**Abstract**

The aim of this study is to examine the self-efficacy of teachers in the upper primary schools of North Garo Hills district of Meghalaya in relation to gender, training status and teaching experience. For this purpose, the researcher used the standardized tool. Statistical measures of mean, S.D. and t-test were employed to analyze the raw scores so obtained and draw inferences. The findings of the present investigation reveal that gender and teaching experience were reported to have significant influence on the self-efficacy of teachers while training status had no significant influence on the same. The paper discusses certain implications of the study findings and offers some relevant suggestions for enhancing the self-efficacy of upper primary school teachers of North Garo Hills district of Meghalaya.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Education is the key to India’s bright future (Rao, Lakshmi & Krishna, 2004). With ‘Right to Education’ being a fundamental right as per the Constitution of India, it thus becomes essential to ensure quality education to the children. Teachers are one of the most important assets for any educational system (Kaur & Singh, 2013). Performance of schools to a large extent rests on the performance of teachers in terms of transmission of knowledge, skills and values by teachers to the students. Teachers play an important role in shaping the young minds (Knowles & Brown, 2000) and therefore it is important to understand what makes them effective teachers. Studies have shown that teaching effectiveness is closely linked with student achievement (Sanders & Rivers, 1996; Sanders & Horn, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2000; European Commission Report entitled...
Communication on Teacher Education, 2007; Heck, 2009). Thus, the issue of teacher effectiveness is of concern to a large number of stakeholders including teachers, students, parents, school management, as well as policy makers. According to Sindhi & Shah (2013), there is an urgent need to increase effectiveness of teachers in India. One factor that has been consistently linked to teaching effectiveness in several studies is Teacher Self-efficacy (e.g. Armor et al., 1976).

The self-efficacy is the concept based on Bandura’s social cognitive theory. It is defined as the belief about one’s own capabilities to organize and execute a certain task (Bandura, 1997). It is the personal belief that one is capable of performing in an appropriate and effective manner to attain certain goals (Ormrod, 2006). Perception of one’s own self-efficacy may not reflect his or her real capability. However, perceived self-efficacy has an important role in arranging one’s behaviors.

In the context of a teacher, self-efficacy is the belief a teacher has regarding his or her capability to exhibit necessary behaviors to execute teaching successfully (Bandura, 1994). This definition rings true with the belief that there is a relation between teachers’ executing their job effectively and their perceptions of self-efficacy. In fact, it is stated in many resources that this perception of teachers’ is likely to influence their attitudes and behaviors positively or negatively. Teacher self-efficacy is thus, in effect, the conviction the teacher has about his/her ability to teach pupils efficiently and effectively.

The growing body of research on teacher self-efficacy suggests that it may account for individual differences in teacher effectiveness. For example, teacher self-efficacy has been found to be consistently related to positive teaching behaviour and strong pupil achievement, pupils learn more from teachers who have high self-efficacy, and highly self-efficacious teachers are more likely to use open-ended questions, inquiry methods, or small group learning activities for students. They are also more persistent at a task, take more “risks” (e.g., are more willing to try not-yet-tested teaching activities), and are more likely to use innovative elements in their teaching. Teachers with high self-efficacy also are more open to new ideas, more willing to adopt innovations, are less likely to experience burn-out, support pupils’ autonomy to a greater extent, and are more attentive to low ability students (Brouwers & Tomic, 2003; Henson, 2001; Ross & Bruce, 2007). Finally, teachers with high self-efficacy exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have greater commitment for teaching, and are more likely to remain in the teaching profession (Tschanne-Moran & Hoy, 2001). According to Good and Brophy (2003), teachers with high self-efficacy perception levels maintain student participation at a higher level through spending more time keeping track of their students, supervising their works during a lesson, and providing them with group works and collaborative tasks. There are also studies which have found the existence of reciprocal relationship between a teacher’s self-efficacy and the academic achievement levels of his or her students (Ross, 1994; Kaufman and Sawyer, 2004). According to those studies, a teacher starts to feel more efficacious as his or her students become successful, and as a teacher feels efficacious, students become successful.
Thus, we see that a teacher’s self-efficacy perception appears to be an important variable having influence on such matters as classroom management, method and strategy use, increasing student achievement and success. A teacher lacking a sense of self-efficacy is not expected to become efficient in his or her lessons. For this reason, it becomes important to spend some effort on determining the self-efficacy perception levels of teachers teaching in the elementary levels of education. In this respect, the purpose of this study is to explore the self-efficacy beliefs of the teachers teaching in the upper primary schools of North Garo Hills district of Meghalaya.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of related literature carried out by the researcher revealed that in relation to gender, male and female school teachers differ significantly in their self-efficacy as reported by Sibichen and Annaraja (2010), and Sridhar and Badiei (2008). Whereas the studies such as those of Jena, Prakash Chandra (2011) and N. Devi (2013) reported that gender had no significant difference in self-efficacy levels of teachers. The review also discovered that training status of teachers also significantly affect their self-efficacy. In this regard, Sotiria Tzivinikou (2015), and Bedir (2015) concluded that trained teachers have higher self-efficacy than their untrained counterparts. But the studies such as those of Passi & Sharma (1982), Rezayat and Nayeri (2013), Lewis M. W. (2012) and Hunt S.T. (1996) came out with the conclusion that training has no influence on the self-efficacy. In relation to teaching experience, it was found that the more experienced teachers had higher self-efficacy than the less experienced teachers (Woolfolk Hoy and Burke-Spero, 2005; Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). While some other studies came out with the findings where less experienced teachers were found to have higher self-efficacy than the more experienced teachers (Bedir, 2015; Sinha et al., 2002; Sen and Sood, 2016).

III. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Student achievement and outcome is the immediate goal of all the schools, which is dependent on the performance of a teacher. The performance of a teacher to a large extent depends upon his psychological state of mind. The belief in one’s ability to perform on the part of the teachers results in enhanced learning and academic achievement among the students. This stresses the need to study teachers’ self-efficacy.

Further, the review of literature goes to show that Self-efficacy, the belief in one’s own abilities, is rarely considered an important trait for teacher quality. But of late it is gaining popularity among the international researchers. But it is a sad fact that in India, there is a dearth of studies on teachers’ self-efficacy. It was also found that the studies on the said variable have not been done in North Garo Hills district of Meghalaya.

The researcher is therefore motivated to find out the level of teachers’ self-efficacy among the upper primary school teachers of North Garo Hills district of Meghalaya. Apart from the theoretical significance, the proposed investigation will have
practical value. The researcher earnestly hopes that the findings of the study will be useful to policy makers, planners, researchers and all others in raising the quality of elementary education in the state of Meghalaya in general and North Garo Hills district in particular.

IV. OBJECTIVES
1) To study the Self-Efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to gender
2) To study the Self-Efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to training status
3) To study the Self-Efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to teaching experience.

V. HYPOTHESES
1) There is no significant difference in the Self-Efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to gender
2) There is no significant difference in the Self-Efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to training status
3) There is no significant difference in the Self-Efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to teaching experience.

VI. RESEARCH PROCEDURE
1) Methodology: In the present study, descriptive survey method was used to assess the differences in the variables among the subjects of the study.
2) Population: There are 178 numbers of govt. funded U.P. schools and 745 numbers of U.P. school teachers in North Garo Hills district of Meghalaya. As per the delimitation of the study, all the 178 U.P. schools and their 745 teachers have been taken as the subjects of the study. Thus it is a population study.
3) Tool used for data collection: The data have been collected using the standardized tool viz. Occupational Self Efficacy Scale by Pethe, Chaudhari and Dhar (2012).

VII. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
The data were analysed through certain descriptive as well as inferential statistics. In order to study the significant differences in self-efficacy of teachers with regard to gender, training status and teaching experience, t-test was employed.

Table 7.1: Self-Efficacy differential among U.P. School teachers in relation to Gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>‘t’ Value</th>
<th>Sig/ns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>72.08</td>
<td>14.62</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>68.53</td>
<td>14.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For the group of gender (male - female), the value of ’t’ in table 7.1 indicates that the male U.P. school teachers of North Garo Hills district differ significantly with female teachers on their self-efficacy scores. From the mean score, it is seen that the male U.P. school teachers have more measure of self-efficacy than their female counterparts. So, the hypothesis which states ‘there is no significant difference in the self-efficacy of U.P. school teachers in relation to gender’ is not retained.

On the basis of the result obtained to the first hypothesis in terms of gender, the mean scores reflect that the male teachers have better level of self-efficacy when compared with the female teachers. Male teachers tend to have more confident when it comes to teaching. This finding is supported by the result of the study conducted by Sridhar and Badiei (2008) who found that Iranian male teachers had high personal efficacy than their counterparts in India. Sibichen and Annaraja (2010) in their research on secondary teacher education students also found that male students had higher level of self-efficacy.

Table 7.2: Self-Efficacy Differentials among trained and untrained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>’t’ Value</th>
<th>Sig/ns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trained</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>71.69</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>Ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untrained</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>70.53</td>
<td>15.28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the group of training status (trained-untrained), the value of ’t’ in table 7.2 indicates that the trained U.P. school teachers of North Garo Hills district do not differ significantly with untrained teachers on their self-efficacy scores. From the mean score, it is however seen that the trained U.P. school teachers possess slightly higher self-efficacy level than their untrained counterparts. So, the hypothesis which states ‘there is no significant difference in the self-efficacy of U.P. school teachers in relation to training’ is retained.

On the basis of the result obtained to the second hypothesis in terms of training status, the mean scores reflect that the trained and untrained teachers do not significantly differ with each other in their level of self-efficacy. Even though the result shows that the difference in self-efficacy level between the trained and untrained teachers are not significant, the difference is in favour of the trained teachers which is obvious as trained teachers tend to have higher level of confidence and self-belief in their ability to teach. The above result may have been due to the fact that the number of trained teachers (80) observed was very small as compared with the untrained teachers (623). This finding is supported by Passi & Sharma (1982), Rezayat and Nayeri (2013), Lewis M. W. (2012) and Hunt S.T. (1996) who came out with the conclusion that training has no influence on the self-efficacy. On the other hand, Sotiria Tzivinikou (2015), and Bedir (2015) concluded that trained teachers have higher self-efficacy than their untrained counterparts as is shown by the mean scores in the present study.
Table 7.3: Self-Efficacy differentials among more than and less than 5 years of teaching experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>‘t’ Value</th>
<th>Sig/ns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;5 Years</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>69.87</td>
<td>15.23</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5 Years</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>75.52</td>
<td>11.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the group of teaching experience (>5 years, <5 years), the value of ‘t’ in table 7.3 indicates that the U.P. school teachers of North Garo Hills district with >5 years teaching experience differ significantly with teachers having <5 years of teaching experience on their self-efficacy scores. From the mean score, it is seen that the teachers having less than 5 years of teaching experience possess higher self-efficacy level than teachers having more than 5 years of teaching experience. So, the hypothesis which states ‘there is no significant difference in the self-efficacy of U.P. school teachers in relation to teaching experience’ is not retained.

On the basis of the result obtained to the third hypothesis in terms of teaching experience, the mean scores reflect that the teachers having less than 5 years of teaching experience and those having more than 5 years of service significantly differ with each other in their mean scores of self-efficacy. The teachers having less than 5 years of teaching experience are generally new, young, trained and professionally educated. As such they have more confidence in their ability to teach and they consider themselves better equipped to meet the challenges of teaching profession as compared with the experienced yet old and (most of them) untrained teachers. This finding is supported by Bedir (2015), Sinha et al. (2002), and Sen and Sood (2016) who found that less experienced teachers have higher measure of self-efficacy than the more experienced teachers. However, this result contradicts the result as found out by Woolfolk Hoy and Burke-Spero (2005), Tschanne-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007).

VIII. CONCLUSION

The aim of the present study was to explore the self-efficacy of upper primary school teachers in relation to certain variables like gender, training status and teaching experience. The result discussed above goes to show that gender and teaching experience have significant influence on the self-efficacy of the upper primary school teachers of North Garo Hills district. But, surprisingly, the teachers’ training status was found to have no bearing on the self-efficacy of the teachers concerned. In view of the results obtained, it may be suggested to the concerned educational authorities, teacher training institutes and the policy makers that the training programmes for the teachers must be organized with the training contents adapted to the needs of the teachers by taking into account the sources that influence their self-efficacy. The self-efficacy of the teachers can also be enhanced by building up their self-esteem, nourishing their beliefs and convictions and boosting their confidence. The school administrators must also ensure good organizational climate and conducive working conditions for work. Occupational
self-efficacy is an important concept in teacher education and the same may be incorporated in the D.El.Ed curriculum to revitalize elementary teacher education programme. Hence, it is suggested that teacher training institutions like DIET, may think of incorporating occupational self-efficacy in the curriculum of teacher education to enhance the competency among elementary school teachers.

VIII. REFERENCES


PAPER CITATION

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