

Self-concept and Teacher Effectiveness: A Study of Women Primary Teachers in Odisha

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Abstract: The study was designed to examine the relationships of the attributes of self-concept of the women teachers' with their effectiveness as teachers. Hundred college students including both boys and girls were participants in the study. Each student was asked to recall the names of two women primary teachers who have made significant impacts on his /her life. Students were asked to rate their teachers on an 11-point Students' Perception of teacher rating scale which consisted 11 characteristics of an effective teacher. The concerned teachers were then tested on their five-dimensions of self-concept using Teachers' Self-concept questionnaire. Correlational analyses pointed out that 35 of the 55 correlations between teachers' self-concept and measures of teacher effectiveness were significant which suggested a strong relationship among these variables. When the data were subjected to multiple regression analyses, it is observed that each of five attributes of self-concept predicted significant variances for teacher effectiveness. However, social evaluation and emotionality-rationality aspects were found as strongest factors of teacher effectiveness. Besides, global competence, and intellectual self-concept, the physical self-concept of the teachers were also found to have impact on the effective teachership.

Key words: Global competence, intellectual self-concept, social evaluation, emotionality-rationality

Date of Submission: 26-06-2018

Date of acceptance: 10-07-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

Quality of teaching has been an issue of significant concern for the researchers in the field of psychology and education. Over the past few decades, researchers have focused on the teacher as a primary factor of quality education. Some of those researchers have reported that the professional role of teachers is highly complex which requires not only the academic abilities of the teachers but also their specific personality traits and skills to prove them as efficient and effective. Relating to the teachers' factor, many studies have emphasized on the importance of teacher's abilities, personality traits, and dynamic dispositions (e.g., 3, 7, 8, 15). Some researchers have observed that emotional characteristics of teachers are very important, especially in creating classroom climate that could enhance students' learning capacities (5). Among the emotional characteristics, the most important are their emotional sensitivity and empathy (1, 11, 17). On the other hand, bearing in mind the meaning of the self-concept as the organized scheme of all the thinking and experiences that individual has (13), it is reasonable to believe that teacher's self-concept should have profound impact on his /her effectiveness as a teacher. Studies have reported that teachers' self-concept influence their characteristics of interaction with students and thereby have profound effect on the students' participation in classroom proceedings and carry forward of not only academic skills but also socio-emotional intricacies into their future life (e.g., 4, 9, 17). Some teachers even remain lifelong sources of inspiration to students because they induce them not only by academics but also by their own self-concept (e.g., 7, 9). Probably, this is a gap in this area of research as not many studies have linked the teachers' self-concept with their effectiveness in teaching for quality education among the students. In order to study the above postulated relationship, the present research examined the role of different attributes of self-concept in mediating the relationships between teacher effectiveness in imparting quality education to the students. Hence, the constructs used in the present study are described below.

1.1 Self-concept

Self-concept could simply be defined as what a person thinks of oneself. Self-concept is an integral construct that incorporates all the experience of an individual, which is important in the individual's self-evaluation and functioning in the social and professional setting that he or she comes across (6). It is also a map that each person consults in order to understand him /her, especially in moments of crisis or situations in which he or she makes a choice (16). It is believed that self-concept regulates and directs individual's behaviors and

activities (12). Earlier models hold that self-concept is a general construct, but recently self-concept has been understood as the multidimensional construct whose aspects are inter-related. According to Marsh and Shavelson (10), self-concept has hierarchical structure. At the highest level of the structure there is the most stable part, general self-concept, built through integration of two main aspects from the first lower level – academic and non-academic self-concept. In academic domain it has different aspects concerned with different academic domains and in non-academic domain it has social, emotional and physical self-concepts. At the bottom, there are less stable specific elements that are more dependent on the situation. Self-Concept is the keystone of individual's personality, which defines his way of thinking, feeling and behaving. There are several terms that are used synonymous with self-concept and most of them are 'self-image', 'ego', 'self-understanding', and 'self-perception' etc. Self-concept is one of the most dominating factors in human life as everyone is continuously striving for self-actualization, realization and self enhancement and is constantly wishing to avoid self-condemnation and self-lowering experience. In general self-concept refers to the conscious and reflective personality of an individual as an object separate from other and amid the environment. Self-concept is the concept of 'self which personifies in individual as a whole. It means how the individual perceives himself and how he perceives his environment in relation to himself. The individual's self-concept is his picture or image of himself, his views of himself different from other persons and things. This self-image incorporates his perception of what he is really like (Self-identity) and of his worth as a person (self-evaluation) as well as his aspiration for growth and accomplishment (self-ideal). Once the self-concept develops, the individual comes to perceive himself as an active agent in determining his own behavior.

1.2 Self-concept and teaching

Many studies have reported the importance of self-concept in relation to personality and behavior, and consequently to the process of teaching and learning. Combet. al., (2), for example, reported that self-concept is a continual influence on what one does including methods of teaching, perceiving students need, responding to students, and liking, disliking or being indifferent towards the students. Combs and Aliva (2) concluded that self-concept is an important phenomenon in choosing methods, materials, and techniques of teaching. According to Parson (14), an optimum self-concept provides both students and teacher with the possibility of improving activity and the results of teaching and learning maximally. Finally, it is possible to conclude from the current research that the self-concept of the teacher is a significant factor contributing to his / her teacher effectiveness.

1.3 Teacher effectiveness

Robert Walker (18) had engaged college students in discussion and writing assignments that pertain to the outstanding characteristics of their most effective teachers; "effective" meaning that these teachers made the most significant impact in their lives. Based on those themes, he arrived at the conclusion that effective teachers share at least eleven clear characteristics. Those characteristics consistently affect students in positive ways. Those twelve characteristics of effective teachers are: (i) come to the class prepared, (ii) maintain positive attitudes about teaching and about students, (iii) keep high expectations for all students, (iv) show creativity in teaching, (v) treat and grade students fairly, (vi) display a personal, approachable concern with students, (vii) cultivate a sense of belonging in the classroom, (viii) has a sense of humor and do not take everything seriously, (ix) respect students and do not deliberately embarrass them, (x) forgiving and do not hold grudges, and finally (xi) admit mistakes. Arising from the above discussions, the present research was proposed to examine the relationships between women primary teachers' attributes of self-concept and their effectiveness as teachers.

II. OBJECTIVES & HYPOTHESES

The study aimed to examine (a) relationship of the attributes of teachers' self-concept with their effectiveness as teachers, and (b) the extent to which each attribute of teachers' self-concept contribute to their teacher effectiveness.

During primary school years, teacher is the most significant agent of socialization for the child even more than parents. Children look forward to their teachers not only for their academic support, but more for their socio-emotional development. Therefore, a teacher who impacts the socio-emotional aspects of students' behavior is always remembered as a great teacher.

Hypothesis I: Teachers who are more skilled in social evaluation and emotionality-rationality are more likely to be considered as effective teachers.

Global competence of the teachers helps to provide students with wider and interesting experiences to which children are very sensitive.

Teachers with global competence and strong academic self-concept would have profound positive impact on the development children and hence they remember them as effective teachers.

Hypothesis 2: There would be strong relationships between teacher effectiveness and teachers' global competence and academic excellence.

Teachers' physical self-concept is a strong source of her personal satisfaction and contentment about her profession, which help to make her a happy teacher.

Hypothesis 3: Hence, teachers' with a positive physical self-concept are more likely to become effective teachers.

III. METHOD

Participants were 100 college students randomly selected from degree classes of three rural colleges in Odisha. The sample included both boys and girls. The students' age ranged between 17 to 20 years. The teacher effectiveness was measured by the 33 -item Students' Perceived Teacher Effectiveness Scale (18). The scale measures eleven constructs of teacher effectiveness. All items are rated from 0 (not at all descriptive about the teacher) to 10 (very descriptive about the teacher). Each of the construct of teacher effectiveness was measured by 3 items of test which are randomly distributed along the test. Reliability of the test is quite satisfactory for this research sample. Cronbach Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.74 to 0.89.

Teachers' self-concept was measured by Self-concept Questionnaire(13), which consists of five constructs namely: (i) Global competence - subjective feeling of capability for any action and its successful performance; (ii) Physical self-concept - satisfaction with body image and perception of someone's own physical ability; (iii) Social evaluation - subjective assessment of someone's own social value; (iv) Emotionality-rationality - expressed sensibility versus rational acceptance of the environment; and (v) Intellectual self-concept - awareness of our own intellectual abilities and confidence in them. Each of the construct was measured by five statements to which the teacher responds by "not agreeing to at all" to "completely agreeing to" about herself on a scale of 0 to 4. Reliability of scales is quite satisfactory for this research sample. Cronbach Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.71 to 0.86

3.1 Research design and procedure

Participants were asked to recollect their primary school days and select two women teachers of their school time; teachers who, in their judgment were extremely effective and have impact on their lives. They were also requested to choose teachers whom they could recall in detail and also whom they could presently contact and request for responding to a self-concept questionnaire. Participants were provided with two questionnaires, one self-concept questionnaire to be administered on the teachers and students' perception of teacher effectiveness questionnaire to be responded by them. The students were informed about the aim of the research, and they were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The participants completed their questionnaires in the colleges in front of the researcher and were handed over the teachers' self-concept questionnaire to be responded by their teachers and returned in two days.

IV. RESULTS & CONCLUSION

4.1 Correlational analyses

In order to examine the relationships among the attributes of self-concept and characteristics of teacher effectiveness, product-moment correlations were computed between the five attributes of self-concept and the eleven effective characteristics of the teachers. The results are presented in Table 1. Social evaluation as a self-concept is found to have maximum significant correlations with effective teacher characteristics. It has significant correlations with all the 11 measures of teacher effectiveness and the average of significant correlations came out to be 0.39 (averaged by Fisher's z-score method). The second attribute of self-concept is emotionality-rationality which has also been found significantly correlating with all the eleven measures of teacher effectiveness. The average of all the significant correlations between emotionality-rationality and teacher effectiveness was found to be 0.34. Both these significant correlations very clearly suggested that social and emotional aspects of the teacher's self-concept are more important for her to become an effective teacher than her intellectual and global competence. However, self-concept relating to the global competence of the teacher was found significantly correlating with 7 of the 11 teacher effectiveness measures and its average significant correlation is 0.29. Intellectual self-concept of the teachers significantly correlated with 8 of the effective teacher characteristics resulting in an average significant correlation of 0.28. Even physical self-concept of the teacher is found to significantly correlate with 6 of the 11 effective teacher characteristics yielding an average significant correlation of 0.26. Hence, the results of correlational analyses clearly pointed out that each of the five attributes of teacher's self-concept contributes to her effectiveness as a teacher. Hence, the conclusion is that teachers' self-concept is a strong determiner of his/her effectiveness as an efficient and appreciated teacher and more important is her socio-emotional self-concept.

4.2 Regression analyses

The results of correlational analyses (as many of them are significant) are suggestive for multiple regression analyses of the data to know about how each attribute of self-concept is a significant predictor of the characteristics of effective teacher and the extent these attributes explain the variances in the teacher effectiveness traits. The results of multiple regression analyses having self-concept measures regressed on effective teachers' characteristics are presented in Table 2. It is observed in the results that social evaluation, global competence, and intellectual self-concept are significant predictors, which explained 28% of the variances of the of teachers' preparedness for the class. On the other hand, social evaluation, emotionality-rationality, and physical self-concept of the teacher explained 33% of the variances about teachers' positive attitude for teaching and about students in the class. Further, three of the self-concepts namely; emotionality-rationality, social evaluation, and intellectual self-concept significantly explained 27% of the variances about teachers' high expectations of students. Creativity is another important effective teacher characteristic which is explained about 24% by global competence, intellectual self-concept and social evaluation of the teachers. Similarly, 22% of the variances of teachers' fairness in dealing with students and giving them grades are explained by all the five aspects of the self-concept. Likewise, 28% of variance in personal concern is explained by social evaluation, emotionality-rationality, and physical self-concept, 31% of sense of belongingness is explained by only social evaluation and emotionality-rationality, 32% of sense of humor by social evaluation, emotionality-rationality, and global competence, 25% of variance of respect for student by social evaluation and emotionality-rationality, 27% of forgiving by social evaluation, emotionality-rationality, and physical self-concept and finally, 27% of variances for admitting mistakes are explained by social evaluation, emotionality-rationality, and physical self-concept.

Table 1. Correlation among the five attributes of self-concept and eleven measures of teacher effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness	Self-concept	Global competence	Physical self-concept	Social evaluation	Emotionality-Rationality	Intellectual self-concept
Prepared		.36**	.13	.41**	.26**	.28**
Positive		.24*	.27**	.39**	.42**	.21*
Hold high expectations		.17	.11	.27**	.34**	.26**
Creative		.32**	.17	.29**	.24*	.32**
Fair		.28**	.27**	.28**	.29**	.26**
Personal Concern		.25*	.31**	.31**	.27**	.19
Sense of belonging		.22*	.18	.41**	.37**	.23*
Sense of Humor		.32**	.21*	.36**	.32*	.16
Respect students		.18	.14	.31**	.29**	.20*
Forgiving		.17	.28**	.30**	.36**	.19
Admit mistakes		.17	.23*	.35**	.33**	.27**
Average of 'r' from 'z' score		.29**	.26*	.39**	.34**	.28*

TABLE 2: Multiple regression analyses with measures of self-concept regressed on each of the eleven attributes of teacher effectiveness.

Criterion	Predictor	Beta	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Prepared	Social evaluation	.32	.28	.27
	Global competence	.26		
	Intellectual self-concept	.26		
Positive	Emotionality-rationality	.37	.33	.31
	Social evaluation	.32		
	Physical self-concept	.28		
Hold high expectations	Emotionality-rationality	.31	.27	.26
	Social evaluation	.25		
	Intellectual self-concept	.22		
Creative	Global competence	.28	.24	
	Intellectual self-concept	.26		
	Social evaluation	.20		
Fair	Emotionality-rationality	.23		
	Global competence	.21		
	Physical self-concept	.21		

	Social evaluation	.23		
	Intellectual self-concept	.24	.22	.20
Personal touch	Social evaluation	.31		
	Emotionality-rationality	.30		
	Physical self-concept	.24	.28	.26
Sense of belonging	Social evaluation	.33		
	Emotionality-rationality	.31	.31	.30
Sense of Humor	Social evaluation	.34		
	Emotionality-rationality	.30		
	Global competence	.25	.32	.30
Respect students	Social evaluation	.26		
	Emotionality-rationality	.26	.25	.22
Forgiving	Social evaluation	.27		
	Emotionality-rationality	.31		
	Physical self-concept	.23	.27	.25
Admit mistakes	Social evaluation	.30		
	Emotionality-rationality	.28		
	Intellectual self-concept	.25	.27	.26

4.3 Conclusion

It may be concluded from the findings that self-concept of the teachers is a primary attribute for their effectiveness as teachers. Social evaluation, referring to the teacher's acceptance and understanding, of her dignity being a teacher, has been found as the most desired self-concept to be an effective teacher. In other words, a happy teacher is an effective teacher. The second in the list is the emotionality-rationality self-concept of the teacher, which implies the extent the teacher is willing to invest her emotions with students, colleagues, and the institution. Physical self-concept of the teacher referring to her satisfaction about her own physical image is also found to be connected to teacher effectiveness. Hence, not only global and intellectual competences of the teachers are important for students, more important for them are their teachers' socio-emotional attitudes.

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IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Chhabilata Dei. "Self-Concept Andteacher Effectiveness: A Study of Women Primary Teachers in Odisha." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS). vol. 23 no. 07, 2018, pp. 08-13.