

General Self Efficacy and Empowerment of Women Teachers

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Abstract

Self Efficacy affects all areas of human endeavor, by determining the beliefs a person holds regarding his or her power to affect situation, thus strongly influencing both the power of person actually has to face challenges competently and the choices a person is likely to make. The purpose of the present study was to measure the general self efficacy of women teachers and find the difference in general efficacy of female teachers based on subjects taught (arts / science); level of teaching (primary / secondary); age and years of teaching experience. The present study also made an attempt to suggest measure to enhance the general self efficacy of female teachers for their empowerment. The data was collected using a general self efficacy standardized scale constructed by Schwarzer R., and Jerusalem M. (1995). The data was analyzed by applying descriptive and inferential statistics. The study concludes with implications to enhance self efficacy for women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Self Efficacy in the words of Albert Bandura is “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations”. In other words, self efficacy is a person’s belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave and feel (1994). Self Efficacy in human behavior plays a powerful role in determining choices people make. The effort they will expand, how long they will persevere in the face of challenge and the degree of anxiety of confidence they will bring to the task at hand. Self efficacy belief touch virtually every aspect of people’s lives-academic, professional, social, personal, and success of people in these various aspects to life is determined up to some extent by their concerned self efficacy beliefs. A strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and personal well-being in many ways. People with high assurance in their capabilities approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided. They set themselves challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to them. They heighten and sustain their efforts in the face of failure. They quickly

recover their sense of efficacy after failures or setbacks. They attribute failure to insufficient effort or deficient knowledge and skills which are acquirable. They approach threatening situations with assurance that they can exercise control over them. Such an efficacious outlook produces personal accomplishment, reduces stress and lowers vulnerability to depression. In contrast people who doubt their capabilities shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats. They have low aspirations and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. When faced with difficult tasks they dwell on their personal deficiencies, on the obstacles they will encounter, and all kinds of adverse outcomes rather than concentrate on how to perform successfully. They slacken their efforts and give up quickly in the face of difficulties. They are slow to recover their sense of efficacy following failure or setbacks because they view insufficient performance as deficient aptitude it does not require much failure for them to lose faith in their capabilities. They fail as easy victim to stress and depression. Several Studies have found that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs have been repeatedly associated with positive teaching behaviors and student outcomes. The more efficacious the teacher felt, they had positive beliefs in his or her ability to positively impact student learning.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Research has shown that the self-efficacy of teachers affects the performance of their students. Female teachers in Singapore primary schools made up more than 80% of the teaching population and with many reports it is said that teachers are shunning Science and that women possess low Science self-efficacy (Wee-Loon, 2011). Research has also indicated the importance of self-efficacy in shaping elementary teachers' likelihood to teach Science (Weld, & Funk, 2005). Teachers with high efficacy beliefs contribute to stronger student achievement than teachers with lower teacher efficacy (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). Throughout the process of reviewing studies conducted on women it was found that women hold negative views on practically all areas of teaching. With this negative attitude towards teaching, one would expect that could be the same case for Indian female teachers as well. This study attempts to study the general self efficacy of female teachers, and attempts to suggest measures for women empowerment.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the General Self Efficacy of female teachers.
- 2) To study the difference in General Self Efficacy of female teachers in terms of
 - a) Teaching in level of school (Primary/Secondary)
 - b) Subjects taught (Arts/Science)

c) Age

d) Years of teaching experience

3) To suggest measures to enhance the general self efficacy of female teachers for their empowerment.

HYPOTHESES

H₁: The primary and secondary school female teachers differ in their general self efficacy

H₂: The arts and science teaching female teachers differ in their general self efficacy

H₃: The female teachers differ in their general self efficacy based on Age

H₄: The female teachers differ in their general self efficacy based on Years of Teaching experience.

METHODOLOGY

The study used Descriptive survey method. The sample consisted of one hundred female teachers randomly chosen using stratified random sampling method. A general self efficacy standardized scale constructed by Schwarzer R., and Jerusalem M. (1995) designed for the general adult population was used to collect the data. Statistical techniques namely, Mean, Median, SD and 't' test were used to analyze the data collected.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Objective 1:

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of General Self Efficacy of female Teachers

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Median	No. Above median	No. at Median Point	No. Below median
General Self Efficacy	100	27.8	4.29	27	38	20	42

The above Table 1 data indicates that the mean and median values are close to each other. Hence the General Self Efficacy of female Teachers is normally distributed. It also shows that **42% of the teachers General Self Efficacy are below Median Point. Hence there is a need to enhance the General Self Efficacy of Female Teachers.**

Objective 2:**Table 2: Number (N), Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and 't' Value of the General self efficacy of female Teachers teaching in different Levels**

Level of Teaching	N	Mean	SD	t value	significance
Primary	50	28.96	4.21	4.31	Significant at 0.05 level
Secondary	48	26.46	4.12		

It is revealed from the table 2 that 't' value of 4.31 is greater than table t value of 1.98 at 0.05 level. Therefore the Primary and Secondary female school teachers differ in their General Self Efficacy. Hence, by observing the mean values it is concluded that **Primary school female teachers have higher General Self Efficacy than the Secondary school female Teachers**

Table 3: Number (N), Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and 't' Value of the General self efficacy of female Teachers based on Subjects taught

Subjects Taught	N	Mean	SD	t value	significance
Arts	54	27.22	4.07	2.14	Significant at 0.05 level
Science	46	28.48	4.52		

It is revealed from the table 3 that 't' value of 2.14 is greater than table t value of 1.98 at 0.05 level. Therefore the Arts and Science female school teachers differ in their General Self Efficacy. Hence, by observing the mean values it is concluded that **Female teachers teaching Science have higher General Self Efficacy than the female teachers teaching Arts subjects.**

Table 4: Number (N), Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and 't' Value of the General self efficacy of female Teachers based on Age

Age	N	Mean	SD	t value	significance
<= 45	60	27.24	4.16	3.08	Significant at 0.05 level
>45	40	29.06	4.49		

It is revealed from the table 4 that 't' value of 3.08 is greater than table t value of 1.98 at 0.05 level. Therefore the female teachers differ in their General Self Efficacy based on Age. Hence, by observing the mean values it is concluded that **Female teachers whose age is greater than 45 have higher General Self Efficacy than the female teachers whose age is less than or equal to 45 years of Age.**

Table 5: Number (N), Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and 't' Value of the General self efficacy of female Teachers based on Teaching Experience

Teaching Experience(Years)	N	Mean	SD	t value	significance
<=15	65	27.47	4.13	1.55	Not Significant at 0.05 level
>15	35	28.46	4.88		

It is revealed from the table 5 that 't' value of 1.55 is less than table 't' value of 1.98 at 0.05 level. Hence, it is concluded that the **female teachers do not differ significantly in their General Self Efficacy based on their Teaching Experience.**

Objective 3:

Enhancing the general self efficacy of female teachers for Women empowerment is possible through Professional development and Reflective teaching practices.

Professional development and self efficacy – There is a need to Provide appropriate and sufficient Professional development programmes to teachers inorder to empower them. Professional development programmes have been successful in their ability to enhance teachers' feeling of self-efficacy. Effective professional development can have a long term effect on how teachers view their self-efficacy (Watson, 2006). Murphy et al. (2007) reported that professional development was found to be the most important factor influencing confidence in Teachers. They added that confidence was significantly higher if teachers had carried out some professional development.

Reflective Teaching - If teachers reflect upon their teaching in class and in particular the female teachers their self efficacy get strengthened. Teachers of both genders should recognise that each of them has their strengths and limitations, and the common problems they face as teachers. This empowers them to solve problems.

FINDINGS:

1. 42% of the female teachers General Self Efficacy are below Median Point.
2. Primary school female teachers have higher General Self Efficacy than the Secondary school female Teachers
3. Female teachers teaching Science have higher General Self Efficacy than the female teachers teaching Arts subjects.
4. Female teachers whose age is greater than 45 have higher General Self Efficacy than the female teachers whose age is less than or equal to 45 years of Age.
5. Female teachers do not differ significantly in their General Self Efficacy based on their Teaching Experience

CONCLUSION

The findings reveal that there is a need to enhance the general Self Efficacy of female teachers of Secondary schools, female teachers teaching Arts subjects and those who are less than 45 years of Age. Professional development programmes and reflective teaching can help them to enhance their self efficacy and empower them.

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