

Teaching Efficacy to Student Teachers in the Faculty of Education, Elbasan Albania

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to determine the level of sense of efficacy among student teacher in the Faculty of Education, Elbasan, Albania. Teaching efficacy is an important variable in the development of a teacher and early learning experiences have a great impact in efficacy. Some variables such as gender and type of the diploma were tested to identify their impact on the teacher efficacy. Data were collected using a 12-item questionnaire - Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (short form) developed by Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001), with a sample size of 243 student-teachers, enrolled in two programs: "Elementary Teacher" and "Preschool Teacher". Descriptive statistics were used to describe the degree of teaching efficacy, while differences among relevant groups were analyzed using an independent sample t-test and ANOVA. Findings indicate that the majority of student teacher in the Faculty of Education have a high level of teaching efficacy during pedagogical practice. They are more efficient in instructional strategies and less efficient in student engagement.

Key words: Teaching efficacy, efficacy in instructional strategies, efficacy in classroom management, efficacy in student engagement.

1. Introduction

Pedagogical practice is an important component in the study program for teachers, affecting the student's professional development for teachers. Fieldwork gives future teachers the opportunity to apply what they have learned, to connect theory with practice (Davis, Petish & Smithey, 2006). The student teacher implement their knowledge and skills through experiences in real situations of teaching and learning through unplanned incidents (Borko & Mayfield, 1995). They can benefit from the incidental learning, social situations, opportunities to apply knowledge in new ways and new situations, increased competence, increased awareness, lifelong learning skills and develop self-esteem (Lankard, 1995).

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001: 783) define teacher efficacy as "a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated". Teacher efficacy is a factor positively correlated with students' academic performance (Ashton & Webb, 1986, Esterly, 2003) and student success (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk & Hoy, 1998), the classroom environment (Raudenbush, Rowan, and Cheong, 1992). Advances in the field of teaching efficacy will result in better prepared teacher who on the other hand will impact in higher student achievement (Hill, Rowan, & Ball, 2005).

Pre-service teachers are an ideal model for research because they are the future teachers who will impact our classes in the future, but also because their beliefs are malleable only for a limited amount of time (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998; Swars, Hart, Smith, Smith, & Tolar, 2007), confirming hence the hypothesis of Bandura (1977) which emphasizes that early learning experiences will have the greatest impact on changes in efficiency.

Although Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) explained that the demographic variables are not usually determinant in the teacher efficacy, researchers continue to explore determinant power of these variables, such as teacher experience, teacher gender, age, grade level teachers (Five & Buehl, 2010; Edwards, Green & Lions, 1996; Penrose, Perry & Ball, 2007; Five & Looney, 2009; Paneque & Barbetta, 2006).

Fortman dhe Ponc (2000) found an increase in teacher efficacy during student teaching. Similarly Soodak and Podell (1997) reported that teachers in the early years of the profession, perceive themselves as more efficient than their colleagues with more experience, however, the efficacy levels falling rapidly many times during the first months in the first year of teaching. Similarly, Edwards, Green and Lions (1996) have reported that teacher experience is negatively associated with teaching efficacy, but, Fives & Buehl (2010) and Penrose, Perry & Ball (2007) found that teachers' experience was positively associated with teacher efficacy. Paneque & Barbetta (2006), Knobloch (2006) reported no significant relationship between teaching experience and teacher efficacy.

Experienced teachers are generally equipped with a source of information, including a greater experience to develop their teaching efficacy. The future teachers in general do not have this source of information, at least not while engaging in their teaching practice at the school, where they obtain emotional awakening and social obedience, including performance feedback from supervisors, teachers in classroom, and their colleagues (Chan, 2008; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). With differential quantity of information from these sources, as well as different experiences of teaching practice, pre-service teachers may have different levels of confidence in the self-efficacy of their teaching.

Experienced teachers have higher self-efficacy in teaching than initial teacher as to efficacy in instructional strategies as well as in classroom management, but no differences in efficacy for student engagement (Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A., 2007). Teaching and student management are concerns that often dominate the thoughts and time of initial teacher (Meister & Melnick, 2003; Pigge & MARSO, 1997). Roberts, Harlin, and Ricketts (2006) examined the subscales of teaching efficacy (ie, student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management), and concluded that the efficacy of student engagement resulted to be lower in the four measurement periods during the semester.

To beginner teachers and student teacher, confidence to efficacy, is associated with attitudes toward students and maintain control (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). Students with a low sense of teaching efficacy tend to have an orientation toward classroom control, taking a pessimistic view of students' motivation, relying on strict rules, inadequate awards and use punishments to make students to learn (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998:23). After engaging in teaching, confidence in teacher efficacy has an impact on behavior. Greater efficacy enables the teachers to be less critical of students when they fail (Ashton & Webb, 1986) working more with a student. Interns student with higher teaching personal efficacy are evaluated more positively for their behavior in the presentation of learning, classroom management, teaching supervisor questions and their assessment in practice (Saklofske, Michaluk, and Randhawa, 1988).

Five & Looney (2009) and Edwards, Green & Lions (1996) have reported that women have higher teaching efficacy. This is supported by Ross (1998) who found that the teacher efficacy was higher among women than among men. While Penrose, Perry & Ball (2007) not find any difference between teaching efficacy between men and women. Similarly, recent studies have not reported any difference in the teacher efficacy by gender (Tejeda-Delgado, 2009). Five & Buehl (2010) and Five & Looney (2009) reported primary school teachers as more effective than high school teacher, however, Fives and Buehl (2010) emphasized that it was to emphasizing that teacher in primary schools in general are women.

Many studies have been conducted to study the development of teaching efficacy to student teacher (Cantrell, Young & Moore, 2003; Plourde, 2002). However, in Albania, the research on the efficacy of student teacher is in a relatively early stage. Having regard challenges opposite which is education today, evaluation of teaching efficacy to student teacher will ensure data necessary to

provide a meaningful education in teacher training programs impacting on increasing the quality of teacher. Hence, the purpose of this study is exploratory, to investigate the level of sense of efficacy in pedagogical practice to students teacher in the Elbasan University. Specifically, the objectives of the study are: 1) to evaluate the sense of efficacy to students teacher regarding with efficacy in student engagement, in instructional strategies, and in classroom management, 2) to explain the relationship of efficacy to students teacher with factors such as gender, type of diploma.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 The nature of research

Based on the objectives of the study used a quantitative research model using 9-point Likert scale to evaluate the sense of efficacy of student teacher.

2.2 Sample

Participants in this study were 243 students of the Faculty of Education, University "Xhuvani Aleksander", Elbasan, Albania. Students were enrolled in the Bachelor program: "Elementary Teacher" (ET) and "Preschool Teacher" (PT). Students were aged 19 - 25 years, average age 22vjeç. Of these 88% were female and 12% male. Enrolled in the program "Elementary Teacher" were 39.8% students and 54.1% students were enrolled in "Preschool Teacher".

Participating students voluntarily participated in this study, hence determining the random sample selection model.

2.3 Instrument

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale, TSES (short form), developed by Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A.(2001) is scale used to measure sense efficacy to students teacher. TSES is made of 12 items, assessed by a 9-point likert scale from 1 to 9, ranging from "none" in the "A Great Deal". Three dimensions of efficacy which are assessed are: (1) efficacy in instructional strategies; (2) efficacy in classroom management; (3) efficacy in student engagement.

Evaluation form collects the demographic information over age, gender and type of the diploma

2.4 Procedure

TSES was administered to each participant upon receipt of voluntary consent. Participants were asked to evaluate themselves over a nine-point Likert scale from 1 to 9. Besides TSES participants provided information on age, gender and type of the diploma

2.5 Data Analysis

Results from the TSES were calculated in SPSS. In the study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics based on the mean and standard deviation were used to describe the level of teacher efficacy in its three dimensions: (1) efficacy in instructional strategies; (2) efficacy in classroom management; (3) efficacy in student engagement. Similarly, some variables such as gender and type of the diploma were tested to identify their impact on the teacher efficacy. Inferential statistics, independent sample t-test was used to determine the difference in efficacy between the groups regarding gender and type of the diploma.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Teacher efficacy to student teacher

Referring to the descriptive statistics (Table 1) shows that students teacher have a high level of teacher efficacy ($M = 6.82$, $SD = 0.96$). The results are compatible with previous studies conducted by Soodak and Podell (1997), who reported that teachers in the early years of the profession perceive themselves as more efficient than their colleagues with more experience, and from Fortman and Pontius (2000) who found an increase in efficacy to student teacher during teaching. Students teacher feel most efficient regarding their ability to provide an alternative explanation / example when students are confused ($M = 7.54$), namely efficacy in instructional strategies. They feel less efficient in their ability to motivate students who show low interest in school work ($M = 6.36$), namely their ability to engage students (see Table 1).

Table 1. Teacher efficacy to students teacher during teaching practice

	Mean	SD	Cronbach's Alpha
Teacher efficacy to students teacher			
Total	6.82	0.98	0.96
Sub-construct / Item			
Efficacy in student engagement			0.88
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?	6,36	1,09	
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	6,58	1,08	
How much can you do to help your students value learning?	6,54	1,10	
How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	6,45	,91	
Total	6.48	1.04	
Efficacy in instructional strategies			0.91
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	7,01	1,04	
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	6,98	,94	
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	7,54	,93	
How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	6,66	1,04	
Total	7.04	0.98	
Efficacy in classroom management			,86
How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	7,01	,88	
How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	6,89	,95	
How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	6,73	,90	
How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	7,13	,97	
Total	6.94	0.92	

Regarding the sense of teacher efficacy to students teacher in three dimensions (1) efficacy in instructional strategies; (2) efficacy in classroom management; (3) efficacy in student engagement, (Table 1) notice that: students teacher feel more efficient in instructional strategies ($M = 7.04$; $SD = 0.98$), followed by efficacy in classroom management ($M=6.94$, $SD=0.92$) and in lower level is the efficacy in student engagement ($M=6.48$, $SD=1.04$). Results find support in the study of Roberts, Harlin & Ricketts (2006) who concluded that feelings of efficacy in student engagement resulting lower.

3.2 Teacher efficacy to student teacher and Gender

Inferential statistics, independent sample t-test was used to determine the difference in efficacy between the groups regarding gender. Referring to the data in Table 2 shows that no significant differences in the level of sense of efficacy between men ($M = 6.85$) and women ($M = 6.74$), the difference is small ($MD = 0.11$). This conclusion is consistent with studies conducted by Penrose, Perry & Ball (2007); Tejeda-Delgado, 2009; who found no difference in teaching efficacy between male and female teachers.

Table 2. Gender, Type of diploma and Efficacy						
	Gender	Mean	Mean Difference	Type of diploma	Mean	Mean Difference
Item 1	Male	7,18	-,10	ET	7,25	-,02
	Female	7,28		PT	7,28	
Item 2	Male	6,09	,01	ET	6,02	-,08
	Female	6,07		PT	6,11	
Item 3	Male	6,54	,05	ET	6,43	-,11
	Female	6,49		PT	6,54	
Item 4	Male	6,45	,02	ET	6,43	,00
	Female	6,43		PT	6,43	
Item 5	Male	7,27	,35	ET	6,94	-,01
	Female	6,91		PT	6,96	
Item 6	Male	7,27	,16	ET	7,05	-,13
	Female	7,11		PT	7,18	
Item 7	Male	7,00	,14	ET	6,87	,00
	Female	6,85		PT	6,86	
Item 8	Male	7,45	,31	ET	7,12	-,07
	Female	7,13		PT	7,20	
Item 9	Male	6,90	,15	ET	6,71	-,09
	Female	6,75		PT	6,81	
Item 10	Male	7,63	,10	ET	7,46	-,14
	Female	7,53		PT	7,60	
Item 11	Male	5,90	-,22	ET	6,05	-,09
	Female	6,13		PT	6,15	
Item 12	Male	6,54	,24	ET	6,28	-,07
	Female	6,29		PT	6,35	
Total	Male	6,85	,11	ET	6,71	,07
	Female	6,74		PT	6,78	

Teacher efficacy to student teacher and Type of diploma

Results of independent sample t-test, showed no significant differences (Table 2) at the level of a sense of efficacy among student teachers in the Bachelor program: for "Elementary Teacher" (M = 6.71) and for "Preschool Teacher" (M = 6.78), the difference of points is too small (MD = 0.07).

4. Conclusion

The results of this study throw some light on the level of teacher efficacy to student teacher, of the Faculty of Education, in University "Xhuvani, A.", Albania during pedagogical practice. Students teacher who exercised in teaching during pedagogical practice, feel quite efficient in the teaching process. They are more efficient in instructional strategies and less efficient in student engagement. In this study resulted that no significant differences in teacher efficacy level between male and female teachers. One of the limitations of the study is the fact that there are a small number of men represented in the sample (12% of the sample were men) and the small number of students to

represent male teacher makes it trivial to examine the changes in the group. The fact that the study has a large percentage of the presence of females is related to the reason for study programs at the Faculty of Education teacher dominate female students, more so when it comes to the Bachelor study program: "Elementary Teacher" and "Preschool Teacher". As regards teacher efficacy difference by type of diploma no differences in level. Both, student teacher in elementary education so student teacher in preschool education, feel equally efficient during pedagogical practice. This conclusion can be supported by the fact that programs of study are similar. In the future, it is suggested to estimate the level of efficacy to student teacher, who develop pedagogical practice in the professional master's degree.

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