

Relationship between Aggression, Empathy and Locus of Control Amidst Thai  
Political Crisis

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Abstract - This study aimed to examine the relationship between aggression, empathy and locus of control amidst Thai political crisis. Instruments were The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire, Aggression Questionnaire, and Internal-external locus of control scale. Participants consisted of 74 undergraduates who were affected by Thai Political Crisis. Data were analyzed by using Pearson's correlation and multiple regression, results had shown that there was a negative correlation between empathy and aggression ( $r = -.23, p = .040$ ) while high internal locus of control had been found to correlate with aggression ( $r = -.31, p = .006$ ). Multiple regression analysis also revealed that together, locus of control and empathy, are also a significant predictor of aggression ( $R^2 = .11, p = .014$ ). While the direction of locus of control alone was significant in predicting aggression, with standardized regression coefficient of locus of control at  $-0.26$  ( $\beta = -0.26, p = .039$ ), empathy alone on the other hand was not a significant predictor ( $\beta = -0.12, p = .348$ ).

Field of Study: Psychological science      Student's Signature.....

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

The current Thai political affair revolves around the controversial anti-government protests that have been going on in Thailand since December 2013 (“Thailand opposition to protest amnesty bill”, 2013). The impact of the crisis spans beyond the economic instability and loss of touristic income, it is affecting the everyday life of the general public (“Baht declines to a three-year low”, 2013; Maierbrugger, 2014). On the 13th of January 2014, anti-government protesters, named “Shut Down Bangkok 2014”, blocked all the main roads in parts of the Thai capital city, Bangkok. Although the street protests are supposed to reflect peaceful right of speech in a democratic country, it has been a cause of disruption to the daily lives of the general public. With frequent occupation of government offices and other boycotting acts, blocking means of travels has been a common activity carried out by the protesters (“7 spots to close for sure on Jan 13”, 2014). The „Shut down“ zones are mostly in the city area where many schools, Universities, and even tourist attractions are located (“7 spots to close for sure on Jan 13”, 2014). The casualties amidst clashes occurred between protesters and officers in the protesting areas: Chang-Wattana road, Pan-Fah-Lee-Lad bridge, BanThat-Thong road, Rama 1 road and Rad-Cha-Pra-Song road, gun fires and bombs are used in these areas as well (“7 spots to close for sure on Jan 13”, 2014).

The impact of political crisis has created tension among the general public (“Tension mounts in Thailand after blast wounds 36 protesters”, 2014). Whether it’s due to the political stance individuals choose to be affiliated with, the rise in violent clashes, or even the constant bombardment of political situation from the media contributing to the inconvenience in daily life, the country seem to be on a verge of



high stress (Sivasiampai, 2014). A stressful event, especially in political situation where one's belief is very strongly affiliated with a party, has proven to be a trigger for aggression (Guerra, Huesmann, Tolan, Acker, & Eron, 1995; Moses, 1985). Inconvenience in carrying out daily life emphasizes that even more. Aggression can take variety of forms and can be physical or be communicated verbally or non-verbally (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). While an individual's direction of locus of control can estimate whether or not they would act upon the aggression, an identified psychological antidote for aggression is empathy (Feshbach & Feshbach, 1969).

Anderson and Bushman (2002) defined aggression as any behavior that intent to cause harm to other individuals. Moreover, the targeted individual is believed to be motivated to avoid the aggressive person who is intending to cause harm. However, accidental harm is not considering as aggression because it is not intent. According to Berkowitz (1993), any negative event, such as provocations and frustration may result in experiencing unpleasant thought, memories, and physiological response. These responses from negative event trigger the stress hormone or „fight-or-flight“ response, which is associated with anger. Buss and Perry (1992) suggested that aggression could be classified into types, which include physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostile aggression. First, *physical aggression* is the act that one's intent to harm other. It is dangerous in short-term; it shows immediate and rapid harm (Markovits, 2013). Second, *verbal aggression* is verbalizing to cause harm to others, such as swearing and insulting (Vissing & Straus, 1991). Third, *anger* is an emotion response to threat, irritation, attack, injustice and disappointment (Sell, Tooby & Cosmides, 2009). Lastly, *hostile aggression* or reactive aggression is an emotion occurs when the primary intent is to do harm. It usually occurs in response to being provoked or perception of

provocation (Dillenkoffer, 2003). These components can be seen as the reaction to negative situation, which trigger or provoke unpleasant thought, emotion, and physiological response (Berkowitz, 1993).

Under the political situation, the amount of empathy an individual possesses plays a role of antidote against the level of aggression they are likely to exhibit (Moses, 1989). Thus, in the rise of tension among the public, examining individual empathy level would determine whether aggression could be contained in such political dilemma.

The concept of empathy is rather broad; especially in terms of social psychological context. However, as proposed by Dymond (1950), empathy can be applied from social insight point of view, where one has the ability to understand and predict another person's feelings and behavior. Another way empathy can be described is as vicarious emotional response of a perceiver to the emotional experience of a perceived object (Feshbach & Feshbach, 1969). From these two definitions, one can see that there are two components to approaching empathy: cognitive, and affective empathy. According to Rogers, Dziobek, Hasenstab, Wolf, and Convit (2007), There are two major types of empathy: cognitive empathy is the capacity to understand another's perspective or mental state and affective empathy is the capacity to respond with an appropriate emotion to another's mental states.

Furthermore, locus of control, meaning the emphasis we put on events, whether externalized or internalized is the independent variable of predicting aggression (Russell, 1974; Williams & Vantress, 1969). Locus of control refers to the orientation of belief towards a certain outcome whether it is based on our own actions or other external factors (Zimbardo, 1985). Julian Rotter (1954) originally introduced the concept. In an attempt to explain the relationship between personal

characteristics and the surrounding environment, Julian Rotter had introduced the locus of control through what is now called the social learning theory (Darity, 2008). Its key concept is that the locus of control dictates the source of reinforcement of a person. Individuals with internal locus of control will expect the important things in their lives to happen because of their own skills and effort, while people with external locus of control expect these things due to uncontrollable external forces such as luck and fate (Darity, 2008).

A concept developed by Julian B Rotter, claims that there are two ways a person believes they can control events, either internally or externally (Rotter, 1966). *Internal locus of control* is an individual's belief that his or her own action governs the outcome of an event. *External locus of control* is a belief that the outcome of an event is governed by some one or some other factor that is beyond their control (Carlson, Buskist, Heth, & Schmaltz, 2009).

Therefore, the researchers aimed to examine the relationships between aggression, empathy and locus of control of the Thai undergraduates amidst Thai political crisis. The outcome we hope to achieve is to increase public awareness on the rise in tension and to point out whether or not individual's empathetic level and their locus of control have the ability to reduce the tension.

## **Literature Review**

**The Thai Political Situation** According to Bangkok post, the newspaper agency in Thailand (2014), Thailand's unrested political situation has been for over 10 years. The disagreement between two main political parties has not been settled. However, recently, the situation is out of hand. In the beginning of 2014, antigovernment protesters, leaded by Suthep Thaugsuban, against Pheu Thai Party joined force to block all the main roads in parts of the Thai capital city, Bangkok,

which they named this force as „Shut Down Bangkok 2014“. Gunfire and bombs are used to protesters (Bangkokpost, 2014). Thailand’s political turmoil pulled down the economic uncertainties, GDP in Thailand to slower down. Many individuals have been affected by the situation. The „Shut down“ zones are mostly in the city area where many schools and Universities are located (Bangkokpost, 2014).

One of the dangerous areas is near the Chulalongkorn Univeristy. The roads surrounding University are close and forbid any transportation to pass. Therefore, university students might struggle to come to study and this may affect their psychological health, such as stress and anxiety. Moreover, this could affect their physical health; for instance, headache results from stress.

**Aggression** The definition of Aggression by Anderson and Bushman (2002) is any behavior that intent to cause harm to other individuals. Moreover, the targeted individual is believed to be motivated to avoid the aggressive person who intending to harm. However, accidental harm is not considering as aggression because it is not intent (Anderson, & Bushman, 2002). According to Berkowitz (1993), any negative event, such as provocations and frustration may result in experiencing unpleasant thought, memories, and physiological response. These responses from negative event trigger the stress hormone or „fight-or-flight“ response, which associated with anger (Berkowitz, 1993).

In this research, aggression is a behavior, such as frustration, that response to negative situation, which produce unpleasant thoughts, feelings, and memories.

***Components of Aggression*** According to Hennig et al. (2005), aggression can be classified in to two main types: Neurotic Hostility and Aggressive Hostility. Neurotic hostility is categorized by having high irritability, resentment, guilt, and verbal hostility. Aggressive hostility is characterized by having high negativism and

assault (Hennig et al., 2005). However, in this study will be examine the components of aggression according to Buss and Perry (1992), which include four main subtraits in aggression:

1. Physical aggression is the act that one's intent to harm other (Buss & Perry, 1992). It is dangerous in short-term; it shows immediate and rapid harm (Markovits, 2013).
2. Verbal Aggression is verbalizing to cause harm to others, such as swearing and insulting (Vissing & Straus, 1991).
3. Anger is an emotion response to threat, irritation, attack, injustice and disappointment (Sell, Tooby & Cosmides, 2009), as well as a state of high arousal that decrease over time (Buss & Perry, 1992).
4. Hostile aggression is an emotion occurs when the primary intent is to do harm. It usually occurs in response to being provoked or perception of provocation (Dillenkoffer, 2003).

Regarding to the Buss and Perry (1992), the result revealed that there were relationships among all components. Physical and Verbal aggression have been found to be strongly correlated because both represent the act of intention to harm others. Moreover, Anger has been found to highly correlated with other three variables. Anger can be considered as a link between thoughts and actions; thus, anger was found to correlate with physical and verbal aggression. Furthermore, after anger gradually faded, and ones be able to calm down, the negative thoughts will replace the anger; hence, anger was also found to correlate with hostility (Buss & Perry, 1992).

Anderson and Bushman (2002) introduced the most recent integrative framework, which is called the general aggression model (GAM). GAM is the

integration of existing theories on aggression. There are five main theories of aggression that were used in this study including cognitive neoassociation, social learning, social interaction, script, and excitation transfer theories. GAM emphasized on the social interaction. The process of GAM can be identified as input, routes, and outcomes system. First, input is how environmental, biological, psychological, and social factors have an impact on aggressive behavior. Second, routes presents as the internal states including cognition, affect, and arousal, which influenced by the input variables. Lastly, outcomes consist of two possible ways: reappraisal and impulsive action. Reappraisal is how individual searching alternative outcomes for the situation. Impulsive actions can result in aggressive or nonaggressive action depending on individual's view of the situation (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). According to Huesmann et al. (1984), they suggested that aggression is viewed as a personality trait because aggression tends to be stable across ages and generations. They did a longitudinal study of 22 years on the aggression to examine the stability over time and generation. The result revealed that 8 years old tend to be more aggressive than later 30 years old. Aggression could predict later antisocial behaviors such as abuse, physical aggression, etc. Moreover, they have found that the stability of aggression over generation was higher comparing to individual stability of aggression over ages (Huesmann et al., 1984).

**Empathy** Empathy is the key aspect of social function and therefore, plays an important role in human behaviour. Extensive research on empathy has displayed positive effects of this construct on various platforms, ranging from psychology to education (Miaskiewicz, & Monarchi, 2008). However, the concept of empathy is rather broad; especially in terms of social psychological context. However, as proposed by Dymond (1950), empathy can be applied from social insight point of

view, where one has the ability to understand and predict another person's feelings and behavior. Another way empathy can be described is as vicarious emotional response of a perceiver to the emotional experience of a perceived object (Feshbach & Feshbach, 1969). From these two definitions, one can see that there are two components to approaching empathy: cognitive, and affective empathy.

***Components of empathy*** According to Rogers et al. (2007), There are two major types of empathy: cognitive empathy and affective empathy. All psychologists have not exactly agreed upon this criterion; some claim that there are more than 2 types. However, when discussing psychopathological cases, most distinctions are made on the presumptions of these two core differences in empathy (Cox et al., 2012).

1. Cognitive empathy: The terms cognitive empathy and theory of mind are often used synonymously. Quite straightforwardly, its definition is the capacity to understand another's perspective or mental state (Rogers, Dziobek, Hassenstab, Wolf, & Convit, 2007).
2. Affective empathy: Also known as emotional empathy, affective empathy is the capacity to respond with an appropriate emotion to another's mental states (Shamay-Tsoory, Aharon-Peretz, & Perry, 2008). To do so is the assumption that our ability to emotionally empathize with others is based on us being affected by another's emotional or arousal state (B.M. de Waal, 2007).

According to Preston and de Waal (2000), on an ultimate level of empathic emotional linkage supports group alarm, vicariousness of emotions, mother-infant responsiveness, and the modeling of competitors and predators; these are not only limited to humans but span across species.

**Locus of Control** Locus of control refers to the orientation of belief towards a certain outcome whether it is based on our own actions or other external factors (Zimbardo, 1985). The concept was originally introduced by Julian Rotter (1954). In an attempt to explain the relationship between personal characteristics and the surrounding environment Julian Rotter had introduced the locus of control through what is now called the social learning theory (Darity, 2008). Its key concept is that locus of control dictates the source of reinforcement of a person. Individuals with internal locus of control will expect the important things in their lives to happen because of their own skills and effort, while people with external locus of control expect these things due to uncontrollable external forces such as luck and fate (Darity, 2008).

***Components of locus of control*** A concept developed by Julian B Rotter, claims that there are two ways a person believes they can control events, either internally or externally (Rotter, 1966).

1. Internal locus of control is an individual's belief that his or her own action governs the outcome of an event (Carlson et al., 2007).
2. External locus of control is a belief that the outcome of an event is governed by some one or some other factor that is beyond their control (Carlson et al., 2007).

According to Rotter's IE locus of control scale, higher score on the scale will result in having more orientation towards the internal locus of control while receiving low score will result in have more orientation towards the external locus of control.

In an attempt to understand the interaction between personal characteristics



and the environment and its outcome behavior, the psychologist Julian Rotter invented the social learning theory in 1954. The focus of the theory was on the role of people's expectation of how likely it is that a given behavior will lead to a desired outcome.

According to Rotter, there are two types of expectancies: expectancy to a single situation and a generalized expectancy applied to situation in overall. Locus of control then was proposed as one of the most important factors of generalized expectancies. Locus of control refers to the „perceived location“ of reinforcement sources for a person-that is, who or what is responsible to the things that happen to a person. Those with an internal locus of control will expect the important things in their lives to occur because of their own effort, skills, or ability while those with external locus of control will expect these things to happen because of external uncontrollable forces, such as luck, fate and chance.

For decades now, researchers had been focusing on the psychometric properties and structure of the locus of control scale. Many had suggested that the two factors of the original Locus of control were too limited and had developed new content-specific and multidimensional locus of control factors with up to 3 factors (internality, chance, and powerful others). Though the original locus of control factors proposed by Rotter is no longer in popular use, the topics of locus of control are still one of the biggest topics of interest to social scientists for years to come.

Additionally, it had also been speculated that individuals with internal locus of control are better at adapting to various situations than people with external locus of control (Judge, Locke, Durham, & Klugar, 1998). Furthermore, individuals with internal locus of control appear to be more motivated and generally perform better on the job (Locke, 1983; Spector, 1982). Overall internal locus of control is a significant

factor in predicting job performance of an individual (Jeloudar & Lotfi-Goodarzi, 2012)

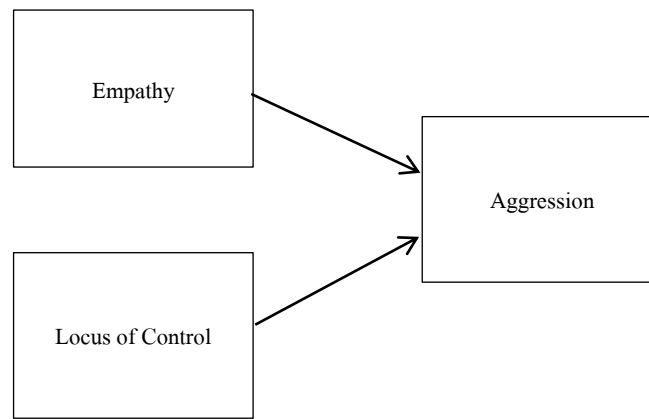
**Relationship between variables** Many studies have been found the relationship between aggression and empathy. According to Yeo et al. (2011), there are two main components of Empathy. Cognitive empathy is the ability to understand another's mental state (Rogers, Dziobek, Hassenstab, Wolf, & Convit, 2007). Affective empathy is the ability to respond with an appropriate emotion to another's mental state (Shamay-Tsoory, Aharon-Peretz, & Perry, 2008). They suggested that there are three forms of aggressive behavior including physical aggression, indirect aggression, and verbal aggression. The result indicated that affective empathy was associated with physical aggression. Cognitive empathy was associated with indirect aggression. Moreover, they found that both affective empathy and cognitive empathy were not associated with verbal aggression (Yeo et al., 2011).

Similarly, the study by Mehrabian (1997) also classified empathy into two components. Cognitive empathy refers to ability to accurately recognize things from another's perspective. Emotional empathy means experience the emotions of another. These two distinct aspects of empathy have show low inter-correlations. Empathy to aggression and violence seems to be more of emotional empathy (Miller and Eisenberg, 1988). Moreover, he found a negative correlation of measures of aggression and violence with measures of emotional empathy. In his study, he developed a new scale to measure emotional empathy, which consisted of two new instruments: the Balanced Emotional Empathy Scale and the Emotional Empathy Tendency Scale (EETS). BEES exhibited stronger negative correlations with all three measures of aggression and violence than EETS. BEES is better identify prosocial orientation and better indirect indicator of violence risk. Higher empathy subjects

engaged more in altruistic behaviors, less aggressive, more affiliative (Mehrabian , 1997).

Locus of Control is also found to be correlated with aggression Bhuatia and Gollin (1978) hypothesized that external locus of control subjects would exhibit greater frustration-produced aggression than internal locus of control subjects. Locus of control is beliefs about one's ability to exercise control over outcomes, may influence the extent to which frustration result in aggression. External locus of control means individuals do not believe they can control outcomes are expected to exhibit greater aggression in response to frustration than those who believe they can control outcomes (internal locus of control). The result supported their hypotheses.

Aggression tends to be the general characteristic of a person with high external locus of control (Russell, 1974; Williams & Vantress, 1969). An individual who tends to have their locus of control oriented towards the external side is also found to have higher level of aggression. This is seen as a positive correlation between the locus of control scale and aggression since higher score on the locus of control scale will result in having higher orientation towards external locus of control. However, since the locus of control scale that we use has a scoring system, which determines that higher the score on the scale will indicate tendency towards internal locus of control, the relationship between the Aggression Scale and the Locus of Control scale in this experiment will be a negative correlation. Furthermore, we can observe the role of empathy and it's interaction with aggression as such: individuals with high level of empathy will also have lower level of aggression (Feshbach, & Feshbach, 1969). We can enter empathy in our model with the hypothesis that empathy will have a negative correlation with aggression.



*Figure 1. Conceptual Framework*

### **Research Objective**

1. To study the relationship between aggression and empathy
2. To examine the relationship between aggression and locus of control
3. To examine the relationship between aggression, empathy, and locus of control in individuals who affected by the political unrest situation in Thailand

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. Empathy has negative correlation with aggression
2. External locus of control has positive correlation with aggression
3. Empathy and external locus of control can predict aggression

### **Variables**

Independent variables are 1) empathy and 2) locus of control. Dependent variable is aggression.

### **Operational Definition**

Aggression, which can be classified into physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility (Buss & Perry, 1992), is any behavior that intent to

cause harm to other individuals (Anderson & Bushman, 2002). In this research we employ Buss and Perry (1992) questionnaire to measure aggression.

Empathy is the faculty which enables us to recognise emotions that are being experienced by another individual (Moses 1985). In this research, we employ Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, and Levine (2011) questionnaire to measure empathy.

Locus of control is the beliefs that one's unable to control over outcomes (Bhatia, & Golin, 1978) In this research, we employ Schepers (2005) questionnaire to measure locus of control.

### **Research Benefits**

1. Provide empirical data to support hypothesized relationship between variables
2. Identify the relationship between variables as a mean to raise awareness
3. Propose a way to reduce social tension within the general public in times of political crisis

## Chapter 2

### Research Methodology

#### Sample

Sample in this research was 77 undergraduate students enrolled in the international program from one public university in Bangkok who had been affected directly by the political crisis. We followed basic assumption for multiple regression analysis (Hair, Black, & Robin, 2010). They suggested 20 samples per 1 independent variable at significant level .01.

To collect the data, we have employed convenience-sampling method in this research. The total set of questionnaires that were given out was 140, We received back 132 (94.29%) set of questionnaires. However, only 114 (85.71%) set of questionnaires could be use in this research. We have found that out of 114, 77 (67.54%) undergraduate students had been affected directly by the political crisis, and 37 (32.46%) were not affected. Also, 18 out of 132 set of questionnaires could not be used in this research, due to incomplete questionnaire.

#### Instruments

Before getting into the instruments, we provided participants with briefing page. This page allows participant to understand their rights as a volunteer of a psychology data collection process. The page describes the ethical issues and underlines the participant's role in this study. Also, it provides contact details in case participants wish to follow up with the study. The 4 instruments that are used in this study are indicated in the following contents:

**Demographic questionnaire** In the demographic questionnaire, we included gender, program, and age of participants as well as the inclusion criteria. We use the self-report technique to ask participant how much they were affected by the political

unrest in Thailand in term of Psychological, emotional, and physical, by rating how much they were affected. Furthermore, we also did the cross-checking by asking participants to indicate the amount of travelling time before and during the political crisis.

**Scale of empathy** The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire by Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, and Levine (2011) was employed as an instrument to measure empathy. The questionnaire consists of 16 self-report tool using five point likert-type scales. This ranges from 0=Never, to, 4=Always. Out of the 16 items, half is positively worded items and the other half is negative which will be scored reversely. TEQ demonstrated strong convergent validity, correlating positively with behavior measures of social decoding, self-report measures of empathy ( $r = .80, p < .001$ ), and negatively with a measure of Autism symptomatology ( $r = -.33, p < .01$ ). It has also exhibited good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .87$ ) and high test-retest reliability ( $r = .81, p < .001$ ). Over all, the TEQ is a brief, reliable, and valid instrument for the assessment of empathy.

**Internal-external locus of control scale** Rotter's internal-external locus of control scale was employed as an instrument to examine individual's locus of control in this research. This scale consisted of 20 questions, each with an answer of either true or false. Each question will reflect the nature of the orientation of the locus of control. This scale yielded reliability coefficient of .80 for external locus of control and .77 for internal locus of control (Schepers, 2005). Schepers conducted a test in the article The Construction of a Normative Scale of Locus of Control to create a normative scale of locus of control for use with students and adults. Using Australian students, test-retest reliability of the scale was verified by Tiggemann and Lange

(1981). With the reliability coefficient of .61 it was concluded that the scale is deemed stable over a considerable period of time.

**Aggression** The aggression questionnaire by Buss and Perry (1992) was employed as an instrument to examine individual's aggression. The aggression questionnaire composed of 4 main components of aggression, including: Physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger, and hostility. The questionnaire was rated on a 7-point Likert scale, 1 (least aggressive) to 7 (most aggressive). Two reversed items have been added, which 1 (most aggressive) to 7 (least aggressive). The test-retest reliability of aggression questionnaire is ranged from .72 to .80 (Buss, & Perry, 1992). According to Buss and Perry (1992), the internal consistency of aggression question was calculated by using the alpha coefficient, which revealed the total score of .89. The internal consistency of question can be classified into the following: Physical aggression has the internal consistency of .85, verbal aggression show the internal consistency of .72, anger with the reliability of .72, internal consistency .83, and hostility with the reliability of .72, internal consistency .77.

### **Data Analysis**

1. Analyzed descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.
2. Analyzed relationships between variables via Pearson's product moment correlation.
3. Analyzed inferential statistics via multiple regression



## Chapter 3

**Results****Demographic Data**

Table 1

*Demographic data of Gender, Program, and Age of participants shown in frequencies and percentage*

	Frequencies	Percentage
Gender		
Male	35	45.5
Female	42	54.5
Program		
BBA	22	28.6
EBA	16	20.8
INDA	8	10.4
COMDE	1	1.3
BALAC	4	5.2
ISE	15	19.5
COMART	6	7.8
JIPP	5	6.5
Age		
17	3	3.9
18	11	14.3
19	21	27.3
20	20	26
21	13	16.9
22	7	9.1
23	1	1.3
26	1	1.3

**Research hypothesis I &II**

Using Pearson's  $r$  correlation analysis, it is revealed that empathy ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = .45$ ) has significant negative relationship with Aggression ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p = .040$ ) whereas Internal Locus of Control is found to be negatively

correlated with aggression ( $r = -.31, p = .006$ ). This indicates that participant who scored high on the aggression test scored low on the Locus of control ( $M = 62.53, SD = 14.15$ ) test, indicating external direction of the Locus of Control. However, it is worth noting that there is also a significant positive correlation of moderate strength between Empathy and Locus of Control ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ) (see Table 2). This suggests that there is a possibility of a multicollinearity problem which means the two independent variables overlap each other too much. To check for the multicollinearity problem we used collinearity diagnostic to find the collinearity statistics and found out that the Variance Tolerance Factor (VIF) is at 1.26 while the Tolerance level is at 0.79 for both of the variables. These mentioned values are within the acceptable range which means that the multicollinearity problem does not exist between these variables.

### **Research hypothesis III**

Multiple regression analysis had revealed that Locus of Control ( $M = 65.81, SD = 15.43$ ) is significant in predicting Aggression ( $M = 3.35, SD = .77$ ) with a standardized regression coefficient of  $-0.26$  ( $p = .039$ ). On the other hand, although Empathy ( $M = 3.51, SD = .35$ ) was a stronger predictor for Aggression than Locus of Control, it was not a statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.12, p = .348$ ). This indicates that Locus of Control is the only significant predictor for Aggression (see Table 2). Moreover, together Empathy and Locus of Control can predict only 10.8 percent of Aggression ( $R^2 = .108, p = .014$ ). Although it was found that the correlation between the two independent variables, namely Empathy and Locus of Control, are at moderate level, which suggests collinearity between the two variables, the tolerance level of both is at .79 which is higher than .20 and VIF is at 1.26 which is

lower than 1.50, therefore, the two variables does not possess the collinearity problem.

As seen in Table 2, aggression and empathy had a significant negative correlation of .23 ( $p < .05$ ) which results in an opposite gain indifferent direction between the two variables. As the aggression of an individual increase, the empathy level of the individual will decrease. Furthermore, aggression also yields a negative correlation with Internal Locus of Control at  $-.31$  ( $p < .01$ ). In this context, since Locus of Control is measured in dichotomous direction, either a direction towards internal or external, a negative correlation with the Internal Locus of Control means that it is positively correlated with the External Locus of Control. Also the fact that the significant level is less than .01 indicates that these two variables are greatly against each other at a very high significant, this means that it is less likely that type I error will occur. Empathy and Internal Locus of Control on the other hand also has a significant correlation at  $.46$  ( $p < .01$ ). As Empathy increases Internal Locus of Control also increases. Again, the significant of the correlation between the two variables are lower than .01, which significantly reduce the possibility of a Type I error.

On Table 3, which shows the Regression coefficient, t-value, and significant value between Constant, empathy, and Locus of Control, it is seen that Locus of Control is a significant predictor for Aggression with b value of  $-.01$  ( $p < .05$ ). Locus of Control is a significant predictor for Aggression at  $-.01$ , for each point increased in Locus of Control; Aggression will be reduced by  $-.01$ . Empathy on the other hand, though had higher prediction value with Aggression with b value of  $-.20$ , was not a significant predictor for aggression ( $p = .34$ ). This means a point increased in Empathy will may, or may not reduce aggression by  $-.20$ . The shared variance of the

two variables are at  $R^2 = .108$  ( $ps < .05$ ). This means that together, Locus of Control and Empathy can predict aggression up to 10.8%.

Table 2

*Pearson's r Correlation between Aggression, Locus of Control, and Empathy*

Measures	Internal		
	Aggression	Empathy	Locus of Control
Aggression	-		
Empathy	-0.23*		
Internal Locus of Control	-0.31**	0.46**	-

*Note: \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$*

Table 3

*Regression coefficients, standardized regression coefficient, t-value, and significant value between the constant, Empathy, and Locus of Control*

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Empathy	-.20	.21	-.12
Locus of Control	-.01	.01	-.26*

*Notes:  $R^2 = .108$  ( $ps < .05$ ).*

*\* $p < .05$ .*

## Chapter 4

### Discussion

In the current study, we are aiming to examine the relationship between aggression and empathy, aggression and locus of control, and aggression, empathy and locus of control in the political crisis.

From the results obtained we have found out that there is significant relationship between aggression and empathy in political crisis; which is that high levels in aggression can predict a low level of empathy in individuals, or in other words, aggression is negatively correlated with empathy in political crisis. This finding supports our first hypothesis and reflects on the previous studies that have been reviewed.

According to Feshbach and Feshbach's study in 1992, empathy's relationship with aggression though significant, may not be as powerful as other predictors. This is also seen in our study, where the relationship of locus of control and aggression is seen have higher significance.

Pearson's  $r$  correlation has revealed that there is a significant negative correlation between the aggression scale and locus of control scale. This means that participant who scored high on the aggression scale will score low on the locus of control scale. The locus of control scale measures the direction of the locus of control an individual has towards his or her perception of life (Zimbardo, 1985). In the scale, high scoring means that the person has a tendency to see the world via an internal locus of control manner. Scoring low on the locus of control scale on the other hand will indicate that the individual has the tendency towards the external locus of control.

Therefore, with the direction of the locus of control scale being measured to either have external or internal direction towards perception of locus of control, it was initially hypothesized that individuals with higher level of aggression will have a perception towards the external direction of locus of control, meaning scoring low on the locus of control scale.

This hypothesis had also been proven various times by other researchers (Russell, 1974; Williams & Vantress, 1969) since individual who feels that they lack the control over their life will tend to be more frustrated with themselves and others around them, resulting in high level of aggression (Russell, 1974; Williams & Vantress, 1969; Bhatia, & Golin, 1978). The results then revealed a negative correlation between the variables; this indicates that our hypothesis is correct. Individuals high in aggression will score low in the locus of control scale indicating direction towards the external locus of control.

On the prediction side, using multiple regression analysis, it is found that locus of control can significantly predict aggression in an individual to a certain extent, although the numbers are not very high. This means that a change in locus of control will also result in a negative change in aggression to a certain degree. According to the multiple regression analysis, a change in a degree of locus of control will also result in a negative change in aggression. It is to be remembered that because the relationship between the aggression scale and the locus of control scale is in a negative correlation, that is why the change in one variable will predict a negative change in another. This again conforms to our initial hypothesis, which dictated that aggression and locus of control has a relationship between one another. A decrease score in the locus of control scale, indicating increase in external

direction of locus of control and decrease in internal direction of locus of control, will result in an increased score for the aggression scale.

## Chapter 5

### Summary

#### Research Objective

1. To study the relationship between aggression and empathy
2. To examine the relationship between aggression and locus of control
3. To examine the relationship between aggression, empathy, and locus of control in individuals who affected by the political unrest situation in Thailand

#### Research Hypothesis

1. Empathy has negative correlation with aggression
2. External locus of control has positive correlation with aggression
3. Empathy and external locus of control can predict aggression

#### Sample

Convenience sampling method was employed in this research. The participant of the research consists of 77 undergraduate students enrolled in the international program from one public university in Bangkok who had been affected directly by the political crisis.

#### Instruments

The 4 instruments that are used in this study are indicated in the following contents:

1. Demographic questionnaire
2. Scale of empathy:



The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire by Spreng, McKinnon, Mar, and Levine (2011) was employed as an instrument to measure empathy.

3. Internal-external locus of control scale

Rotter's internal-external locus of control scale was employed as an instrument to examine individual's locus of control in this research.

4. Aggression

The aggression questionnaire by Buss and Perry (1992) was employed as an instrument to examine individual's aggression.

### Data Collection

The authors were responsible for collecting all data and questionnaires.

### Data Analysis

1. Analyzed descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation
2. Analyzed relationships between variables via Pearson's product moment correlation
3. Analyzed inferential statistics via multiple regression

### Result

1. Using Pearson's  $r$  correlation analysis, it is revealed that empathy ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = .45$ ) has significant negative relationship with Aggression ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p = .040$ ) whereas Internal Locus of Control was found to be negatively correlated with aggression ( $r = -.31$ ,  $p = .006$ ). This indicates that participant who scored high on the aggression test scored low on the Locus of control ( $M = 62.53$ ,  $SD = 14.15$ ) test, indicating external direction of the Locus of Control. However, it is worth noting that there is also a

significant positive correlation of moderate strength between Empathy and Locus of Control ( $r = .46, p < .001$ ).

2. Multiple regression analysis had revealed that Locus of Control ( $M = 65.81, SD = 15.43$ ) is significant in predicting Aggression ( $M = 3.35, SD = .77$ ) with a standardized regression coefficient of  $-0.26$  ( $p = .039$ ). On the other hand, although Empathy ( $M = 3.51, SD = .35$ ) was a stronger predictor for Aggression than Locus of Control, it was not a statistically significant ( $\beta = -0.12, p = .348$ ). This indicates that Locus of Control is the only significant predictor for Aggression. Moreover, together Empathy and Locus of Control can predict only 10.8 percent of Aggression ( $R^2 = .108, p = .014$ ). Although it was found that the correlation between the two independent variables, namely Empathy and Locus of Control, are at moderate level, which suggests collinearity between the two variables, the tolerance level of both is at .79 which is higher than .20 and VIF is at 1.26 which is lower than 1.50, therefore, the two variables does not possess the collinearity problem.

### **Strengths and Limitations**

The strengths of this study are the uses of the original questionnaires, which are widely used in the psychological testing method with great reliability and validity. Moreover, based on the previous literatures, we retest their findings to examine further, as well as measuring variables that have not been test in the prior study; for example, there are no study on the relationship between empathy, locus of control, and aggression.

There are limitations that occurred in our current study. First, there is only one question that use to determine the effect of political crisis on individual; thus, this might not be reliable and not effective in determining one's effects. Moreover,

there could be some other variables that could affect in this study might have not been measure; for instance, stress level should be measure in order to know whether the participant is literally affected by the political crisis. Second, self-report questionnaire may produce bias (DeVellis, 1991); people prefer others to view themselves as a positive individual, so they might not accurately answer the questionnaire.

### **Further Study**

In the further research, due to the current findings did not cover all possible variables that could affect participant; e.g. stress level; thus, the further research should administer those variables as well. In order to reduce the desirability bias in self-report, we might need other research method that could possible measure participant along with self-report, such as using imaging techniques, measure physiological response, etc. Lastly, the future research also needs to administer the pre-test and post-test to compare their response to in current situations for more accurate response.

### **Conclusion**

This study has demonstrated the relationship between aggression to be negatively correlated with both empathy and locus of control. Although, there are various limitations to this study, this attempt to understand how the political situation in Thailand can be seen as a stepping stone for further researches to come. Because Thailand is going through a change in social aspect in a larger scale, it is no longer a pure collectivistic society; the rise in aggression amidst political turmoil may contribute to more violence and division than necessary.

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## Appendix A

### *The Aggression Questionnaire by Buss and Perry*

#### Physical Aggression

1. Once in a while I can't control the urge to strike another person
2. Given enough provocation, I may hit another person.
3. If somebody hits me, I hit back.
4. I get into fights a little more than the average person.
5. If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.
6. There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.
7. I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person.\*
8. I have threatened people I know.
9. I have become so mad that I have broken things.

#### Verbal Aggression

1. I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them.
2. I often find myself disagreeing with people.
3. When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them.
4. I can't help getting into arguments when people disagree with me.
5. My friends say that I'm somewhat argumentative.

#### Anger

1. I flare up quickly but get over it quickly.
2. When frustrated, I let my irritation show.
3. I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode.
4. I am an even-tempered person.\*
5. Some of my friends think I'm a hothead.
6. Sometimes I fly off the handle for no good reason.

7. I have trouble controlling my temper.

Hostility

1. I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy.

2. At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life.

3. Other people always seem to get the breaks.

4. I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things.

5. I know that "friends" talk about me behind my back.

6. I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers.

7. I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back.

8. When people are especially nice, I wonder what they want.

\* The scoring of these items is reversed.

## Appendix B

*The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire*

Below is a list of statements. Please read each statement *carefully* and rate how frequently you feel to act in the manner described. Circle your answer on the response form. There are no right or wrong answers or trick questions. Please answer each question as honestly as you can.

1. When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too
2. Other people's misfortunes do not disturb me a great deal
3. It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully
4. I remain unaffected when someone close to me is happy
5. I enjoy making other people feel better
6. I have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me
7. When a friend starts to talk about his/her problems, I try to steer the conversation towards something else
8. I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything
9. I find that I am "in tune" with other people's moods
10. I do not feel sympathy for people who cause their own serious illnesses
11. I become irritated when someone cries
12. I am not really interested in how other people feel
13. I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset
14. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I do not feel very much pity for them
15. I find it silly for people to cry out of happiness
16. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards him/her

*Scoring* Item responses are scored according to the following scale for positively worded Items 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 16. Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Sometimes = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4. The following negatively worded items are reverse scored: 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15. Scores are summed to derive total for the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire.

## Appendix C

*Rotter's Internal External Locus of Control Questionnaire*

Indicate for each statement whether it is T (true) or F (false) for you. There are no right or wrong answers.

- 1) I usually get what I want in life.
- 2) I need to be kept informed about news events.
- 3) I never know where I stand with other people.
- 4) I do not really believe in luck or chance.
- 5) I think that I could easily win a lottery.
- 6) If I do not succeed on a task, I tend to give up.
- 7) I usually convince others to do things my way.
- 8) People make a difference in controlling crime.
- 9) The success I have is largely a matter of chance.
- 10) Marriage is largely a gamble for most people.
- 11) People must be the master of their own fate.
- 12) It is not important for me to vote.
- 13) My life seems like a series of random events.
- 14) I never try anything that I am not sure of.
- 15) I earn the respect and honors I receive.
- 16) A person can get rich by taking risks.
- 17) Leaders are successful when they work hard.
- 18) Persistence and hard work usually lead to success.
- 19) It is difficult to know who my real friends are.
- 20) Other people usually control my life.

*Scoring*

Give 5 points for each question if you indicated False on questions:

2,3,5,6,9,10,12,13,14,16,19,20

Give 5 points for each question if you indicated True on questions:

1,4,7,8,11,15,17,18

*Results*

0-15 Very strong external locus of control

20-35 External locus of control

40-60 Both external and internal locus of control

65-80 Internal locus of control

85-100 Very strong internal locus of control

## Appendix D

### **Participant information Sheet**

Project Title: Relationships between Aggression, Empathy and Locus of Control Amidst Thai Political Crisis.

You are being asked to take part in a research study for a Senior Project Thesis of Joint International Psychology Program Students in Chulalongkorn University. This research study is conducted by Supriya Khanijou, Patikorn Wood-Thanan, and Phanita Keeraswangporn under the supervision of Dr. Nattasuda Taephant. The board members of the Joint International Psychology Program, Faculty of Psychology, Chulalongkorn University, have reviewed and approved the proposal for this project.

There are 2 parts to this questionnaire. In the first part, you will be asked to provide general information about yourself. In the second part, you will be asked to complete 3 sets of surveys. This questionnaire typically takes 15 minutes to complete.

You may decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn/destroyed. You have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you. You have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered. If you have any questions as a result of reading this information sheet, you should ask the researcher before the study begins.

There are no known benefits or risks for you in this study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary.

The data we collect is confidential and will be used only in regards to this research study. No one will link the data you provided to the identifying information you supplied.

For further information, Dr. Nattasuda Taephant will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time. You may contact her at the Faculty of Psychology, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, Chulalongkorn University.

If you want to find out about the final results of this study, you should contact the Joint international Psychology Program office, 7<sup>th</sup> floor, Faculty of Psychology, Chulalongkorn University.

Please answer all questions truthfully and as accurately as you can. Thank you.



## Part 1: Demographic

Sex  Male  Female

Age .....

Faculty ..... Year .....

How much are you affected by the Political unrest situation in Thailand  
(psychologically, emotionally, physically etc.)?

Not at all  Slightly  Moderately  Considerably  
 Very  Immensely

How long did it take you to travel to the university from your house in the month of  
Januray to February 2014?

.....hrs ..... mins

How long does it take you to travel to the University from your house now?

..... hrs ..... mins

What means of transport do you use to travel to the University?

Car  BTS  Bus  MRT  Motorcycle  
 Walk

Others (Please specify) .....

**Part 2.1** : Please circle the most appropriate number that best describes your response to each statement

SET 1	Extremely Uncharacteristic	Uncharacteristic	Slightly Not Characteristic	Neutral	Slightly Characteristic	Characteristic	Extremely Characteristic
1. Once in a while I can't control the urge to strike another person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Given enough provocation, I may hit another person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. If somebody hits me, I hit back.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I get into fights a little more than the average person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. If I have to resort to violence to protect my rights, I will.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. There are people who pushed me so far that we came to blows.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I can think of no good reason for ever hitting a person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I have threatened people I know.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I have become so mad that I have broken things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I tell my friends openly when I disagree with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I often find myself disagreeing with people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. When people annoy me, I may tell them what I think of them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I can't help getting into arguments when people disagree with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. My friends say that I'm somewhat argumentative.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I flare up quickly but get over it quickly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. When frustrated, I let my irritation show.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I sometimes feel like a powder keg ready to explode.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I am an even-tempered person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Some of my friends think I'm a hothead.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Sometimes I fly off the handle for no good reason.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. I have trouble controlling my temper.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I am sometimes eaten up with jealousy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. At times I feel I have gotten a raw deal out of life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Other people always seem to get the breaks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I wonder why sometimes I feel so bitter about things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

26. I know that "friends" talk about me behind my back.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. I am suspicious of overly friendly strangers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I sometimes feel that people are laughing at me behind my back.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. When people are especially nice, I wonder what they want.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Part 2.2 :** Please circle the most appropriate number that best describes how frequently you feel

SET 2	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too	1	2	3	4	5
2. Other people's misfortunes do not disturb me a great deal	1	2	3	4	5
3. It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully	1	2	3	4	5
4. I remain unaffected when someone close to me is happy	1	2	3	4	5
5. I enjoy making other people feel better	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me	1	2	3	4	5
7. When a friend starts to talk about his/her problems, I try to steer the conversation towards something else	1	2	3	4	5
8. I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything	1	2	3	4	5
9. I find that I am "in tune" with other people's moods	1	2	3	4	5
10. I do not feel sympathy for people who cause their own serious illnesses	1	2	3	4	5
11. I become irritated when someone cries	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am not really interested in how other people feel	1	2	3	4	5
13. I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset	1	2	3	4	5
14. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I do not feel very much pity for them	1	2	3	4	5
15. I find it silly for people to cry out of happiness	1	2	3	4	5
16. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective towards him/her	1	2	3	4	5

**Part 2.3 :** Indicate for each statement whether it is T (true) or F (false) for you.

SET 3	TRUE	FALSE
1. I usually get what I want in life.	T	F
2. I need to be kept informed about news events.	T	F
3. I never know where I stand with other people.	T	F
4. I do not really believe in luck or chance.	T	F
5. I think that I could easily win a lottery.	T	F
6. If I do not succeed on a task, I tend to give up.	T	F
7. I usually convince others to do things my way.	T	F
8. People make a difference in controlling crime.	T	F
9. The success I have is largely a matter of chance.	T	F
10. Marriage is largely a gamble for most people.	T	F
11. People must be the master of their own fate.	T	F
12. It is not important for me to vote.	T	F
13. My life seems like a series of random events.	T	F
14. I never try anything that I am not sure of.	T	F
15. I earn the respect and honors I receive.	T	F
16. A person can get rich by taking risks.	T	F
17. Leaders are successful when they work hard.	T	F
18. Persistence and hard work usually lead to success.	T	F
19. It is difficult to know who my real friends are.	T	F
20. Other people usually control my life.	T	F

**Thank you for your participation**

## Bibliography

### Patikorn Wood-Thanan

Mr. Wood-Thanan graduated from high school at Ruamrudee International School with class of 2010. In the same year he joined Chulalongkorn University (CU) in the first cohort of Joint International Psychology Program (JIPP). Mr. Wood-Thanan has provided immense knowledge in interpreting statistical data in this research. He hopes to be able to use this knowledge in other fields of his future endeavors.

### Phanita Keeraswangporn

Ms. Phanita Keeraswangporn graduated from Keerapatch International School in Bangkok, Thailand. After graduation, she enrolled into the first cohort of Joint International Psychology Program (JIPP). Ms. Keeraswangporn is an asset to the team with her ability to coordinate and work under different roles. Ms. Keeraswangporn has shown great skills in literature analysis. She hopes to apply her skills in other areas of her future career.

### Supriya Khanijou

Ms. Supriya Khanijou graduated the international baccalaureate program from Garden Internal School, Rayong, Thailand before enrolling into the Joint International Psychology Program. Ms. Khanijou has given invaluable contribution to the research as an active member of the team. She has provided great knowledge from her area of interest, which sparked the idea for the research topic. She aims to continue studying

in the field of psychology after she graduates and has great passion of making greater contributions into the field of psychology.