

Relationship between Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy and Teaching Experience

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Abstract

This research investigates the relationships among three dimensions of self-efficacy: instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement in relation to years of teaching experience. Through convenience sampling method 100 female educators who had been teaching for one or more years was selected. Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) was used for this study, which consists of 12 items, administered to the participants. The reliability of the overall scale in this study was found to be excellent, a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.90 demonstrated a high internal consistency of the scale. The results indicate a strong positive correlation between overall self-efficacy and the effectiveness of classroom management as teaching experience increases. However, no significant correlation was observed between years of experience and the effectiveness of instructional strategies or student engagement. The findings highlight the significance of continuous support and development for educators at every stage of their careers, revealing a strong connection concerning professional experience and teacher efficacy.

Keywords: Classroom Management, Instructional Strategies, Self-efficacy.

Introduction

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to successfully organize, implement, and accomplish specific tasks or goals in a specific context (Bandura, 1997). It is a domain-specific construct, meaning that self-efficacy beliefs are situational and may vary across life domains. The term encompasses a one's confidence in their ability to meet the challenges presented by a particular task, rather than a global assessment of self-worth (Johnson & Birkeland, 2021). In essence, self-efficacy affects people's decisions, degree of striving, and being determined and consistently trying to achieve desired goals. Behavior, motivation, and general well-being are all significantly influenced by this belief (DeRosia et al., 2021). Individuals possessing low self-efficacy have a tendency to question their abilities and avoid from thought-provoking tasks, whereas those with high self-efficacy are inclined to confront challenges with confidence and determination (Qamar & Akhter, 2020).

In field of education, teachers are essential in influencing students' academic performance, attitudes, and habits of lifelong learning in addition to sharing knowledge (Miller, 2020). Teacher self-efficacy, which is defined as the conviction that one can influence student learning outcomes through successful teaching strategies, is still a crucial factor in determining how effective a

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teacher is (Hoy & Spero, 2005). High self-efficacy teachers are willing to adopt new teaching techniques, set high standards, stay well-organized, face obstacles head-on, ask for help when necessary, and successfully modify their approaches. In addition to helping instructors by lowering burnout rates and improving job happiness, this also helps children by encouraging increased motivation, academic adjustment, and achievement. Collective teacher efficacy provides insight into how entire faculties and schools affect student results, whereas individual teacher self-efficacy affects students' academic progress (Lazarides & Warner, 2020).

With time, teachers undergo various transformation in the field which raises further inquiries about the influence of these transformations have on their self-efficacy perceptions. The relationship connecting the number of working years of a teacher and his/her self-efficacy is not a simple matter and requires extensive examination. The focus of this research is to understand the complexities of such relationships, focusing on how the time element of a teacher's career affects his/her beliefs in their capabilities, choices and teaching methods as the field develops. As taking advantage of findings of recent studies (Tschannen-Moran & Johnson, 2011), the researchers' intend to guide the discourse on teacher's professional development and provide situational cognizance that will inform all factors affecting appropriate teaching practices.

Theoretical Framework

In the following section, a comprehensive exploration of the theoretical underpinnings of teacher self-efficacy, the evolving nature of self-efficacy with increasing years of experience, and the potential implications for educational outcomes was highlighted.

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

Learning anticipates growth. Bandura's theory has a strong central theme. In all of its motivation to act, a somehow cognitive dimension works together with other aspects to influence a desired behavior — entered through, say, from the environment itself, or through interaction. Based on this theory, there are four sources from which an individual acquires self-efficacy: the direct experiences of success, learning from the successes of others, receiving verbal reinforcement, and experiencing certain emotions, or even physiological reactions. It can be assumed that more experienced teachers have a greater number of accumulated mastery opportunities, vicariously experienced some methods of teaching, been given feedback and help from superiors as well as developed certain management of their physiological and emotional reactions to teaching demands. Therefore, Bandura, in theory opining that self-efficacy beliefs are formed through various interactions on the professional setting of an individual says, including observations of other professionals' practices over time believed that teachers' self-efficacy does not develop out of a social vacuum (Bandura, 1986).

Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory

Erikson's theory speculates that individuals experience various psychosocial stages throughout their lives, each characterized by a specific crisis or developmental challenge. The stage of generativity versus stagnation, occurring during middle adulthood, may be linked to the years of experience that educators possess in the classroom. During this stage, individuals seek to contribute to society's and future generations through productive work and caregiving roles. Teachers with more years of experience may experience a sense of generativity as they mentor younger colleagues, contribute to educational innovations, and positively impact the lives of their

students. This sense of generativity may enhance their self-efficacy belief by confirming their competence, value, and meaningfulness within their profession (Erikson, 1959).

Stage Theory of Career Development

According to stage theories of career development, such the one put forth by Donald Super, people go through a number of stages in their professions, each of which is characterized by unique tasks, difficulties, and transitions (1992). This hypothesis could be used to explain how self-efficacy changes as instructors progress through several career stages (e.g., entry, establishment, maintenance, decline, and disengagement) and how years of experience relate to self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, for example, may rise during the establishment stage as educators become more competent and confident in their jobs, but it may fall during the disengagement stage as they go closer to retirement or leave the field.

These theories provide complementary perspectives for understanding how teachers' years of experience shape their self-efficacy beliefs and contribute to their professional development and well-being. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory focuses on cognitive processes and social learning mechanisms, while Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory emphasizes the developmental tasks and challenges associated with different stages of adulthood.

Research Objectives

The basic two objectives of this study were:

- To discover the relationship between teachers' sense of self-efficacy and teacher years of experience.
- To find out the relationship among three dimensions (instructional strategies, classroom managements, student engagement) of self-efficacy and teacher years of experience.

Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses of the study were:

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between teachers' sense of self-efficacy and their years of experience.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy for classroom management and teacher years of experience.
- H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy for instructional strategies and teacher years of experience.
- H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy for student engagement and teacher years of experience

Literature Review

Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy, a critical construct in education, encompasses various dimensions that profoundly impacts teaching and learning outcomes. Central to this concept are three key domains: efficacy in instructional strategies, efficacy in classroom management, and efficacy in student engagement (Miller, 2020).

Pressley (2023) worked on the self-efficacy dynamics of 77 teachers in Virginia amid the challenging context of COVID-19. The research uncovers noteworthy shifts in first-year teacher self-efficacy over the courses of the school year. Drawing from the results, this study advocates for the implementations of sustained teacher induction programs throughout the school year,

emphasizing the need for continuous support to boost first-year teacher self-efficacy. These recommendations underscore the potential benefits of ongoing professional development initiatives in mitigating the challenges posed by the unique circumstances surrounding teaching during the COVID-19 era.

Li et al. (2019) in their study utilized a simple self-reported assessment in a cross design on forty-five teachers from two Chinese classes and investigated the interrelations among teacher engagement, CPD, self-efficacy, and teaching experience. In their analysis results, teachers' level of self-efficacy and their level of work engagement were found to be significantly positively correlated. The analysis also showed that teaching experience moderates the studied variables, thus it is important to look into each experience category and its impact on work engagement, self-efficacy, and professional development. These result contributes valuable insights into the complex dynamics of the factors influencing teachers' engagement with their work and self-efficacy that professional growth of teachers should not cease.

Klassen and Tze (2014) studied self-efficacy, and personality factors, and their influence on teaching efficacy through 43 studies involving 9216 subjects. Considering the cumulative impact of various psychological characteristics on teaching efficiency, the detailed research established a statistically significant but small effect ($r = .10$). The finding of self-efficacy as a powerful component was particularly interesting; on performing the comparison with teaching performance it was found that self-efficacy in general had a relatively larger effect size $r = .28$. This is from the argument that the teachers' belief in self-efficacy forms the most critical element in enhancing the overall performance of the teachers in class. The analytical summary of the meta-analysis indicates that the sociocultural educational characteristics, including self-efficacy, cognitive factors, and the absolute effect of self-efficacy, play a significant role in determining teaching efficacy in Western studies. Therefore, links between cognitive, emotional constructs and educational effectiveness in context are under addressed which require exploration.

Efficacy in Instructional Strategies

This indicates a teacher's assurance about their capability to use various teaching method and techniques to facilitate student learning effectively. It encompasses the confidence in an individual's capacity to create and implement instructional activities that foster understanding and skill development among students (Klassen & Tze, 2014). Teachers should incorporate a variety of instructional strategies to effectively boost students' self-esteem, which in turn may lead to enhanced academic performance (Awan et al., 2024).

Efficacy in Classroom Management

It is related to the teacher's confidence in his ability to create and maintain a positive and structured learning environment. It includes skills and strategies for setting rules, managing student behavior, and promoting an environment conducive to learning (Hoy & Hoy, 2015).

Miller's research in 2020 concentrates on how teacher self-efficacy, experience, teacher attachment, and the intention to quit the profession affect each other in that particular order. It is surprising to learn about the teachers from 6 to 10 years of experience who seem to be more capable of using effective instructional and classroom management strategies but also seem to have more intentions to quit the profession as compared to the less experienced. This further highlights on the relevance of dedication towards professional principles and professional development. Importantly, the article stresses that self-efficacy and teaching experience, although strongly associated with desire to quit, cannot compete with teacher commitment, in its ability to predict

any teacher's desire to quit, and even more in the early years. These findings are pertinent in extending the understanding of the complex relationships of the factors underlying teachers' retention and motivation in the educational settings.

Efficacy in Student Engagement

This reflects a teacher's acknowledgment of their ability to effectively involve learners in the educational process. It encompasses strategies and practices aimed at capturing and maintaining students' attention, motivation, and active participation (Chen et al., 2018). The study conducted by Fackler et al. (2021) presents a noteworthy international perspective on teacher self-efficacy (TSE). Focusing on teachers in 32 countries, the research covers three fields of TSE: instruction, student engagement and constructive discipline. Another interesting point within the study lies in the understanding of how the predictors, personal and structural as well as environmental, are associated with these TSE constructs in different countries. The research results clearly indicate that some factors relate to certain aspects of teacher self-efficacy, hence the latter also varies in the international context of educators' beliefs and perceptions. Such research offers numerous valuable perspectives for the teachers, strategies makers, and scholars, advocating for a more complex understanding of teacher self-efficacy in a worldwide context.

Methodology

Quantitative and correlational research was done. Data was collected by a cross-sectional questionnaire/survey method. Purposive sampling method was used in this research. In this study population is female teachers of schools in Pakistan, specifically those who have been teaching for one or more years. It is a small-scale study, with a sample consisting of 100 female middle school teachers residing in Lahore was the participants of the study. Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), developed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) utilized by the participants. This scale with twelve items address three dimensions of teacher self-efficacy: instructional strategy, classroom management and student engagement and efficacy. The reliability of the TSES scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a strong reliability coefficient of 0.90 for the overall scale as well as for its subscales. Regarding validity, the scale has been extensively validated in prior research, showing strong content validity and construct validity. No additional validity testing was conducted for this study, as the TSES has been widely accepted as a reliable instrument across different cultural contexts, including similar studies in educational settings.

Ethical considerations were given due attention throughout the study's planning. Request letters were distributed to multiple institutes involved in the research, seeking their cooperation in providing data regarding their subjects. Participants were assured that any information they provided would solely be utilized for educational purposes. Data was collected using self-reported questionnaires. The participants were given sufficient time to complete the survey at their convenience. The data collected was analyzed using statistical methods, including correlation analysis, to examine relationships between the different dimensions of teacher efficacy. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the data, and inferential statistic helped identify trends and correlations in the responses.

Data Analysis and Results

This section includes a presentation of the statistical analysis of the data, accompanied by an explanation of the findings derived from the analysis. The table 1 represents correlation between teachers' self-efficacy with all its three dimensions and years of experience.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation between Teachers' Self Efficacy and their Years of Experience

Teachers' Self Efficacy	Years of Experience
Teachers Sense of Self Efficacy	.26*
Efficacy for Instructional Strategies	.19
Efficacy for Classroom Management	.31**
Efficacy for Student Engagement	.18

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

Table 1 shows the relationship between teachers' years of experience and their self-efficacy. To evaluate this relationship, Pearson correlation analysis was performed. The results show a significant and positive relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their years of experience ($r = 0.26, p < 0.05$). Hence H_{01} is rejected. A significant and positive relationship between teacher's self-efficacy for classroom management and their years of experience ($r = 0.31, p < 0.01$) was also found. Therefore H_{02} is also rejected. On the contrary, the relationship between years of experience and the effectiveness of instructional strategies ($r = 0.19, p < 0.05$), and with student engagement ($r = 0.18, p < 0.05$) is positive but not statistically significant indicates the acceptance of H_{03} and H_{04} . However, the association between years of experience and efficacy in instructional strategies and student engagement remains ambiguous and may lack statistical significance.

Discussion

It has been highlighted in this study how teachers' efficacy beliefs are affected over time regarding the number of teaching years. Self-efficacy beliefs lower or higher with experience is confirmed in a considerable chunk of the research done earlier. For instance, self-efficacy among teachers increases with time due to their accrued knowledge, experience, and skills (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Smith and Ashton (2014) also found positive connections, suggesting that experienced teachers probably have wider instructional resources. On the other hand, more recent studies such as that of Fackler et al. (2021); suggest that the link between experience and efficacy in teaching may vary considerably depending on other factors such as the type of school and available development opportunities. This could further explain why some of the correlational impacts seem muted in this study's case. The results are in line with Klassen and Chiu's (2010) reports, which suggest that self-efficacy for classroom management strategies is likely to rise with work experience.

Conclusion

The importance of teachers' self-efficacy in association to their years of teaching experience is highlighted by this study. It highlights the strong positive relationships that exist between general self-efficacy and classroom management effectiveness as experience levels rise. It can be assumed that there is a significant correlation between the length of teaching experience and the degree of self-efficacy, suggesting that experienced educators are likely to exhibit greater confidence in their teaching abilities. Nonetheless, the lack of noteworthy associations among the effectiveness of instructional strategies, student engagement, and experience suggests a more complex relationship. Moving forward, longitudinal studies could offer insights into the developmental patterns of teacher efficacy over time. Utilizing mixed-methods approaches could enrich understanding by incorporating qualitative insights. Furthermore, interventions aimed at strengthening teacher

efficacy, particularly in instructional strategies and student engagement, should be explored and implemented, with a focus on ongoing professional development and mentorship initiatives.

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