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Teachers' Self-regulation: Using Cartoons to Reflect Teachers Classroom Management Skills, Self-efficacy and Students' Academic Delay of Gratification

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A paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA, April 16, 2009

Abstract

This study examined the most frequently listed characteristics of teachers' with a high degree of self-efficacy identified by certified teachers enrolled in a classroom management course. Findings: a) high self-efficacy is an important belief that teacher most possess and b) teachers can promote delay of gratification among their students.

Teachers' Self-regulation: Using Cartoons to Reflect Teachers Classroom Management Skills, Self-efficacy and Students' Academic Delay of Gratification

Classroom management is no longer an issue of controlling student behavior, grading assignments, disciplining learners, giving homework assignments, and preparing students for standardized tests. By the contrary, the current movement of teaching effectiveness rests on teacher acquiring and engaging themselves in self-regulation of learning and teaching students how they can empower themselves with an appropriate array of self-regulatory skills and strategies. Teacher effectiveness is shifting from investigations centered on teachers' knowledge of their content area, ability to pass state-mandated tests, and classroom management skills, to an examination of their beliefs, motivation, and self-regulatory factors associated with teaching and learning (Dembo, 2001; Randi, 2004). This shift in focus has prompted teacher preparation programs to exert greater effort than before looking at how teacher candidates learn and are trained.

Dembo (2001) proposed that learning to teach content area is not enough; rather, he proposed that teachers need to learn how to learn and how to self-regulate their learning process. During teaching training is important that instructors and program directors focus their attention to the matter of self-regulation of the teacher and teacher candidates. Randi (2004) argued that teacher preparation programs may develop their curricula in such a way that preservice teacher can learn how to structure their environment, manage their time and social interactions, and develop critical self-regulatory learning strategies.

An important component of teacher preparation programs and teaching practice is the teachers' sense of efficacy. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk (2001) posited, "teachers' sense of efficacy is an idea that neither researchers nor practitioners can afford to ignore" (p. 803). High believe of efficacy can help preservice teachers and teachers to sustain motivation and engage in self-regulation, which will result in an effective preparation. *Teachers' self-efficacy* refers to "their beliefs in their ability to have a positive effect on student learning" (Ashton, 1985, p. 142). As Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk (2001) assert, teacher efficacy belief is a judgment of one's capability to influence desired outcomes related to students' performance, behavior, and motivation in the classroom.

Evidence has consistently documented differential teaching effectiveness between teachers and preservice teachers who have a high sense of efficacy beliefs and those who have a low sense of efficacy beliefs. Teachers' high sense of self-efficacy has been associated with a high level of planning and organization (Allinder, 1994); high persistence; less critical behavior toward students (Ashton & Webb, 1986); greater displays of interest for teaching (Allinder, 1994); and stronger beliefs that student motivation and learning are in their hands (Armor et al., 1976). According to Woolfolk and Spero (2005), teachers' self-efficacy beliefs develop during teaching preparation programs.

Academic delay of gratification is a key factor that influences learners' motivation to achieve (Mischel, 1996). Bembenutty and Karabenick (1998) defined *academic delay of gratification* as students' postponement of immediately available opportunities to satisfy impulses in favor of pursuing chosen important academic rewards or goals that are temporally remote but ostensibly more valuable. The

construct of academic delay of gratification is rooted in the work of Mischel and associates (Mischel, 1996).

Bembenutty and Karabenick (1998) examined delay of gratification in an academic context among college students. By using a questionnaire to assess academic delay of gratification, the researchers found that students who preferred temporally distant rewards (e.g., getting a high grade on an incoming test) rather than immediately available rewards (e.g., hanging around with friends rather than studying for a test) reported higher intrinsic interest in the course material, higher self-efficacy beliefs, greater use of self-regulatory strategies, and high final course grades. Thus, preservice teachers' willingness to delay gratification is expected to predict their level of self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance. To be successful in teacher training, preservice teachers would need to focus on academic goals, despite many attractive non-academic sources of gratification.

Objective of the Study

The present study examined the most frequently listed characteristics of teachers' with a high degree of self-efficacy identified by certified teachers enrolled in a classroom management course. During the course, teachers drew three cartoons. The first cartoon portrayed a high self-efficacious teacher interacting with a student with low motivation and unwilling to delay gratification. The second cartoon depicted two teachers, one with high and the other with low self-efficacy, conversing about how they could handle a mutual student with low motivation and academic problems.

In the third cartoon, teachers represented a highly efficacious teacher teaching self-regulation of learning to her students while teaching the content material. The cartoons were analyzed to examine also the characteristics of the students and how

they reacted to the teachers. The purpose of using cartoons was to give to the students a non-threatening form to use displacement and projection of their beliefs and attitudes toward different components of the course.

Method

Participants. Participants in this study were 35 (30 females, 6 males) secondary education in-service teachers enrolled in a classroom management class required by their master's program. All of them have initial certification and were enrolled in a program at an urban college in New York. The students were required to draw three cartoons during the semester as part of the classroom management class.

Measures

Cartoons. The appendixes display the actual assignments of the cartoons. The first cartoon required that teachers portrayed a high self-efficacious teacher interacting with a student with low motivation and unwilling to delay gratification. The second cartoon depicted two teachers, one with high and the other with low self-efficacy, conversing about how they could handle a student with low motivation and academic problems. In the third cartoon, teachers represented a highly efficacious teacher teaching self-regulation of learning to her students while teaching the content material.

Data Analysis

Three experts on teachers' motivation, self-regulation, and classroom practices coded the cartoons. With 98% of agreement of inter-rater reliability, the differences were solved with mutual conversation until a full agreement was obtained.

Results

The most frequently listed characteristics of a learner depicted in the cartoon were a) willingness to delay gratification (by 35 of the students), b) able to engage in positive self-consequences (by 24 of the students), and c) setting goals (by 19 of the students). The most frequently listed characteristics of a teacher with high teacher self-efficacy beliefs were a) teaching delay of gratification (by 32 of the students), b) teaching caring (by 14 of the students), and c) academic press (by 9 of the students). The three most frequently cited characteristics of a high self-efficacious teacher were: a) high self-efficacy (by 23 of the students), b) knowing how to motivate students (by 13 of the students), and c) believing that the students can learn. The three most frequent characteristics of an effective teacher were a) high self-efficacy, b) environmental control, and c) can regulate own emotions.

Discussion

The results revealed that teachers consider that high self-efficacy is an important belief that teachers most possess in order to have an effective classroom management. High confidence on their ability to successfully answer the questions and dealing with students' problems was depicted in most of the cartoons. Teachers projected in their cartoons the point that an efficacious teacher needs to have high self-efficacy beliefs and engage in self-regulation. The belief that teachers can promote delay of gratification among their students was also highlighted in the cartoons.

Teachers provided a variety of ways in which they could reinforce the students. As observed by Dembo (2001) and by Randi (2004), classroom management is no longer an issue of controlling student behavior, grading assignments, and disciplining learners. Teaching effectiveness rests on teachers

acquiring and engaging themselves in self-regulation of learning and on attaining high confidence. These findings call for teaching preparation programs to focus their teacher preparation programs on helping teachers to be self-efficacious and to training them on self-regulation of learning so they can help learners in the schools.

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Table 1:

Teacher Candidates Identify Characteristics of Teachers with High Teacher Self-Efficacy Beliefs

CARTOON # 1 (Tables with ratings for the other cartoons are not showed here)

Characteristics	Frequency	%
Academic delay of gratification	35	14.28
Positive self-consequences	24	9.79
Goal Setting	19	7.75
Ability to complete task	17	6.93
Not codable	16	6.53
Task Strategies	15	6.12
General self-esteem	12	4.89
Time management	11	4.48
Focusing on teacher supports	10	4.08
Help seeking, teacher	9	3.67
Teacher caring	8	3.26
Environmental structure	7	2.85
Verbal praise	7	2.85
Focus on performance/high grades	7	2.85
Long-term utility	6	2.44
Focus on student confidence (not specified)	5	2.04
Self-monitoring	4	1.63
Focus on intrinsic motivation (not specified)	4	1.63
Reflection on past instances of task completion - efficacy	4	1.63
Rewards/tokens	4	1.63
Focus on student self-regulation (not specified)	3	1.22
Help seeking, peer	3	1.22
Personal interest	3	1.22
Imagery	2	0.81
Short-term utility	2	0.81
Teacher collaborate with others in students' lives (parents)	2	0.81
Self-evaluation	1	0.40
Utility (not specified when)	1	0.40
Academic press/challenge	1	0.40

ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE CARTOONS

Homework 1: CARTOON 1

Michael is a student in your eleventh grade math class (use your own content area such as Science, Math, Social Studies). Michael has not submitted to you his last three important homework assignments. In your conversation with Michael, you perceived that he displayed low self-efficacy beliefs about completing the homework assignments and that he had difficulty delaying gratification.

Directions: Assume that with your help, Michael has now developed high self-efficacy beliefs for completing the homework assignments and that you helped him to understand that delay of gratification is important if he wants to complete his homework assignments.

- On a construction paper, by using crayons, watercolors, or color pencils, draw a cartoon in which Michael is displaying high self-efficacy and clearly delaying gratification while he is doing his math homework at home.
- Use words as part of the cartoon.
- In addition, on a white piece of paper, type an explanation/description of the cartoon; be sure that you define in your own words any major concept you may use.
- Your artistic abilities are not considered for grading purpose.

Homework 2: CARTOON 2

Ms. Smith is a seventh grade math teacher with 30 students in her class (use your own content area such as Science, Math). She believes that she can get through to the most difficult students, can help her students think critically, can control disruptive behavior in the classroom, and can motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork. In other words, Ms. Smith possesses teacher self-efficacy beliefs. In contrast, Ms. Cooper, another seventh grade math teacher with also 30 students in her class expresses doubts about her capability to motivate her students, to control disruptive behavior in the classroom, and she believes that she cannot motivate her students to do their schoolwork.

Directions: Assume that Ms. Smith and Ms. Cooper are having a conversation during the lunchtime. Ms. Cooper is complaining about one of her students, Mary, who has not submitted her last three homework assignments without having acceptable excuses.

- On a construction paper, draw a cartoon in which Ms. Smith and Ms. Cooper are having this conversation. In the cartoon, Ms. Smith is trying to enhance Ms. Cooper's teacher self-efficacy beliefs.
- Use words as part of the cartoon. Each of the two teachers will say words reflecting their particular beliefs.
- In addition, on a white piece of paper, type an explanation/description of the cartoon; be sure that you define in your own words any major concept you may use.
- Your artistic abilities are not considered for grading purpose.

Homework 3: CARTOON 3

Miss Miller (or Mr. Miller) teaches eighth-grade math classes (use your own content area such as Science, Math). She has an effective approach for classroom management and discipline, she organizes effectively the physical environment of the classroom, manages classroom behavior, creates a respectful, supportive learning environment, and promotes classroom safety and wellness. Further, she (he) is a caring teacher, has passion for teaching, and believes that her students are competent and that she (he) has high self-efficacy to help them to master the class material.

Directions:

- On a construction paper, draw a cartoon in which Miss Miller (or Mr. Miller) is conducting a regular lesson in her (his) classroom. She (he) is teaching content area material (e.g., $2 + 2 = 4$ or $2x + 3x4 = 20$), but at the same time, she (he) is communicating her beliefs about the students, learning, and teaching. Remember, she (he) is a caring teacher and has passion for teaching.
- Use words as part of the cartoon.
- In addition, on a white piece of paper, type an explanation/description of the cartoon; be sure that you define in your own words any major concept you may use.
- Your artistic abilities are not considered for grading purpose.

Holistic Scoring Criteria for the Homework Cartoons

	Criteria				Points
	TARGET	ACCEPTABLE	EMERGING	UNACCEPTABLE	
	4	3	2	1 (or 0)	
Accuracy	All components of the questions, concepts, and processes are correct.	Most of components of the questions, concepts, and processes are correct..	Some of components of the questions, concepts, and processes are correct.	Less than half of all components of the questions, concepts, and processes are correct. or are not included.	_____
Demonstrated Knowledge	Shows complete understanding of the questions, concepts, and processes.	Shows substantial understanding of the problem, concepts, and processes.	Response shows some understanding of the problem, concepts, and processes.	Response shows a complete lack of understanding for the problem, concepts, and processes.	_____
				Total---->	_____


Specific Scoring Criteria for the Homework Assignments (Cartoons)

Value	Description
EXEMPLARY 4	The drawing clearly contains words representing the major concepts included in the assignment. The description and explanation of the drawing contain a clear description of the scene and all major concepts are correctly defined. The drawing was done on a construction paper and with color crayons or color pencils.
ACCEPTABLE 3	The drawing is for the most part contains words representing the major concepts included in the assignment. The description and explanation of the drawing contain an adequate description of the scene and all major concepts are correctly defined. The drawing was done on a construction paper and with color crayons or color pencils. One major component of the assignment is not present or complete.
EMERGING 2	The words in the drawing poorly represent the concepts of the assignment. The description/explanation is poorly written. The drawing does not meet all of the criteria. Most of components of the assignment are not present. Most components of the drawing and the explanation are not related or are not accurate to what was assigned.
UNACCEPTABLE 1	The words in the drawing do not represent the concepts of the assignment. The description/explanation is comprehensible. The drawing does not meet the criteria. The components of the assignment are not present. The components of the drawing and the explanation are not related or are not accurate to what was assigned.

A Sample for Cartoon # 1

HOMEWORK #1 - LOW SELF-EFFICACY AND DELAYING GRATIFICATION

Ms. Smith




Michael, the homework is very important because it enforces what you have been taught in the classroom.

When you get home, before doing your homework, take 10-15 minutes to think about what you learned in the Spanish class. This time will help you connect better with the homework.

Michael, I have confidence in you and know you can do a good job. Just do the homework first and play or see your friends afterwards. You will feel more relaxed and proud of your work.

one week later ...

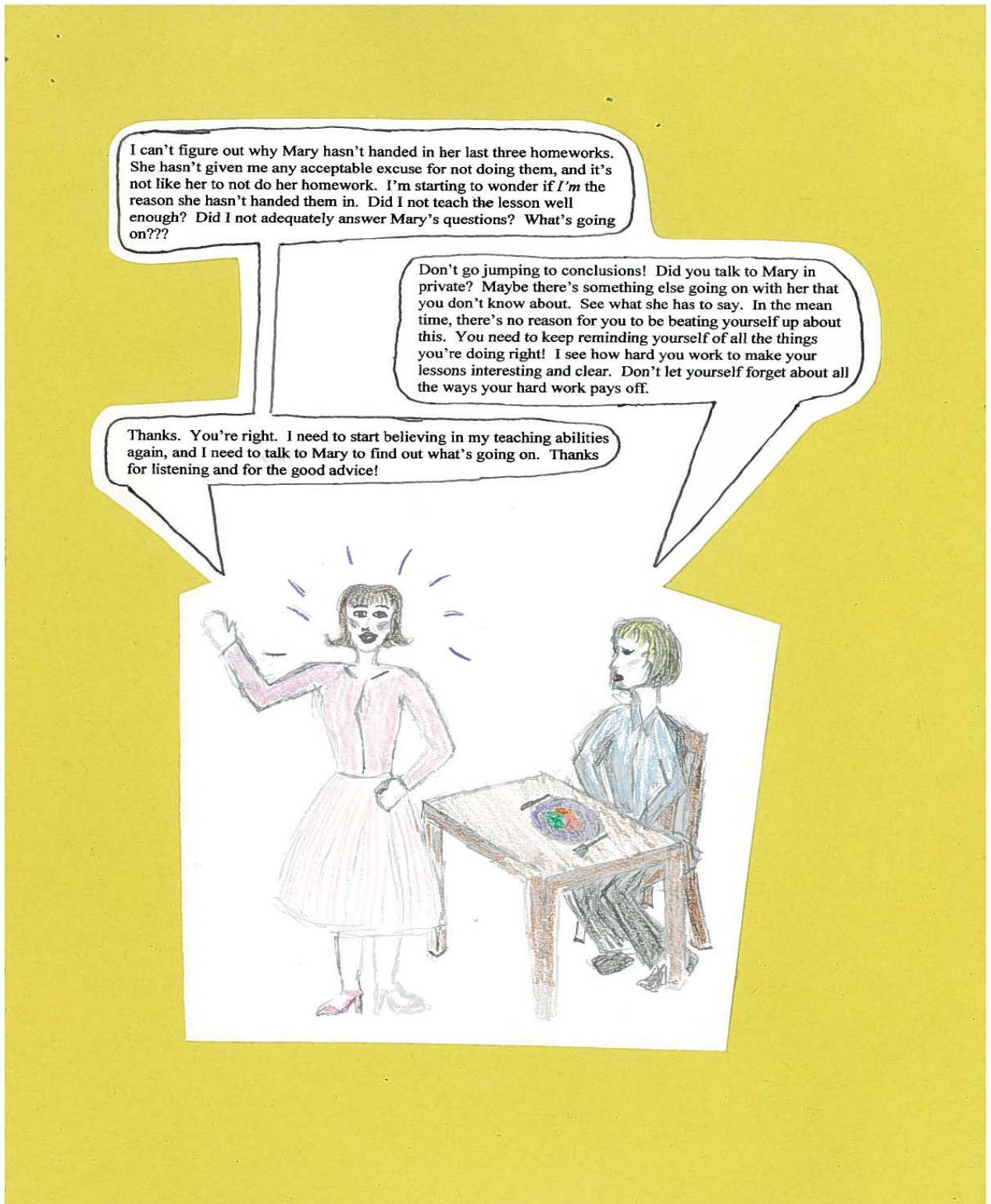
Michael



Ms. Smith, your advice was excellent. The first 15 minutes of thinking really helped me remember the content and focus on the task.

Now, I am more interested in Spanish, it's fun. After finishing my homework I felt better and enjoyed my friends' company more than before.

Ms. Smith, I feel so good about myself and homework is not a pain anymore. Your system really works. I will use it on other subjects, too. Thanks Ms. Smith!



A Sample of Cartoon # 2

A Sample of Cartoon # 3

