

Relationship between Locus of Control and Self-efficacy among Special Educators

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ABSTRACT

Self-efficacy is the belief of a person that is related to a specific task, challenge or endeavor; which means that self-efficacy may differ according to situations. Locus of control, on the other hand, is a person's attribution towards a factor on the outcome of an event. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between self-efficacy and locus of control of special educators. Ex-post facto Research Design was used in this study. The sample for the present study consisted of thirty-five women special education teachers purposively chosen from five special schools in Chennai city. The women special educators were in the age range of 25 years to 40 years, having a work experience of 2 years to 10 years and salary ranging from to rupees 4000 to 12,000 rupees. The following standardized tools were used; the Teacher Self-efficacy Scale by (Scharwzer, Schmitz & Daytner, 1999), and the Levenson's Locus of Control Scale by (Levenson, 1973), the scale yields three distinct factors; The Individual Control (I), The Chance Control (C) and The Powerful Others (P) that were used to assess the variables chosen for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was calculated to understand the relationship between Locus of control and Self-efficacy. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to find out the difference in Self-efficacy and the factors of Locus of Control among the special educators with regard to the chosen demographic variables (namely; age, income and years of experience).

Keywords: *Locus of Control, Self-efficacy, Special Educators*

Self-efficacy in teaching refers to teachers' beliefs about their own values, competencies, and accomplishment. The sources of teachers' self-efficacy come from the way they master their direct experience, their level of anxiety in facing or interpreting their tasks, their imitations of other teacher models, and the social persuasion or specific feedback from their significant others. Self-efficacy in teaching has been associated with important outcomes, including the use of effective teaching strategies, better classroom management, and greater teacher well-being. Locus of Control is another important component of individual wellness. Julian B. Rotter (1954) defined Locus of Control as an extent to which people think they could control occasions influencing them. This construct has a significant impact on

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Bandura's self-efficacy theories and how individuals' expectations shape the goals, they set for themselves. Locus of control and efficacy are two closely related constructs (Lefcourt, 1981). Therefore, Locus of control and Self-efficacy are important behavioural constructs which can determine the effectiveness of teachers in different ways.

Severino, Aiello, Cascio, Ficarra, and Messina (2011) explored the role of self-efficacy and locus of control and found a significant relationship between self-efficacy and locus of control. Higher levels of teacher self-efficacy are associated with resiliency and the ability to rebound from setbacks and exercise some control over events that affect the lives of the teachers. (Erdem & Demirel, 2007; Woolfolk Hoy, 2007) studied the ability of individuals to influence the world around them which is strongly linked to the belief in their ability to bring about change. A teacher's sense of self-efficacy has also been associated with personal goal setting and the persistence to meet these goals through the belief that they have control over the outcome of events in their lives. Hans et al. (2017) found faculty members indicated a strong belief to succeed in their future endeavours on self-efficacy.

Ashagi and Beheshtifar (2015) reported that there was a direct and meaningful relationship between internal locus of control and self-efficacy beliefs and there was not a meaningful relationship between external locus of control and self-efficacy. Similarly, Cascio, Magnano, Elastico, Costantino, Zapparrata, and Battiato (2014) examined the interactions among Self-Efficacy beliefs and Locus of Control as personal capabilities to cope with environmental demands in school teachers, the results suggested that self-efficacy belief represents one of the most important "protective" factors in response to psychological stress. With regard to the role of demographic variables, Merwe (2013) evaluated teacher Efficacy and Locus of Control as part of the teacher's personal characteristics and found significant variations in the different age groups of teachers. Hence, the present study is an attempt to understand the relationship between of Locus of Control and the self-efficacy beliefs of special educators.

METHODOLOGY

Aim

- The study aimed to explore the relationship between Locus of Control and Self-efficacy of Special educators in Chennai city.

Objectives

1. To assess the relationship between Locus of Control and Self-efficacy of Special Educators.
2. To understand the influence of demographic variables (age, income level and years of experience) on Locus of Control and Self-efficacy of Special Educators.

Hypotheses

Ha 1.1: There will be no significant relationship between Powerful Others sub-scale of Locus of Control and Self-efficacy among Special educators.

Ha 1.2: There will be no significant relationship between Chance Control sub-scale of Locus of Control and Self-efficacy among Special educators.

Ha 1.3: There will be no significant relationship between Individual Control sub-scale of Locus of Control and Self-efficacy among Special educators.

Hb 2: There will be no significant difference in the Locus of Control of Special educators with reference to their age, income level and years of experience.

Hc 3: There will be no significant difference in the Self-efficacy of Special educators with reference to their age, income level and years of experience.

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Sample

An ex-post facto research design was employed in this study. Purposive sampling method was used to collect data from thirty-five women special educators belonging to five special schools in Chennai. The sample thus chosen comprised of special education teachers who belonged to the age range of 25-40 years (Mean age = 31.49), the income level of Rs. 4000 - Rs. 12,000 (Mean income = 8828.57) and years of experience range between 2 to 10 years (Mean years of experience 5.37).

Instruments

The following scales were used for the study:

1. Levenson's Scale for Locus of Control

The scale consists of 24 items which are scored on a five-point Likert type (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree). The scale yields three distinct factors. The Individual Control (I) subscale consists of eight items (items 1, 4, 5, 9, 18, 19, 21, 23) measuring the degree of a person's faith in their own abilities and the capacity to control the outcome of their own life's events. The Chance Control (C) subscale also consists of eight items (items 2, 6, 7, 10, 12, 14, 16, 24) estimating the perceptions according to which luck and fate determine a person's life, thus leaving them with limited, if any control in various life situations. The Powerful Others (P) subscale contains of eight items (items 3, 8, 11, 13, 15, 17, 20, 22) which assess the extent to which a person feels that their course of life is steered by people of power who actually control the fate of the weak. Each subscale produces a unique score by adding up the eight responses on it and the raw scores obtained. Therefore, each respondent receives three scores indicative of her relative view on each of the three factors. The split-half reliability is 0.62, 0.66 and 0.64 for I, P, C respectively.

2. Teacher Self-Efficacy scale

The Teacher Self-Efficacy scale (short form) is a 10 item measure developed by Ralf Schwarzer, Gerdamarie Schmitz, and Gary Daytner in 1999. The items were constructed following Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997; Schwarzer, 1992, 1993). Alpha reliability coefficients for the Teacher Self-efficacy Scale were satisfactory, ranging from 0.76 to 0.82. This scale gives a total score on self-efficacy.

Procedure

Permission was sought from the school authorities and consent was obtained from the special educators to participate in the study. The sample consisted of thirty-five women special education teachers purposively chosen from five special schools in Chennai city. Participants completed the Teacher Self-efficacy Scale followed by the Levenson's Locus of Control Scale. The researcher monitored the participants to ensure they worked independently, filling out the questionnaires in a group setting.

Statistics Used

Pearson Product Moment Correlation was computed for each of the factors of Locus of Control and Self-efficacy to understand the relationship between the variables. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to find out the difference in Self-efficacy and the factors of Locus of Control among the special educators with regard to the chosen demographic variables (namely; age, income and years of experience).

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RESULTS

The results of the study are as follows:

Table 1, Relationship between Self-efficacy and Locus of Control of Special Educators

	Sub-scales of Locus Control		
	Powerful Others (PO)	Chance Control (CC)	Individual Control (IC)
Self efficacy	0.46**	0.40*	- 0.23 ^{NS}

*p <0.05 Significant at 0.05 level, **p<0.01 Significant at 0.01 level, NS – Not Significant

Correlation between self-efficacy scores and the subscales of Locus of Control, i.e., Powerful Others ($r = 0.46^{**}$, $n = 35$, $p > .01$), Chance control ($r = - 0.40^*$, $n = 35$, $p > .05$) and Individual Control ($r = 0.23$, $n = 35$, $p > .05$). As noted in table 1, there was a significant relationship between sub-scales of locus of control (namely, Powerful Others and Chance Control) and self-efficacy among the special educators. Hence, the sub-hypotheses Ha 1.1 & Ha 1.2 were rejected.

However, the result did not yield a significant relationship on Individual Control sub-scale of Locus of Control with respect to self-efficacy. Hence, the sub-hypothesis Ha 1.3 was accepted.

Table 2, Influence of Demographic Variables (Age, Income and Years of Experience) on the Locus of Control of Special Educators

Sub-scales of Locus of Control	Demographic Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Powerful Others (PO)	Age	Between groups	453.66	14	32.40	0.83 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	785.08	20	39.25	
		Total	1238.74	34		
	Income	Between groups	183.54	8	22.94	0.57 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	1055.20	26	40.59	
		Total	1238.74	34		
	Years of Experience	Between groups	326.78	8	40.84	1.17 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	911.97	26	35.08	
		Total	1238.74	34		
Chance Control (CC)	Age	Between groups	654.60	14	46.76	1.01 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	928.08	20	46.40	
		Total	1582.69	34		
	Income	Between groups	423.09	8	52.89	1.19 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	1159.60	26	44.60	
		Total	1582.69	34		
	Years of Experience	Between groups	599.49	8	74.93	1.98 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	983.20	26	37.82	
		Total	1582.97	34		

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Sub-scales of Locus of Control	Demographic Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Individual Control (IC)	Age	Between groups	223.15	14	15.94	1.52 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	209.25	20	10.46	
		Total	432.40	34		
	Income	Between groups	124.30	8	15.54	1.31 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	308.10	26	11.85	
		Total	432.40	34		
	Years of Experience	Between groups	133.88	8	16.73	1.46 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	298.53	26	11.48	
		Total	432.40	34		

NS – Not Significant

One-way analysis of variance was carried to find the influence of Age, Income and Years of Experience of the special educators on the sub-scales of Locus of Control. There was no significant difference between the age, income and years of experience of the special education teachers and the sub-scales of Locus of Control. Thus, hypothesis Hb 2 was accepted.

Table 3, Influence of Demographic Variables (Age, Income and Years of Experience) on Self-efficacy of Special Educators

Variable	Demographic Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Self-efficacy	Age	Between groups	268.76	14	19.20	0.65 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	587.42	20	29.37	
		Total	856.17	34		
	Income	Between groups	43.17	8	5.40	0.17 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	813.00	26	31.27	
		Total	856.17	34		
	Years of Experience	Between groups	131.91	8	16.49	0.59 ^{NS}
		Within Groups	724.28	26	27.86	
		Total	856.17	34		

NS – Not Significant

Likewise, the one-way analysis of variance performed to find out the influence of the demographic variables (such as age, income and years of experience) on the self-efficacy of the special education teachers did not differ significantly. Therefore, hypothesis Hc 3 was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The results indicated that there is no significant relationship between internal locus of control (Individual Control) and the score obtained on self-efficacy. But, the results showed a significant relationship between the external locus of control (namely; Powerful Others and Change Control). Skinner and Greene (2008) argued that control beliefs have two main

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functions in shaping control processes: (1) when preparing to take on an activity, expectations of control have a regulatory function in that they shape how people approach and engage in the task; and (2) following an action-outcome episode, they have an interpretative function, in that they help translate the meaning of the experience for future control. Bandura (1997) proposed that because self-efficacy beliefs were explicitly self-referent in nature and directed toward perceived abilities given specific tasks, they were powerful predictors of behaviour.

Educators with an “external locus of control” generally believe that their successes or failures result from external factors like the environment has more influence beyond their control, such as luck, fate, circumstance, injustice, bias, or colleagues who are unfair, management, administrators and policymakers who are prejudiced or more demanding. This finding was supported by other researchers (Greenwood et al., 1990; Ashton et al., 198). This attribution to external factors, they believe that the strengths and behavioural outcomes are determined by powerful persons, fate, chance and fortune (Simon, J., Dewitte. S., & Lens, W. 2004).

With regard to the influence of demographic variables age, income and the number of years of teaching experience. The finding of this study was inconsistent with those of previous studies (Woolfolk and Hoy, 1990; Lamorey and Wilcox, 2005; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk & Hoy, 2007) on self-efficacy, which could be because the existing study did not take into account the sufficient data such as experience with the specific group of students and another reason may be the limited years of experience that the participants have in this current study. Income is considered a significant predictor of teacher efficacy and previous study had suggested that there is a connection between teacher efficacy and salary (McCarty, 2013), and this study is not consistent with this finding. This could be probably because teachers feel satisfied with their monthly income, as they equate their jobs with service attitude or the income through this source need not be their primary source to provide for their families. With respect to age as well, there was no significant difference, consistent with the studies (Hicks, 2012; Jenks, 2004; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2007; Voris, 2011).

Schultz and Schultz (2005) suggested that locus of control increases in internality until middle age, decreasing thereafter. In Indian culture, women are majorly groomed in such a way that they are always influenced by the members of their family and therefore the relationship between externality and self-efficacy. Jamal et al. (2014) found out that “monthly income” of teachers positively affect their “life satisfaction” and on the other side, “age”, “working mother” and “marital status” influence “locus of control” of these teachers. This could be the reason for the insignificance of income to the locus of control in this present study, in line with the above-mentioned study.

CONCLUSION

The study provides insight on how external locus of control which is a personality variable, has a significant relationship with self-efficacy belief. The findings also indicated that there was no difference in the Locus of Control and Self-efficacy with regard to the chosen demographic variables (such as; age, income and years of experience) on the Locus of Control and Self-efficacy among special education teachers. The findings of this study will be helpful while designing training programmes to enrich special educators.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not a conflict of interests

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