social interaction among individuals, leaving feelings of loneliness, sadness, and worry for most people going through difficult times due to the global pandemic.

Individual groups who are affected by this social restriction policy are university students. Along with changes in the trajectory of development toward adulthood, Arnett uses the term emerging adulthood, characterized by experimentation before taking on roles and responsibilities as adults (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). The life stage occurs at the end of adolescence and young adulthood in the age range of 18 to 25, so university students have unique characteristics. The characteristics are a period of identity

exploration, instability, self-focus, and feeling in-between, which has implications for individual mental health. For example, exploring identity can make individuals enthusiastic about doing it but, on the other hand, doubt and worry about themselves because they feel they have not been able to find options for development paths that will be explored to achieve love relationships and the intended field of work (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). The social restriction policy due to the global pandemic has more or less affected individual opportunities to leave, addressing the mental health implications of the developmental characteristics of this emerging adulthood period.

The emerging adulthood phase initiated by Arnett faces so many paths of choice, so preparation for adult life is longer than half a century ago (Papalia & Martorell, 2021). Existence at the higher education level provides an academic environment allowing students to interact socially with various parties. It will play an essential role in helping students achieve their future career goals. Likewise, college life becomes an environment that offers opportunities for students to actualize themselves and find the meaning of life. This means that being at the higher education level opens up wider opportunities for individuals to develop themselves in all aspects of life as a form of preparation for adulthood.

Even though university students were confined during the pandemic, that does not mean they have lost the opportunity to develop themselves. Post-pandemic life should encourage university students to gradually plan actions to improve themselves as a form of investment in building the future. Being in college is an important time for university students to hone themselves to build the right life values and perspectives about their world and the power to rise from pressure (Liu et al., 2019). The mindset of university students is not only a determinant of their academic achievement. However, it will also determine their ability to adapt to the work and social environment in the future. Therefore, explaining the factors and mechanisms of psychological well-being in university students is necessary (Liu et al., 2019). This is a form of personal growth. According to the well-being framework from Ryff and Singer, personal growth is an essential component of positive psychological functioning (Mason, 2019). The results of previous research show that PGI skills are inversely related to psychological pressure but are related in line with indicators of well-being (Mason, 2019).

The concept of personal growth initiative (PGI) was first introduced by Robitschek, as stated by Patanapu, Doshi, Kulkarni, Reddy, Adepu, & Reddy (2018). Individuals with PGI will demonstrate better problem-solving skills, deal with various situations in life proactively, and respond proactively to the changes they encounter (Patanapu et al., 2018). According to Robitschek & Cook, cited by Mason (2019), university students with PGI or the desire to carry out a process of change based on personal encouragement will influence more advanced cognitive and behavioral traits, which will ultimately be related to success as students.

The process of change that a person deliberately carries out is seen as PGI, as

well as a way for a person to change himself and develop throughout the life span. Robitschek emphasizes that PGI consists of conscious and unconscious processes and that growth includes various parts of the self to carry out personal growth processes in various circumstances of human life (Aranha et al., 2019). So, the ability to identify and make personal changes that will enhance one's positive development when certain circumstances occur (such as educational transitions, childbirth, and promotion) is a manifestation of PGI.

Students with PGI who develop in such a way will proactively answer and overcome difficulties found in everyday life and demonstrate better problem-solving skills (Patanapu et al., 2018). Accordingly, Soylu et al. (2021) state that when studying at a university, a person will repeatedly make efforts for personal growth, especially in facing many educational challenges.

Many factors influence PGI, one of which is optimism. Optimism is a way that can help individuals observe and consider many things. Optimistic people will view life not from a negative perspective but always hope to produce something positive (Ain, 2019). Optimism, an innate tendency to expect positive outcomes in various domains of life, is one of the signs that can predict well-being (Heo et al., 2017), as also reinforced by the results of previous research, which showed that optimism is related to components of psychological well-being (Agarwal & Malhotra, 2019; Maheshwari & Jutta, 2020). Someone with an optimistic perspective will be moved to take the initiative to carry out personal growth to develop themselves actively.

Another factor that influences PGI is the internal locus of control. The results of previous research (Hough et al., 2021; Baluku et al., 2022) found a relationship between internal locus of control and psychological well-being. Similarly, the literature confirms that individuals with a high internal locus of control experience high psychological well-being (Micheletto et al., 2022). As a dimension of psychological well-being, personal growth plays a role that guides psychological well-being and is known to have a relationship with the internal locus of control (Micheletto et al., 2022). Someone with a high internal locus of control will tend to develop personal abilities and realize their potential in a positive direction (Baluku et al., 2022). Thus, this internal locus of control will assist individuals in interpreting personal growth as a process that must be actively carried out because it is strengthened by beliefs in the ability to control the circumstances encountered in the life journey.

The next factor that influences PGI is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a construct that Bandura has developed in social cognitive theory, defined as a person's belief in his ability to manifest behavior to achieve the desired target, as well as an assessment of his skills and abilities in coping with various circumstances in the environment (Lönnfjord & Hagquist, 2018). Previous research shows that self-efficacy can influence PGI (Çankaya et al., 2017; Sharma & Rani, 2014). Coşkun et al. (2022) cite Wood and Bandura's statement through the social cognitive theory that people with high self-

efficacy show persistence in trying and dare to act according to the demands of the situation. This means people with high self-efficacy will be more proactive in growing and changing.

Within PGI, four components work synergistically, including readiness for change, playfulness, using resources, and intentional behavior. The existence of general self-efficacy (GSE) will be able to optimize personal growth. Based on the results of the study, PGI is related to various variables such as psychological well-being, career exploration, family functioning, mental health, and self-efficacy (Sharma & Rani, 2013). The novelty of this research is combining optimism, internal locus of control, and general self-efficacy with being examined their contribution to PGI. In addition, this study also analyzes the role of sociodemographic factors, namely age, gender, semesters already attended at university, parents' education, parents' occupation, college status, the birth order in the family, and the number of siblings.

METHODS

This research is a quantitative study with correlational regression techniques. The research sample was selected using a purposive random sampling technique, which means that all university students with active status have the same opportunity to become participants in this study. Data was collected online using the snowball technique, so a total of participants were 129. Participants in this study were active university students studying at several campuses in Bandung City who had directly taken online learning and currently transitioning to face-to-face lectures. Along with filling out the online questionnaire, participants were asked to fill out informed consent first.

There are four research instruments to measure three independent variables and one dependent variable. The measuring tool for optimism uses the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R) constructed by Cano-Garcia et al. (2015). This measuring instrument has ten items, but the validity test results showed six out of 10 valid items with a validity range of 0.44 - 0.66 and a reliability index of 0.57. An example of an optimism measuring item is "optimistic about the future." The internal locus of control variable was measured using the internal locus of control scale constructed by Suárez-Álvarez et al. (2016). The validity test results showed that nine out of 10 items were valid with a range of 0.51 - 0.82 and a reliability index of 0.85. An example of the item is that "success is a consequence of the effort made." General self-efficacy was measured by the New General Self-Efficacy (NGSE) constructed by Chen et al. (1999). It consists of eight items, and based on the validity test results, all of these items were valid with a range of 0.72 - 0.84 and had a reliability index of 0.91. An example of a general self-efficacy item is, "I am confident of being able to achieve most of the goals that have been set." Finally, PGI was measured by the personal growth initiative scale from Robitschek (2003), consisting of nine items. The validity test results showed that all

items were valid, with a range of 0.48-0.80 and a reliability index of 0.86. An example of the item is that "I plan specific actions to achieve goals."

The research data was tested using hierarchical multiple regression to determine how several predictor variables could predict the dependent variable by including socio-demographic factors. The research hypothesis being tested is:

Hypothesis 1: Optimism influences PGI

Hypothesis 2: Internal locus of control influences PGI

Hypothesis 3: Self-efficacy influences PGI

Hypothesis 4:Optimism, internal locus of control, and general self-efficacy simultaneously influence PGI.

RESULTS

This research involved 129 participants, all active university students currently studying at universities in Bandung City.

Table 1

Overview of Demographic Data

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	98	76
	Female	31	24
Age	Less than 20 years	58	45
	More than 20 years	71	55
College status	Public Universities (PTN)	31	24
	Private Universities (PTS)	98	76
Semester attended	Beginning (1-3)	29	22.5
	Middle (4-6)	64	49.6
	End (7-8)	36	27.9
Birth order in the family	Oldest	57	44.2
	Middle	33	25.6
	Youngest	59	30.2
Number of siblings	Two persons	77	59.7
	More than two people	52	40.3
Mother's Education	Less than high school	9	7
	High school and equivalent	48	37.2
	Undergraduate	61	47.3
	Postgraduate	11	8.5
Father's Education	Less than high school	7	5.4
	High school or equivalent	41	31.8
	Undergraduate	67	51.9
	Postgraduate	14	10.9
Mother's occupation	Housewife	72	55.8
	Civil servant	10	7.8
	Private sector employee	23	17.8
	Entrepreneur	13	10.1
	Other	11	8.5
Father's occupation	Civil servant	16	12.4
	Private sector employee	41	31.8
	Entrepreneur	53	48.3
	Other	20	15.5

Table 1 shows that most participants are male students (76%), and (24%) are female. Their age was generally over 20 (55%), and the rest (45%) were under 20. Besides,76% of university status were active university students studying at private universities (76%), and (24%) of university students were studying at public universities. Most university students were in semesters 4-6 (49.6%). In general, the participants had parents (mother and father) with an undergraduate level of education, but most of the participants had mothers who were housewives (55.8%).

Before testing the regression, the research data was tested using classical assumptions. This classic assumption test includes the normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. All test results are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Classical Assumption Test Results

Classical Assumption Test	Test	Results	Conclusion
Normality	Graph of observed and predicted values	Linear trend	Fulfilled
Multicollinearity	Tolerance value and VIF	Tolerance > 0.01, VIF < 10	Fulfilled
Heteroscedasticity	Graph of residual and predicted values	Random trend	Fulfilled

Based on the results of the classical assumptions test as a requirement for conducting regression analysis, it is known that all testing procedures have been fulfilled so that the research data meets the requirements.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistic

Factor	Average	Standard Deviation	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Median
Internal Locus of Control	37.67	4.37	26	45	35.50
New General Self-Efficacy	31.87	4.76	18	40	29.00
Optimism	20.92	3,41	10	29	19.50
Personal Growth Initiative	34.71	5.06	21	45	33.00

Table 4
Profile of Research Variables

Factor	% Low	%High
Internal Locus of Control	31.0	69.0
New General Self-Efficacy	29.5	70.5
Optimism	33.3	66.7
Personal Growth Initiative	42.6	57.4

Descriptive descriptions and profiles of participants based on the variables studied can be seen in Table 3 and Table 4. It shows that, in general, participants (70.5%) had high confidence about overcoming various challenges and demands of life (NGSE), and 69% focused more on internal strengths to control the situation (ILC) in daily life. 66.7% of participants tended to have positive perspectives on current or future circumstances, and 57.4% tended to desire self-change continually (PGI) to express awareness of the need to prepare for a better future life.

Table 5

Results of Hierarchical Regression Tests

	Influence of Variables (t Test)														
R^2	Model	Konstanta	ILC	NGSE	OPT	Jenis Kelamin	Usia	Status PT	Semester Tempuh	Urutan Anak	Jumlah Saudara	Pendidikan Ibu	Pendidikan Ayah	Pekerjaan Ibu	Pekerjaan Ayah
*** 0,56	Model 1	3,73	0,24 ***	0,54 ***	0,22 **										
*** 0,56	Model 2	3,56	0,25 ***	0,53 ***	0,23 **	0,11									
*** 0,56	Model 3	7,58	0,24 **	0,54 ***	0,23 **	0,14	-0,19								
*** 0,56	Model 4	7,96	0,24 **	0,54 ***	0,22 **	0,14	-0,20	-0,24							
*** 0,57	Model 5	2,30	0,24 **	0,53 ***	0,21 **	0,10	0,19	-0,29	-0,32 *						
*** 0,57	Model 6	2,56	0,24 **	0,53 ***	0,21 *	0,10	0,19	-0,30	-0,32 *	-0,08					
*** 0,57	Model 7	2,51	0,24 **	0,53 ***	0,21 *	0,10	0,20	-0,30	-0,32 *	-0,07	-0,02				
*** 0,58	Model 8	-0,61	0,24 **	0,53 ***	0,22 **	0,28	0,26	-0,43	-0,39 **	-0,09	-0,02	0,77 *			
*** 0,58	Model 9	-0,71	0,24 **	0,52 ***	0,23 **	0,26	0,25	-0,44	-0,40 **	-0,11	0,00	0,73	0,12		
*** 0,59	Model 10	-2,15	0,24 **	0,54 ***	0,23 **	0,27	0,24	-0,34	-0,34 *	-0,15	-0,04	0,77	0,12	0,45	
*** 0,59	Model 11	-2,09	0,24 **	0,54 ***	0,23 **	0,26	0,24	-0,34	-0,35 *	-0,14	-0,04	0,78	0,10	0,45	-0,02
*** 0,60	Model 12	-1,12	0,24 **	0,52 ***	0,25 **	0,22	0,18	-0,33	-0,38 *	-0,09	-0,12	0,59	0,08	0,44	-0,02
*** 0,60	Model 13	-0,24	0,24 **	0,53 ***	0,25 **	0,18	0,17	-0,34	-0,38 *	-0,09	-0,11	0,61	0,03	0,45	-0,03
*** 0,60	Model 14	-0,15	0,24 **	0,52 ***	0,27 **	0,22	0,19	-0,41	-0,39 **	-0,07	-0,15	0,63	0,02	0,44	0,01

*Signifikan pada Tingkat Kekeliruan 10%
**Signifikan pada Tingkat Kekeliruan 5%
***Signifikan pada Tingkat Kekeliruan 1%

The hierarchical regression test results showed that internal locus of control, general self-efficacy, and optimism simultaneously affected PGI by R^2 = 0.56 ***. Among the three factors that influence PGI, it was found that general self-efficacy (NGSE) had the most significant effect (R^2 = 0.54***) and showed consistent values until all demographic factors were added to the hierarchical testing model (*** meaning that it was significant at an error rate of 1%). The strength of this simultaneous influence was getting stronger in line with the addition of demographic factors, as seen from the change in the value of R^2, which was initially R^2 = 0.56*** to R^2 = 0.57***, R^2 = 0.58***, R^2 = 0.59***, and R^2 = 0.60***. Among the demographic factors added to the testing model, only semesters that were already attended consistently influenced PGI in a negative direction (value of R^2 = -0.32* to R^2 = -0.40**), which means that the lower the semester will increasingly magnify individual initiative to change.

DISCUSSION

The college environment offers opportunities for university students to actualize themselves, find the meaning of life, and build independence to prepare for the future. Arnett classifies students currently pursuing higher education as being in the emerging adult period with an age range of 18-25 years (Papalia & Martorel, 2021).

While at higher education, gradually, individuals begin to plan actions to develop themselves as a form of investment in building the future. This form of personal growth refers to the main elements of positive psychological functioning. PGI refers to a person's desire to continuously and intentionally change thoughts, behavior, and emotions (Luyckx & Robitschek, 2014) with all their potential. Participants with high PGI will actively plan efforts to achieve future goals (Yalçın & Malkoç, 2013), and concerning higher education, they are always encouraged to make repeated efforts for personal growth, especially in facing many educational challenges (Soylu et al., 2021).

The impact of the pandemic, which limited many human activities in the last three years, did not dampen university students' encouragement to realize their desire to be actively involved in changing thoughts, behaviors, and feelings (Table 1 and Table 3). Sustainable self-growth is reflected through the content of four components in it, namely readiness to realize self-change, having an understanding that change requires planning, participating in utilizing external resources that are seen as able to support personal change and taking concrete actions that are directed to the realization of self-change (Luyckx & Robitschek, 2014).

This study focused on predictor variables derived from internal resources: optimism, internal locus of control, and general self-efficacy. The findings of this study indicate that these three internal resources simultaneously influence participants' desire to make changes within themselves continuously despite experiencing limitations as a form of pandemic adaptation. However, among these three sources, the main force driving PGI is self-efficacy, with an effect of 52% to 54% (Table 4). This finding aligns with the statement that PGI is predicted by self-efficacy (Çankaya et al., 2017; Sharma & Rani, 2014). The initiative to always grow is determined by the belief that a person can do what he wants, so he always hopes to make self-improvement intentionally and continuously.

The social restriction policy during a pandemic creates problems for individuals. Even if every individual who faces a problem situation knows well what actions need to be taken to overcome the situation, they need to be supported by confidence in their ability to take the desired action, or Bandura calls it self-efficacy (Sharma & Rani, 2014). Bandura defines self-efficacy as a person's belief about his ability to mobilize resources through thoughts, motivations, and behaviors needed to perform in the situation (Williams & Rhodes, 2016).

A person's belief that he can cope with the situation with his resource will determine how strong motivation is shown through the effort exerted and how long he can survive to achieve goals under challenging situations. Being in a difficult situation due to the pandemic does not discourage students from carrying out the process of self-growth, considering that this process is a phenomenon that occurs throughout the life span that goes hand in hand with education (Genç & Fidan, 2018). Personal growth shows a person's efforts to realize their potential to become competent to achieve targeted goals (Karaman et al., 2020). Self-efficacy includes belief in the abilities possessed, and it will

become a force that motivates students to make self-change in a planned and continuous manner to actualize their potential. Personal growth is a change in behavior, thoughts, and feelings that will help students control their daily environment or manifest as a person with the power to recover from various difficulties and obstacles (Kaur & Singh, 2017). In other words, people with personal growth are people with self-improvement (Genç & Fidan, 2018).

Subsequent findings show that the internal locus of control can predict PGI. Someone with an internal locus of control tends to initiate change and social movements, seeks to control the environment positively, wants to seek understanding and helpful guidance, uses hints and information more effectively, and refuses to spread information that is inaccurate and deviates from the actual situation (Chiang et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Rutter (2013) states that an internal locus of control will allow a person to delay satisfaction because he considers long-term benefits and prefers to focus on efforts to achieve results. This aligns with the social learning theory referred to by Rotter; people with an internal locus of control assess how much they can control daily events (Toti et al., 2021). Positive thoughts in people with an internal locus of control enable them to reduce pressure in everyday life so that they are not hindered from remaining oriented toward self-development goals (Gore et al., 2016). Likewise, Di Fabio and Saklofske (2019) state that internal locus of control refers to the belief in overcoming circumstances and relating events that occur as their ability to control circumstances. In addition, people with an internal locus of control believe they can control and cope with various events and still try to build a personal life (Buddelmeyer & Powdthavee, 2015; Hoffman et al., 2016), reserve energy to deal with events, including growing continuously (Zhang et al., 2014). Zhang et al. (2014) also say that internal locus of control will protect a person from depressing life symptoms (Buddelmeyer & Powdthavee, 2015).

As the two independent variables previously described, optimism is also the third predictor of personal growth. Optimism is a psychological trait that can determine how a person evaluates himself and his surroundings and further processes the information obtained, which will ultimately take action steps following that information. Optimism has the function of filtering one's mind in reacting and making adjustments to situations one faces, including new situations. In addition, optimism reflects a positive state that contributes to the strength that supports one's abilities (Boyer et al., 2021). As Peterson, cited in Boyer et al. (2021), optimism is one's way of explaining the causes of each event by maximizing good events and minimizing bad events. It is further said that every good event occurs because of an internal power that is owned and applies permanently in all aspects of life. In contrast, bad events are part of external events that are entirely manageable and temporary.

An optimistic view can be transformed into a psychological strength because it always instills hope about opportunities to achieve success (Sameer, 2018). Optimism

simultaneously reflects an innate tendency to hope for positive outcomes in life so that it becomes a sign that predicts well-being (Heo et al., 2017). Individuals with optimism and the desire for well-being will always move and take the initiative to carry out personal growth to develop themselves actively. This study's findings align with the explanation above that various stressful and unpleasant events do not discourage students from optimism, so they always take the initiative to improve self-capacity and sustainable growth by realizing their potential and resources.

Based on the test of socio-demographic factors by entering participant demographic data one by one into the research model to find out their role in personal growth initiatives comprehensively, it was found that only semesters consistently had an effect but in a negative direction (Table 4). This finding invites particular interest because it differs from Yalçın& Malkoç (2013), who found that PGI plays a vital role in students transitioning from higher education to the world of work. This means that the higher the semester, the closer to the world of work, and the stronger the initiative for self-development.

Life as a university student is colored by social interaction and friendship, so academic activities become the driving force for organizing and building the intended career. Thus, higher education does not only act as an environment that provides academic knowledge solely but also functions to assist students in building an independent and meaningful life. University students play an essential role in developing society following their origin. Society generally views education as a means for developing intelligent human beings who will later participate in an increasingly competitive life by showing the best quality to survive (Beri & Jain, 2016). While studying at tertiary institutions, university students can plan for the future and carry out the stages of building themselves toward that future, which means that the actions of building these plans will go hand in hand with the semester they are taking. The higher the semester attended by university students, the efforts to approach plans are getting stronger and more formed because it is in line with the personal growth that the students actively carry out. However, the findings from this study indicate a different situation, namely, the higher the participant's semester, the lower the PGI shown.

An adequate explanation regarding these findings still needs to be further explored. Research conducted by Harris-Reeves et al. (2022) shows that students in the early years of their existence at tertiary institutions pay great attention to assessment issues. Students, therefore, try to find strategies to overcome them and proactively build their capacities and resources to develop academic skills to continue their education. Academic skills can be developed through general study skills programs that tertiary institutions usually offer for students in the early semesters of their existence at tertiary institutions. Such a program aims to support students' self-confidence and increase academic success opportunities. The program was chosen at the beginning of the semester because university students realized that the transition period took work to pass. This

situation is reinforced by the statement that the transition period is a significant life-change experience that invites stress for individuals, thus inviting opportunities and doubts (Mateu et al., 2020; Millman & McNamara, 2018). Therefore it is necessary to equip students with the opportunity to overcome the transition from the previous level of education to higher education so that the learning process in college can run optimally. Usually, after completing the intended series of academic skill development, university students' attention to assessment issues decreases (Harris-Reeves et al., 2022).

The research results, as found by Harris-Reeves et al. (2022), showed that a series of academic skill developments facilitated by universities for students at the beginning of the semester would affect anxiety around assessment problems and perceived heavy workloads. Suppose the academic skills development program has succeeded in reducing student anxiety. In that case, the next stage is for students to declare themselves to have increased to maintain motivation. This situation differs from Krause's research findings in McGhies (2017), that university students report a high sense of interest and motivation when entering higher education. Still, as semesters have been attended, success in realizing the assessment of each subject will cause a decrease in the level of the university students' motivation.

The decrease in the level of motivation of university students along with the increase in semesters attended, one of the causes of which is that the problem of anxiety and course load has been resolved, directly or indirectly, will affect the seriousness of students in preparing for continuous changes which are the fundamental foundation of PGI. The decreased motivation possibly underlies the non-unidirectional effect between participants' semesters and PGI.

CONCLUSION

PGI, which is a marker of how a person changes himself and develops throughout the life span, consciously and unconsciously, is primarily predicted by a person's belief in his abilities. In addition, the ability of participants to direct, assess, and take responsibility for behavior and actions in everyday life is also a predictor of personal growth together with optimism which refers to global expectations that there are more good conditions than bad conditions in the course of life. This initiative in personal growth cannot be separated from the participants' semesters, which have consistently influenced their motivation to take the initiative to build future independence.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the Dean of the Faculty of Psychology, the Chair and staff of LPPM, the research participants, and the students who have helped carry out this research.

REFERENCES

Agarwal, N., and Malhotra, M. (2019). Relationship between optimism, resilience and psychological well-being in young adults. Int. J. Soc. Sci. Econ. Res. 4, 6141–6148.

Ain, Q. U. (2019). Impact of Optimism and Personal Growth Initiative on Positive Interpretation of Illness in Asthma Patients. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences,* 7(4), 357-363. https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2019.0704.0092

Aranha, A. M., Raj, L., & Premanand, V. (2019). The role of personal growth initiative in the relationship between self-compassion and selfesteem among college students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 7(1), 196-203. DOI: 10.25215/0701.021

Baluku, M. M., Bantu, E., Namale, B., & Otto, K. (2022). Maintaining high eudaimonic wellbeing despite ambiguity intolerance among three employment status groups: Examining the buffering effects of positive psychological attributes. *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology,* 1-30.

Beri, N., & Jain, M. (2016). Personal growth initiative among undergraduate students: Influence of emotional self efficacy and general well being. *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, 8(2), 43-56.

Boyer, W., Jerry, P., Rempel, G. R., & Sanders, J. (2021). Explanatory Styles of Counsellors in Training. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 43, 227-242.

Buddelmeyer, H., & Powdthavee, N. (2015). Can having internal locus of control insure against negative shocks? Psychological evidence from panel data. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 122, 88-109. https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2616082

Çankaya, E. M., Dong, X., & Liew, J. (2017). An examination of the relationship between social self-efficacy and personal growth initiative in international context. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 61, 88-96. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2017.10.001

Cano-García, F. J., Sanduvete-Chaves, S., Chacón-Moscoso, S., Rodríguez-Franco, L., García-Martínez, J., Antuña-Bellerín, M. A., & Pérez-Gil, J. A. (2015). Factor structure of the Spanish version of the Life Orientation Test-Revised (LOT-R): Testing several models. International *Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, 15(2), 139-148. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2015.01.003

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

Chen, G., Gully, S. M., & Eden, D. (1999). New general self-efficacy scale. Organizational Research Methods. https://doi.org/10.1037/t08800-000

Coşkun, B., Katitaş, S., & Karadaş, H. (2022). The Relationship Between Faculty Members' Organizational Support Perceptions and Personal Growth Initiative Levels, The Mediating Role of General Self-Efficacy. *International Journal of Modern Education Studies*, 6(2), 400-422.

Di Fabio, A., & Saklofske, D. H. (2019). Positive relational management for sustainable development: Beyond personality traits—The contribution of emotional intelligence. *Sustainability*, 11(2), 330. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11020330

Genç, M., Fidan, Y. (2018). The effect of personal growth initiative on student's career adaptation skills: the case of a university. *İstanbul Ticaret Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 35(1), 151-178. DOI: https://doi.org/10.15345/iojes.2021.05.009

Harris-Reeves, B., Pearson, A., & Massa, H. (2022). Exploring the expectations and experiences of first year students undergoing a tailored transition initiative. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, 19(3), 16.

Heo, J., Chun, S., Kim, B., Ryu, J., & Lee, Y. (2017). Leisure activities, optimism, and personal growth among the young-old, old-old, and oldest-old. Educational Gerontology, 43(6), 289-299. https://doi.org/10.1080/03601277.2017.1289457

Hoffman, Y. S.G., Shrira, A., Cohen-Fridel, S., Grossman, E.S., & Bodner, E. (2016).

The effect of exposure to missile attacks on posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms as a function of perceived media control and locus of control. *Psychiatry Research*, 244, 51-56. DOI: 10.1016/j.psychres.2016.07.005.

Gore, J. S., Griffin, D. P., and McNierney, D. (2016). Does internal or external locus of control have a stronger link to mental and physical health? *Psychol. Stud*. 61, 181–196. doi: 10.1007/s12646-016-0361-y

Karaman, M., Artan, T. & Cebeci, F. (2020). Grup çalışmasının sosyal hizmet bölümü öğrencilerinin kişisel gelişim becerilerine etkisi. *Turkish Studies-Social Sciences*, 15(6), 3013-3026. https://dx.doi.org/10.47356/ TurkishStudies.43519

Kaur, A. & Singh, A. (2017). Personal growth initiative among school students. *International Journal of Education & Management Studies*, 7(3), 392-395.

Liu, X., Ping, S., & Gao, W. (2019). Changes in undergraduate students' psychological well-being as they experience university life. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 16(16), 2864. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16162864

Lönnfjord, V., & Hagquist, C. (2018). The psychometric properties of the Swedish version of the general self-efficacy scale: A Rasch analysis based on adolescent data. *Current Psychology*, 37(4), 703-715. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-016-9551-y

Luyckx, K., & Robitschek, C. (2014). Personal growth initiative and identity formation in adolescence through young adulthood: Mediating processes on the pathway to well-being. *Journal of adolescence*, 37(7), 973-981.

Maheshwari, A., and Jutta, M. V. (2020). Study of relationship between optimism and resilience in the times of COVID-19 among university students. *Int. J. Indian Psychol*. 8, 2349–3429. doi: 10.31219/osf.io/5a3gs

Mason, H. D. (2019). Personal growth initiative: Relation to hedonia and eudaimonia happiness among South African university students. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 29(3), 260-264. https://doi.org/10.1080/14330237.2019.1626133

Mateu, P., Inglés, E., Torregrossa, M., Marques, R. F. R., Stambulova, N., & Vilanova, (2020). Living life through sport: the transition of elite Spanish student-athletes to a university degree in physical activity and sports sciences. *Frontiers in psychology*, 1367. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01367

McGhie, V. (2017). Entering university studies: identifying enabling factors for a successful transition from school to university. *Higher Education*, 73, 407-422. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10734-016-0100-2

Micheletto, V., Zito, M., Bustreo, M., Gabrielli, G., Circi, R., & Russo, V. (2022). The Impact of Optimism and Internal Locus of Control on Workers' Well-Being, A Multi-Group Model Analysis before and during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Social Sciences, 11(12), 559.

Millman, T., & McNamara, J. (2018). The long and winding road: Experiences of students entering university through transition programs. *Student Success*, 9(3), 37-49. https://doi.org/10.5204/ssj.v9i3.465

Papalia, D.E., Martorell, G. (2021). *Experience Human Development*. Fourteenth edition. New York: McGraw Hill Education.

Patanapu, S . K ., Doshi, D ., Kulkarni, S ., Reddy, P ., Adepu, S ., & Reddy, S . (2018). Does academic performance influence personal growth initiative? An institutional-based study among undergraduate dental students. Journal of Education and Health Promotion, 7(1), 83 . Retrieved from https:// www .ncbi .nlm .nih .gov/pmc/articles/PMC6052781/table/T1/ https://doi .org/10 .4103/jehp .jehp_204_17

Robitschek, C. (2003). Validity of Personal Growth Initiative Scale scores with a Mexican American college student population. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *50*(4), 496. DOI 10.1037/022-0167.50.4.496

Rutter, M. (2013). Annual research review: Resilience–clinical implications. *Journal of child psychology and psychiatry*, 54(4), 474-487. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2012.02615.x

Sameer, Y. M. (2018). Innovative behavior and psychological capital: Does positivity make any difference?. *Journal of Economics and Management*, (32), 75-101. doi: 10.22367/jem.2018.32.06

Sharma, H. L., & Rani, R. (2014). Self-efficacy–a comparison among university postgraduates in demographic profiles. *Research Journal of Educational Sciences*, 2(1), 1-7.

Sharma, H. L., & Rani, R. (2013). Relationship of personal growth initiative with self-efficacy among university postgraduate students. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 4(16), 125-135.

Sherer, M. et al (1982), "The Self-Efficacy Scale: Construction and Validation", *Psychological Reports* 51(2), 663-671. https://doi.org/10.2.2466/pr0.1982.51.2.663

Soylu, Y., Siyez, D. M., & Ozeren, E. (2021). Gender Perception, Career Optimism and Career Adaptability among University Students: The Mediating Role of Personal Growth Initiative. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, *17*(1), 1-15. DOI: 10.29329/ijpe.2020.329.1

Soylu, Y., Siyez, D. M., & Ozeren, E. (2021). Gender Perception, Career Optimism and Career Adaptability among University Students: The Mediating Role of Personal Growth Initiative. *International Journal of Progressive Education*, 17(1), 1-15.

Suárez-Álvarez, J., Pedrosa, I., García-Cueto, E., & Muñiz, J. (2016). Locus of control revisited: development of a new bi-dimensional measure. Anales de Psicología/Annals of Psychology, 32(2), 578-586. https://doi.org/10.6018/analesps.32.2.200781

Toti, J. F., Diallo, M. F., & Huaman-Ramirez, R. (2021). Ethical sensitivity in consumers' decision-making: The mediating and moderating role of internal locus of control. *Journal of Business Research*, 131, 168-182. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2021.03.045

Yalçın, İ., & Malkoç, A. (2013). Kişisel Gelişim Yönelimi Ölçeği-II'nin Türkçe'ye

Uyarlanması ve Psikometrik Özelliklerinin İncelenmesi [Adaptation of Personal Growth Initiative Scale-II to Turkish and investigation of psychometric properties]. *The Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences*, 26, 258-266. DOI: 10.5350/DAJPN201326030

Williams, D. M., & Rhodes, R. E. (2016). The confounded self-efficacy construct: conceptual analysis and recommendations for future research. *Health psychology review*, 10(2), 113-128.

Zhang, W., Liu, H., Jiang, X., Wu, D., & Tian, Y. (2014). A longitudinal study of posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms and its relationship with coping skill and locus of control in adolescents after an earthquake in China. *PLOS ONE*, 9, 1-7. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0088263