

Teaching Efficacy Level of Physical Education Teachers in Oman and Kuwait Countries: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Received: September 18, 2020

Accepted: January 25, 2021

Online Published: January 26, 2021

doi:10.5430/ijhe.v10n2p9

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v10n2p9>

Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore Omani and Kuwaiti physical education teachers' teaching efficacy level and to determine differences in terms of gender variables. The sample consisted of 164 physical education teachers from Oman and 187 from the State of Kuwait. There were 49.9% male physical education teachers and 50.1% female physical education teachers from both countries. Data were collected through a developed teaching efficacy scale, which was borrowed from the literature, consisting of 5 main categories: content knowledge, pedagogical special knowledge, general teaching, classroom management, and assessment in physical education. Generally, the results revealed that physical education teachers hold a positive and medium level of teaching efficacy. In addition, physical education teachers in the State of Kuwait possessed higher levels than Omani physical education teacher in all dimensions except in the general teaching and classroom management dimensions. Furthermore, the level of teaching efficacy was higher for female physical education teachers compared to their counterparts. Further recommendations for future studies are also suggested.

Keywords: teaching efficacy, physical education, self-efficacy

1. Introduction

Teacher quality has become a critical issue facing most educational systems around the world, and educational researchers have focused on examining factors that enhance and affect, positively or negatively, a teacher's professional quality (Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien, & Rivkin, 2005; Haycock & Crawford, 2008; Van, Laura, & Allen, 2013). One such factor is the development of positive teaching efficacy.

Teacher efficacy is an essential determinant of teaching quality that brings a dynamic change to the learning outcome of students (Lee et al., 2013; Pendergast et al., 2011). Teachers with a high level of self-efficacy demonstrate effective teaching which positively impacts student achievement and helps students reach their potential. According to Shaukat and Iqbal (2012), Teachers with a high level of self-efficacy tend to apply useful ideas, try innovative methods, and encourage students, thus providing fruitful learning outcomes. Woolfolk et al. (1990) also indicated that teachers with a high level of self-efficacy implement constructive and student-based techniques to handle students' learning problems. Teachers' self-efficacy is also reflected positively in the students' achievement level as well as their satisfaction with, and positive attitudes toward, learning (Caprara et al., 2006; Khan, 2012; Yi-Hsiang, 2014).

People view the term "self-efficacy" in different ways. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as the confidence people have in their abilities for success in a given task. Pajares (2002) exposed self-efficacy as an individual's judgments of the capabilities to perform courses of action that require attaining designated types of performance. Self-efficacy is the confidence that one has in carrying out specific behaviors. Pajares (2002) also maintained that self-efficacy beliefs are the core of social cognitive theory out of all thoughts affecting human functioning and standing. He also asserted that self-efficacy beliefs can be the base for human motivation, well-being, and personal accomplishment (Pajares, 2002).

Self-efficacy beliefs of a teacher can be obtained by four ways, mastery experiences, verbal persuasion, indirect experiences, and emotional arousal. These ways encircle cognitive processing procedure that determines how information are weighted which affect anticipated teaching tasks. Firstly, mastery experiences are considered the greatest influencer among the ways because of indication of one's performance in teaching situations. (Mulholland &

Wallace, 2001). Self-efficacy leads to successful performance, however low-quality performance experience decreases teacher self-efficacy beliefs. As a teacher's mastery experience develops, a growth in teacher self-efficacy is occurred. Such experiences rely on memories of previous related experiences (Tschannen-Moran, A. Hoy & W. Hoy, 1998). The second way is increasing self-efficacy beliefs is indirect experiences. Indirect experiences are obtained by observing as well as perceiving others who execute a task (Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2007). Such a way helps acquiring effective actions without implementing a trial-and-error process (Pajares, 2002). The third way for building teacher self-efficacy beliefs is verbal persuasion. A substantial persuasive technique affects significantly one's self-efficacy beliefs development as stated by (Pajares, 2002). Moreover, physiological states including anxiety, strain, and mood are related to self-efficacy beliefs. For example, stress and anxiety have negative impact on teachers' performances which may make teacher self-efficacy beliefs weak after experiencing negative feelings or uncertainties about their capabilities. Such perceptions provide negative effects which lead for inadequate performance. Thus, reduction of negative physiological states increases self-efficacy beliefs.

In physical education contexts and other education settings, teachers' self-efficacy has been found to be a powerful factor in development effectiveness of the teaching and learning process (Chase, 1998). In addition, scholars have reported a relationship exists between teachers' self-efficacy and other related variables such as personality, job satisfaction, student achievement, behavior, motivation, and professional development (Caprara et al., 2006; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Pan & Franklin, 2011).

A teachers' pedagogical decisions in the classroom are affected by various factors, including content knowledge and level of understanding of scientific concepts. In addition, an important factor influencing a teacher's educational behavior is self-efficacy. In social cognitive theory, an individual's self-efficacy or ability to perform a work affects how the work is performed (Bandura, 2007). Education research supports this theory. A teacher with a high level of self-efficacy has a great desire for education, tries to motivate students, and has a high degree of self-confidence (Bandura, 2007). In contrast, the teacher who has low self-efficacy has little desire to teach, does not pursue goals, has authoritarian tendencies in education, does not trust his or her educational abilities, is not persistent in the face of difficult circumstances, and attributes failures to luck.

A study searched for strengths and sources of self-efficacy beliefs by physical education teachers, and it showed that teaching efficacy reflected the level of confidence physical education teachers had in their ability to effectively implement specific teaching dimensions (Iaochite & Neto, 2014). These dimensions may be categorized as content knowledge, pedagogical special knowledge, general teaching, classroom management, and assessment in physical education. Woolfolk et al. (1990) reported that successful teachers are systematized, demonstrate effective instruction skills, ask productive questions, and give effective responses for students with academic difficulties.

This study examines the level of teaching self-efficacy among physical education teachers in Oman and Kuwait and also determine the different cultural contexts (e.g., demographic variables such as gender, educational qualification, and physical education nationality) that relate to the teachers' self-efficacy. This study provides insights into adoption of vital strategies which can increase teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and result might result in positive learning outcomes

Exploring teachers' self-efficacy has gained a wide attention by researchers. For example, physical education teachers have been found to have a high level of self-efficacy toward the teaching profession compared to teachers of other subjects (Ozer & Demirel, 2017). Bilali (2013) also stated that Albanian male and female teachers had the same self-efficacy levels. The difference in the level of sense of efficacy among gender was not notable, consequently female and male teachers had the same self-efficacy levels.

However, there are two concerns which may argue Bilali's study findings. Firstly, the study was implemented on student-teachers who teach in a university. On the other hand, this may be different from employed teachers, and the study applies quantitative approach which gives bias results; however, a mixed methods approach would provide more efficient findings. Klassen and Chiu (2010) conducted a study about male and female self-efficacy and the study concluded that female teachers showed weaker classroom management self-efficacy compared with male teachers; in contrast, female teachers show higher self-efficacy than male teachers. Moreover, a study was conducted in Turkey on biology teachers' self-efficacy using regression analysis by Akta et al. (2013). The study results indicated that gender can have positive and significant impact on prediction of education process self-efficacy perceptions. Aslan's (2013) also conducted a study in Turkey and she reported that remarkable differences among students' opinions about sources of self-efficacy were occurred. Whereas Akram and Ghazanfar's (2014) presented a study which involve students both genders who study at University of Gujarat, Pakistan, those students mentioned difference in academic self-efficacy, with male students had shown greater levels of self-efficacy.

Although several studies have considered self-efficacy among teachers globally, few studies have been conducted in

the Kuwaiti and Omani contexts specifically among physical education teachers. As previously mentioned in the literature, a teacher's culture plays a significant role in determining the level of self-efficacy (Minett, 2015). Hence, findings of a study on teacher self-efficacy in the US is different than a study in Oman and Kuwait so implementing such a study can show enhance the literature and provide the level of self-efficacy Kuwaiti and Omani teachers have. Abu-Hilal et al. (2016) stated that the level of self-efficacy among teachers is similar between both genders. Aljahwari and Aldhafri (2020) revealed that no significant difference between self-efficacy and psychological adjustment among students as a result of gender or class. Alkharusi et al. (2017) stated that female teachers who teach mathematic had greater self-efficacy than male teachers. Similarly, Al Rawahi et al. (2019) sorted the three main aspects that are affecting teachers' self-efficacy: teachers' motivational strategies, teachers' general beliefs, and student academic achievements. These aspects are connecting with one another. For example, as teachers' self-efficacy increases, student academic achievements increase, and as teachers' general beliefs increases, student academic achievement

2. Method

The researchers developed a teaching efficacy scale to examine physical education teachers' efficacy toward teaching after examining variety of scales in the literatures related to physical education. Once the scale has been developed, it was evaluated by 10 experts from education and teaching backgrounds. For validity of the scale, the scale was presented to the 10 experts to provide suggestions and to make modifications. Then, the scale was modified accordingly. The scale consisted of 43 items divided into five correlated efficacy dimensions: content knowledge (CK; 11 items), pedagogical special knowledge (PSK; 10 items), general teaching (GT; 8 items), classroom management (CM; 6 items), and assessment in physical education (APE; 8 items). The items were measured and sorted by the 5-point Likert scale: (1 = *completely disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *undecided*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *completely agree*).

To check the scale reliability, a Cronbach's alpha test was calculated. The internal consistency estimates for the scale dimensions were .90, .92, .74, .65, and .93 for the CK, PSK, GT, CM, and APE, respectively. All of the scale dimensions were averagely accepted based on the rate of internal consistency. Apart from the CM dimension, which is below the standard value of 0.70, the instrument has an overall high rate of internal consistency and was deemed fit for field survey.

3. Participants

The majority of the participants were men, with 40.9% ($n = 144$), whereas female respondents were 59.1% ($n = 207$). Based on the descriptive analysis, 46.7% ($n = 164$) of the respondents were from Oman, whereas 53.3% ($n = 187$) were from Kuwait. In addition, that demographic information showed that the highest frequency is for the teachers who had experience in teaching between 15 to 20 years (32.6%), followed by teachers with 5 to 10 years teaching experience (28.1%). Meanwhile, the lowest frequencies were for the category of teachers who had more than 20 years teaching experience (8.1%).

4. Findings and Discussion

The main aim of this study was to describe the level of teaching efficacy that physical education teachers hold and to determine the difference in the levels of self-efficacy among teachers in Oman and Kuwait. To determine the level of teaching self-efficacy, statistical analysis, mean, standard deviation, and t-test were applied using SPSS Statistics version 23.0. The results were categorized with self-efficacy for CK, self-efficacy for PSK, self-efficacy for GT, self-efficacy for CM, and self-efficacy for APE.

Generally speaking, the results showed that physical education teachers in both countries possessed moderate teaching self-efficacy, and the Kuwaiti physical education teachers' level of teaching self-efficacy is higher than that of their counterparts expect in classroom management. The descriptive analysis showed that the level of CK of Kuwaiti physical education teachers is relatively high compared to that of Omani physical education teachers. This is seen in the mean value of $3.93 \pm .785$ and $3.79 \pm .768$, respectively. In addition, the level of PSK in Kuwait ($3.94 \pm .857$) is higher than in Oman ($3.86 \pm .857$). In contrast, the level of GT in both countries is low, with a mean and standard deviation of $3.23 \pm .374$ for Oman and $3.09 \pm .467$ for Kuwaiti, respectively. In this case, the level of teaching self-efficacy in GT seems to be higher in Oman than in Kuwait.

The results also showed that although the level of teaching efficacy of CM in both states is low, Kuwaiti physical

education teachers seem to have a better level in this case compared to Omani physical education teachers. The mean and standard deviation are $3.00 \pm .468$ and $2.92 \pm .417$, respectively. Concerning the level of teaching efficacy in APE, the results showed that physical education teachers in both countries hold higher levels, which can be seen from the mean values of $4.07 \pm .815$ and $3.9 \pm .744$. Relatively, Kuwaiti physical education teachers are better than Omani physical education as seen from their mean difference.

To determine any gender significant differences in the level of teaching efficacy among physical education teachers in both countries, an independent sample t-test was conducted. The results showed that female teachers ($n = 207$) possessed a higher level of teaching efficacy than male teachers did ($n = 144$) in the CK, PSK, and APE, whereas, on the other hand, no significant differences appear between them in GT and CM. The statistical significance scores that represent the teaching efficacy level of female physical education teachers are as follows: CK ($M = 4.04$; $p = 0.000$), SPK ($M = 4.07$; $p = 0.001$), and APE ($M = 4.07$; $p = 0.017$).

This study concluded that the level of teaching self-efficacy was seen to be moderate in both states, but teachers in Kuwait were dominant in CK, PSK, and APE. In addition, the teachers in both states have low levels of CM and GT. It also concluded that female teachers in both countries showed higher teaching efficacy levels than male teachers did. These results could be attributed to the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs in both countries. It seems that there needs to be more focus on acquiring content knowledge and preparing physical education teachers in pedagogical aspects. Professional development programs could also be endorsed by Ministries of Education in both countries for in-service physical education teachers. This result aligns with the findings of Erbas et al. (2014) who concluded that efficacy teaching of physical education candidates was in medium level and female teachers are better than male teachers in content knowledge. Similarly, Oncu (2019) found that Turkish physical education teachers had a positive and high level of self-efficacy beliefs, but no significant difference between male and female physical education teachers was observed. In addition, Achurra and Villardon (2013) concluded that Chilean teachers scored significantly higher on overall self-efficacy than their Spanish counterpart did. The significant difference was found in the students' involvement, classroom interaction, assessment, and total self-efficacy dimensions.

The t-test results showed that a meaningful difference exists between male and female physical education teachers in both countries and in favor of physical education female teachers. However, this result did not support the findings of Akram and Ghazanfar (2014), Aktau et al. (2013), Butucha (2013), Odanga et al. (2015), and Mackay and Parkinson (2010), who stated self-efficacy of male teachers were higher than female teachers. The findings of this study also aligned with Aslan (2013) and Ongowo and Hungi (2014), who stated that physical education female teachers had greater self-efficacy compared with male teachers. Despite the relatively high level of self-efficacy appearing among physical education teachers, the level of teaching self-efficacy should improve in areas such as CM and GT because they records a low level.

5. Conclusion

According to the study, gender has an important role to play in the level of teaching self-efficacy in Oman and Kuwait. Several findings in the literature have disputed the fact, whereas others supported it. Moreover, high self-efficacy teachers were found to be more efficient in planning and organizing tasks, open to implement innovative ideas, and demonstrated persistent and resilient during teaching process. In this study, physical education female teachers were found to have higher levels of self-efficacy than male teachers. This might be caused by beforehand planning and preparation, hardworking, and motivational toward the profession.

This study is an attempt to explore teaching self-efficacy among physical education teachers in Oman and Kuwait, but additional in-depth studies that implement qualitative methods such as interviews and observations could allow further understanding of factors influencing physical education teachers' self-efficacy. More studies should be conducted, especially in the areas where the level of teaching self-efficacy is lower than expected, such as in classroom management. Future study investigating physical education teachers' self-efficacy in the areas of technology, teaching strategies, and inclusion are needed.

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