

Self-efficacy Among Government School Teachers of Punjab

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Abstract

This study was undertaken to study general self-efficacy among government school teachers of Punjab. Only primary school teachers were selected for this research pursuit. Hindi version of The General Self-efficacy Scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1993; and Sud, 1998) was used to collect the data. A representative sample of 52 primary school teachers teaching in government schools of Punjab was randomly selected. Results of the study showed that gender, teaching experience and type of family has significant impact on self-efficacy of primary school teachers. Significant gender differences were found, male primary school teachers showed high level of self-efficacy as compared to female primary school teachers. Teachers with more teaching experience showed high self-efficacy level as compared to their counterparts with less teaching experience and teachers belonging to joint family showed high self-efficacy than teachers belonging to nuclear family. Whereas, locale showed no significant impact on the self-efficacy of primary school teachers.

Keywords: Government School Teacher, Self-Efficacy, Gender, Urban, Rural, Teaching Experience, Family.

Introduction

The concept of self-efficacy originated from Bandura's social-cognitive theory of behavioral change (Bandura, 1977). This concept is related to the beliefs which people have about their own capacity to complete a specific task / action. It further believes that everyone has to evaluate his/her abilities to perform a particular given task successfully. It is considered as one's own belief in his/her abilities to deal with various situations. It not only explains how one feels about himself/herself, but whether or not one can successfully achieve his/her goals in life. A self-system of a person as described by Bandura is comprised of a person's attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills. This system plays a major role in how one perceive situations and how person behaves in response to different situations as self-efficacy is an essential part of his self-system. This concept has a strong influence on the approach to the task, the persistence to accomplish the same task, as well as the level of effort (Bandura, 1977).

Self-Efficacy - Theoretical Basis

Bandura and even other researchers also examined that self-efficacy can have an impact on everything from psychological states to behavior to motivation (Bandura, 1977). An individual will not engage in performances and adopt performance goals that are thought to lead to desirable outcomes unless he feels efficacious in effecting a successful performance (Ponton, Edmister, Ukeiley, & Seiner, 2001). People usually choose those activities which they feel will lead to satisfying ends rather than engaging themselves in perceived futile endeavors. People self-reflect and process different sources of efficacy information and also form beliefs about their level of capability in various fields. Application of this knowledge, favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward engagement in select behaviors are developed that influence activity choice (Ponton et.al, 2005). Self-efficacious individual is one who believes in " his capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Gardner, 1983).

Theories of learning, cognitive theories and theories of social cognition gave the theoretical base to the concept of self-efficacy. These theories describe the nature, sources and psychological processes which are involved in the formation of self-efficacy beliefs. Learning theories explain the emergence of behavior and consequences of that behavior.

Cognitive theories describe the involvement of cognition in the process of behavior generation and emphasized the consideration of gains or losses resulting from performing the said behavior as significant deciding factors (Tsang et al. 2012). According to Bandura's Social Cognition Theory human functioning is a product of dynamic interplay of personal, behavioral and environmental influences. Social-cognitive theory affirms that self-efficacy beliefs originate from a broader framework of "self-theories" of Dweck (1999) that entail motivation as well as performance. These theories investigate how people develop beliefs about themselves (i.e., self-theories) and how these beliefs create psychological worlds, shaping thoughts, feelings and behaviors. The approach reveals why some students are motivated to work harder, and why others give into patterns of helplessness and are self-defeating. Self-efficacy has been described as a domain specific assessment. Research studies reported that self-efficacy beliefs also vary in level, strength, and generativity across different domains (Tsang et al, 2012). One's perception of capability in operating the Microsoft system is typically much different than an assessment of capability of developing that system. Consequently, assessments of efficacy can be contextualized to the activity of interest.

Bandura's (1997) theory, self-efficacy is influenced by four factors: personal mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological reactions. Personal mastery experiences indicate an individual's previous successes or accomplishments with a given task and are considered to have the strongest and most consistent influence on self-efficacy (Schunk & Meece, 2006). Vicarious experiences, which are also a form of social comparison, occur when other individuals perform a specific behavior. It has strongest impact on self-efficacy when the model/performer is similar to the individual and demonstrates coping or adaptation when confronted with errors during task performance (Schunk, Hanson, & Cox, 1987; Schunk & Meece, 2006). Verbal persuasion in the form of encouraging feedback from important others, such as parents, teachers, and peers, has been found to positively impact self-efficacy if subsequent performance of the task is successful (Schunk & Meece, 2006). On the other hand, physiological indicators of anxiety, such as increased heart rate, may detract from self-efficacy by signaling to the individual that he/she lacks the capability to perform a task successfully (Schunk & Meece, 2006).

Self-efficacy is also related to health behavior of a person. It determine whether health behavior change will be initiated, to what extent and for how long it will be sustained in the face of obstacles and failures. Self-efficacy influences the challenges that people take on as well as how high they set their goals. Individuals with strong self-efficacy select more challenging goals (DeVellis & DeVellis, 2000). They focus on opportunities not on obstacles.

Review of Literature

Self-efficacy is associated with various human functioning. Self-efficacy predicts course satisfaction in traditional face-to face classrooms (Bandura, 1997). Regarding the relationship between self-efficacy and student satisfaction, Pajares and Schunk (2001) stated that a strong sense of efficacy enhances human well-being; for instance, self-efficacy beliefs influence the amount of stress and anxiety that people experience as they engage in an activity (Pajares and Miller, 1994), and probably when students engage in a course. Self-efficacy also predicts course satisfaction in traditional face-to face classrooms (Bandura, 1997). Although there is empirical evidence to support the positive effects of self-efficacy beliefs on students' well-being and course satisfaction (DeWitz and Walsh, 2002). Self-efficacy is the individuals' assessment of their capabilities to organize and execute actions required to achieve successful levels of performance (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy makes a difference in how people feel, think and act. On the contrary feeling low sense of self-efficacy is related with depression, anxiety and helplessness. Self-efficacy levels can enhance or impede motivation. People with high self-efficacy choose to perform more challenging task, they set for themselves higher goals and remain stick to them. They shape their actions in thoughts, and anticipate either optimistic or pessimistic scenarios as per their self-efficacy level.

This paper is an attempt to study self-efficacy among primary school teachers, the review of the related research studies revealed that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy experience higher levels of job satisfaction, lower levels of job-related stress and face less difficulties in dealing with students' misbehaviors (Caprara et al., 2003). The concern about teachers' self-efficacy has progressively gained an important role in school psychology research as it is found to have implications for effective teaching, instructional practices, and also for students' academic achievement (Klassen et al., 2009; Klassen and Tze, 2014). Teachers' personal values are the important predictors of teachers' self-efficacy. Teachers for whom novelty, independence, and choosing their own goals are important for their efficiency are actually more efficient in their teaching activities when they feel independent of external conditions. Teachers who show concern for their students and "value" in terms of what they do can benefit in terms of self-efficacy (Barni et al., 2019). Understanding the main antecedents of self-efficacy may have important payoffs in working for teachers' well-being and school effectiveness and improvement. It has great influence on many attitudes and behaviors (Schwartz, 2015) also at the work place (e.g., Koivula, 2008). Teachers with strong, positive efficacy beliefs about their teaching ability are more likely to take risks and use new techniques (Guskey, 1988; Stein & Wang 1988). In a comparative study about self-efficacy and self-esteem of married employed and married unemployed women (Azar and Vasudeva, 2006) found that employed married women have significantly higher

self-efficacy beliefs and self-esteem than unemployed married women.

Regarding the influence of family on self-efficacy, Pearson (2009) stated that there exists a significant relationship between self-efficacy and support in the family and self-efficacy also mediates the relationship between support in the family and academic performance. On the other hand (Gardner, 2011) reported significant relationship between parent social self-efficacy and child social self-efficacy. Family environment also has a productive influence on the self-efficacy of a person. The adolescents of joint families showed higher self-efficacy than the adolescents belonging to the nuclear family (Singh and Udainiya, 2009). This may be due to our social culture and norms. The presence of grandparents at home is a boon for the grandchildren (Edwards, 1998). Researchers have found that the unconditional love that grandparents bestow upon grandchildren, aid in their self-esteem and efficacy. In a research study by (Kasikci and Alberto, 2007) a positive relationship between family support and self-efficacy was found among Turkish patients.

Busch (1995) studied gender differences in perceived self-efficacy in marketing, organizational behaviour, accounting, computing, mathematics and statistics and found that female students had significantly lower self-efficacy in computing and marketing and higher self-efficacy in statistics than the male students. In statistics female students outperform their male counterparts. According to the study of (Atta et al., 2012; Himabindu, 2012; Ongowo and Hungi, 2014) significant gender differences were found. Batdi, (2014) reported that male teachers have high self-efficacy than female teachers. More than 50% of the teachers of rural areas of Gujarat (India) have medium level of self-efficacy and 25% of teachers have high level of self-efficacy. Male teachers have significantly more disciplinary self-efficacy than female teachers. Female and experienced teachers have high self-efficacy than male and less experienced teachers (Patel, 2014). Beginning secondary school teachers have average level of self-efficacy (Butucha, 2013). Female teachers have lower self-efficacy than their male counterparts. Public school teachers have lower self-efficacy than private school teachers. Female and urban teachers have higher level of self-efficacy beliefs than male and rural teachers (Shazadi et al., 2011; Kumar and Lal, 2006), whereas, as per the study of Ahmad et al. (2015) female teachers have higher self-efficacy beliefs than male teachers. In a study Raju and Samiullah (2012) reported no significant gender difference in teacher self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy beliefs among urban teachers have higher level than rural teachers (Shazadi et al., 2011). Page et al. (2014) found that urban elementary school teachers have low level of self-efficacy than sub-urban and rural elementary school teachers. Whereas, (Mishra and Acharya, 2011) reported no significant difference in teacher efficacy of senior-secondary school teachers with respect to locale. More experienced teachers have high level of

self-efficacy (Raju and Samiullah, 2012; Batdi, 2014; Patel, 2014; Shazadi et al., 2011).

Self-efficacy had also been reported as a powerful predictor of academic success (Lent & Hackett, 1987; Pintrich & Degroot, 1990; Alkhatib, 2010; Boyer & Usinger 2012; Kingir et al., 2013). A study by Navidinai et al. (2009) reveals that there is low but statistically significant positive correlation between teachers' efficacy beliefs and their students' achievement.

Review of the related research literature shows that there is a need to conduct research studies on self-efficacy of primary school teachers as they owe the responsibility of molding the behavior of small children in their childhood. It is evident that childhood in a true sense is the stage at which foundation for balanced personality of the child/person is being laid. The knowledge, experience and skills inculcated and the abilities and beliefs nurtured among them in this stage forms the basis of their being an efficient and responsible member of the society. On the one hand, a self-efficient teacher can become a guide, mentor, philosopher and friend to the students and on the other hand his self-efficacy has implications for better planning, effective teaching, instructional practices, his/her job satisfaction and also for students' academic achievement. Current research pursuit along with examining the influence of gender and locale on self-efficacy of primary school teachers also intends to study the impact of teaching experience and type of family to which they belong.

Objectives

1. To study self-efficacy among government primary school teachers of Punjab.
2. To study self-efficacy among government primary school teachers with respect to gender.
3. To study self-efficacy among government primary school teachers with respect to locale.
4. To study self-efficacy among government primary school teachers with respect to teaching experience.
5. To study self-efficacy among government primary school teachers with respect to type of family.

Hypothesis

1. There will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to gender.
2. There will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to locale.
3. There will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to teaching experience.
4. There will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to type of family.

Methodology

This study was conducted by following descriptive method of research.

Sample

Universe of the study is primary school teachers teaching in government schools of various

districts of Punjab. A representative sample of randomly selected 52 teachers was taken for this study giving due weightage to gender, locale, teaching experience and type of family.

Research Tool Used

In the current research pursuit the Hindi version of the General Self-Efficacy (GSE) scale was used. The General Self-Efficacy (GSE) scale was originally developed in Germany and translated into English by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1993) and in Hindi by Sud (1998). It is a four point scale for

identifying the subjects in categories of high and low self-efficacy. Tool is comprised of 10 statements designed to tap this self-efficacy construct. Responses to all 10 items are summed up to yield the final composite score, with a range from 10 to 40.

Statistical treatment of data

Descriptive method was used to analyze the data. Statistical procedures like mean, median, mode and standard deviation were calculated. To find out mean differences t-test was used.

Table 1: Showing Distribution of Scores of Self-efficacy among primary school teachers (N= 52)

| Class Interval | Frequency | Mid-point X | Percentage % | Cumulative % |
|----------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 19-20 | 1 | 19.5 | 1.92 | 1.92 |
| 21-22 | 0 | 21.5 | 0 | 1.92 |
| 23-24 | 2 | 23.5 | 3.85 | 5.77 |
| 25-26 | 1 | 25.5 | 1.92 | 7.69 |
| 27-28 | 3 | 27.5 | 5.77 | 13.46 |
| 29-30 | 9 | 29.5 | 17.31 | 30.77 |
| 31-32 | 4 | 31.5 | 7.69 | 38.46 |
| 33-34 | 12 | 33.5 | 23.08 | 61.54 |
| 35-36 | 5 | 35.5 | 9.61 | 71.15 |
| 37-38 | 6 | 37.5 | 11.54 | 82.69 |
| 39-40 | 9 | 39.5 | 17.31 | 100 |
| | N = 52 | | | |
| Mean | 33.25 | | Mode | 33 |
| SD | 4.707 | | Kurtosis | 0.358 |
| Median | 33 | | Skewness | -0.605 |

Table 1 shows that the mean score of primary school teachers on self-efficacy scale is 33.25 with standard deviation 4.707. The statistical data from table 1 demonstrate that 23.08 % primary school teachers belong to the class interval in which self-efficacy mean falls, 38.46 % primary school teachers

lie below the class interval in which self-efficacy mean falls. Further, 38.46 % primary school teachers lie above the class interval in which self-efficacy mean falls and indicates high level of self-efficacy among them.



Fig. 1 Curve Showing Distribution of Scores of Primary School Teachers on Self-efficacy

Table 2: Showing Self-efficacy among Government Primary School Teachers with respect to Gender

| Males (N=25) | | Females (N=27) | | Mean Difference | t- value |
|--------------|------|----------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| 35.12 | 4.38 | 31.52 | 4.389 | 3.6 | 2.958** |

*p<.05, **p<.01

It is clear from table 2 that on self-efficacy scale mean score of male primary school teachers is higher than female primary school teachers. Further, the obtained t-value (2.958) is more than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. This reveals that there exists a significant gender difference in the self-

efficacy level where male teacher exhibit high level of self-efficacy than female teachers. Hence, first hypothesis stating that, "there will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to gender" is accepted.

Table 3 : Showing Self-efficacy among Government Primary School Teachers With respect to Locale

| Rural (N =40) | | Urban (N = 12) | | Mean Difference | t- value |
|---------------|-------|----------------|------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| 33.075 | 4.269 | 33.83 | 6.13 | 0.755 | 0.399 |

Table 3 reveals that on self-efficacy scale mean score of primary school teachers belonging to rural area is less than primary school teachers belonging to urban area. The obtained t-value (0.399) is very less than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, there is no significant difference

in the self-efficacy level of primary school teachers with respect to locale. Therefore, second hypothesis stating that, "there will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to locale" is not accepted.

Table 4: Showing Self-efficacy among Government Primary School Teachers With respect To Teaching Experience

| Above 10 year (N = 20) | | Below 10 years (N = 32) | | Mean Difference | t- value |
|------------------------|-------|-------------------------|------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| 34.85 | 4.233 | 32.25 | 4.78 | 2.6 | 2.049* |

*p<.05

Primary school teachers with teaching experience above 10 years have high mean score on Self-efficacy scale than their counterparts with teaching experience less than 10 years. Further, the obtained t-value (2.049) is more than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that,

teachers with more teaching experience have high self-efficacy level than teachers with less teaching experience. Therefore third hypothesis stating that, "there will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to teaching experience" is accepted.

Table 5: Showing Self-efficacy among Government Primary School Teachers With respect to Type of family

| Nuclear (N= 23) | | Joint (N= 29) | | Mean Difference | t- value |
|-----------------|-----|---------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
| Mean | SD | Mean | SD | | |
| 31.565 | 4.8 | 34.586 | 4.247 | 3.021 | 2.37* |

*p<.05

It is clear from table 5 that on self-efficacy scale mean score of primary school teachers from Joint family is higher than primary school teachers from Nuclear family. The t-value came out to be 2.37, which is more than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that teachers belonging to joint family have high self-efficacy than teachers belonging to Nuclear family. Therefore, fourth hypothesis stating that, "there will be a significant difference in the self-efficacy of government primary school teachers with respect to type of family" stands accepted.

Results and Discussion

The results of present study indicates that there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy of male and female primary school teachers, where male teachers showed significantly high level of self-efficacy as compared to female teachers. The results are in accordance with the studies of (Atta et al., 2012; Himabindu, 2012; Butucha, 2013 ; Batdi, 2014; Ongowo and Hungi, 2014; and Patel, 2014), who also reported significant gender differences in self-efficacy. The result of present study supports the findings of ; Batdi, 2014 and Patel, 2014) which found

that male teachers have high self-efficacy than female teachers. Whereas, on the contrary (Shazadi et al., 2011; Ahmad et al., 2015) found that female teachers have high self-efficacy than male teachers.

The study revealed that as far as locale is concerned no significant difference was found between urban and rural primary school teachers. This finding is in tune with the findings of (Mishra and Acharya, 2011) who also reported similar result that no significant difference is there in teacher efficacy of senior-secondary school teachers with respect to locale.

Present study reported a significant difference in self-efficacy of primary school teachers with respect to teaching experience, where teachers with more than 10 years experience exhibit high self-efficacy than teachers with less than 10 years teaching experience. The result is supported by the findings of (Shazadi et al., 2011; Raju and Samiullah, 2012; Batdi, 2014; Patel, 2014) which also reported that more experienced teachers have high level of self-efficacy.

Another finding of the study that there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy of primary school teachers with respect to the type of family, where teachers belonging to joint family reported high self-efficacy as compared to the teachers belonging to nuclear family. This finding can be discussed in the light of the findings of (Singh and Udainiya, 2009) who reported that the adolescents of joint families showed higher self-efficacy than the adolescents belonging to the nuclear family. (Pearson, 2009) also stated that there exists a significant relationship between self-efficacy and support in the family.

Conclusion

Self-efficacy is a psychological skill which one should foster and strengthen. One should incorporate sources of self-efficacy into one's own life. Research studies suggested that self-efficacy is beneficial for well-being of a person. A family plays an important role in making person optimistic and confident in his abilities, even when things become difficult. The presence of elders at home is a boon for the grandchildren (Edwards, 1998). The circumstances and experience make person more self-reliant and efficient. When a person succeeds in any task, he/she becomes able to build a powerful belief in his abilities. Celebrating success also builds confidence, when other people speak high of you it improves yours sense of self-efficacy. Therefore, for leading a successful and contented life there is need to develop the sense of self efficacy among students. A self-efficient teacher can do this task very efficiently. He / she develops confidence among their students, provides them opportunities to develop and foster their abilities and prepares them for the betterment of society.

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