INTERACTIVE INFLUENCE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND GENDER ON PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF PUNJAB

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the interactive influence of self-efficacy and gender on professional commitment. A sample of 1000 secondary school teachers from six districts of Punjab was drawn for the study. Professional Commitment Scale for Teachers by Baljeet Kaur (2007) andTeacher Self-efficacy Scale by Ralf Schwarzer, Gerdamarie S. Schmitz and Gary T. Daytner (1999) were used to collect data. The study reported no significant influence of interaction between self-efficacy and gender on professional commitment.

Keywords : Self efficacy, Professional Commitment

Teachers are the agents of social change and help in constructing a better world. Teachers are expected to perform multiple tasks like enhancing students' motivation, managing classroom, preparing lesson plans, presenting them and evaluating students' work. Therefore, understanding of teachers' perceptions and beliefs is highly important.

The earliest definition of self-efficacy was offered in a RAND study conducted by Armor et al. (1976) and Berman and McLaughlin (1977). Teacher self-efficacy was defined as the extent to which a teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect students' learning outcomes. Later, Bandura (1977) developed the theoretical foundation of self-efficacy. In his seminal work, "Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioural Change", he defined self-efficacy as "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainment". Bandura (1986) proposed 'Social Cognitive Theory' that emphasized the critical role of self-beliefs in human cognition, motivation and behaviour.

"Commitment is a term, teachers frequently use in describing themselves and each other. It is a word they use to distinguish those who are 'çaring', 'dedicated' and who 'take the job seriously'from those who put their own interests first" (Nias, 1981). It is individual's psychological bond to the organization and a sense of job involvement and loyalty to the organization. Professional commitment includes taking pride in one's profession, passion for teaching, drive for excellence, professional attitudes, faithfulness to the organization, ethics, positive regard for students and colleagues, patience for learning, motivation for self-improvement and a desire for professional development.

Self-efficacy has been directly and indirectly related to professional commitment. Research suggests that stronger the self-efficacy individuals have, the higher the goals they set and firmer their commitment to them (Bandura and Wood, 1989; Locke et al., 1984). Self-efficacy beliefs influence the choices people make, determine how much effort they make to accomplish a task, how long they persevere when confronting obstacles and how resilient they will be in the face of adverse situations. The higher the sense of efficacy, the greater the effort,persistence and resilience. Self-efficacy has been identified as one of the dimensions of teacher empowerment (Short and Rinehart, 1992). The teachers feel that they have the skills and ability to help students learn; have feeling of mastery in their subject and that results in desired outcomes.

Professional commitment of the teacher is related to his beliefs of personal efficacy. The self-efficacy beliefs of the teachers affect their institutional activities and study environment management strategies. They also positively influence students' learning experiences and academic outcomes. Low self-efficacy is associated with disengagement from activities and weak commitment to teaching (Evans and Tribble, 1986).

Coladarci (1992) concluded that greater teaching commitment tended to be expressed by those teachers who were higher in both general and personal efficacy. Joffres and Haughey (2001) in their qualitative study on decline of elementary teachers'commitment concluded that when

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teachers experienced low self-efficacy their commitments shifted or declined. Ware and Kitsantas (2007) and Chan et al. (2007) reported that teacher efficacy predicts professional commitment.

Objective

• To study the interactive influence of self-efficacy and gender on professional commitment.

Method
Sample

The sample consisted of 1000 male and female, urban and rural teachers teaching in government schools of Punjab at the secondary level. The data was collected from six districts of Punjab. Random sampling technique was used.

Measures

1. Professional Commitment Scale for Teachers by Baljeet Kaur (2007)
2. Teacher Self-efficacy Scale by Ralf Schwarzer, Gerdamarie S. Schmitz and Gary T. Daytner (1999).

Procedure

Descriptive survey method was used. Professional Commitment Scale and Teacher Self-efficacy Scale were administered on sample of 1000 male and female, urban and rural teachers teaching in government schools of Punjab at the secondary level.

Results

Table: *Summary of 3 x 2 factorial design of ANOVA for professional commitment (by self-efficacy and gender)*

Source	df	Mean Square	F
Model	6	8977564.38	21220.54**
Self-Efficacy	2	33643.12	79.52**
Gender	1	4031.05	9.53**
SE x Gender	2	1005.12	2.38
Error	994	423.06	
Total	1000		

*Note.*** Significant at $P = 0.01$

The F value for professional commitment at different levels of self-efficacy is significant ($P = 0.01$). It means that there is significant difference in professional commitment at low, average and high levels of self-efficacy. Further, the mean score of professional commitment of teachers with low level of self-efficacy (215.24) is significantly lower than the teacher with average level of self-efficacy (232.49) and high level of self-efficacy (245.28). Also, the mean score of professional commitment of teachers with average level of self-efficacy (232.49) is significantly lower than the teacher with average level of self-efficacy (245.28).

The F value for professional commitment between male and female teachers is significant ($P = 0.01$. It means that there is significant difference in professional commitment between male and female teachers. Further, the mean score of professional commitment of female teachers (233.20) is significantly higher than the mean score of professional commitment of male teachers (229.99).

The F value for interaction between self-efficacy and gender is not significant. It means that there is no significant influence of interaction between self-efficacy and gender on professional commitment. Therefore, our null hypothesis stating 'there is no significant interactive influence of self efficacy, gender and their interaction on professional commitment of secondary school teachers' stands corroborated.

Discussion

The research concluded no significant influence of interaction between self-efficacy and gender on professional commitment. The findings are in accordance with the findings by Al-Amri (1985) and Kohli (2005) who found that gender had no bearing on professional commitment of teachers at various levels of education. The results are also in compliance with the results of the studies by Solomon (2008) and Egilini (2010) which found significant relationship between teacher efficacy and teacher commitment.

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