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Correlation between Teacher Competence and the Self-efficacy of Secondary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to compare the different levels of teacher competence and self-efficacy among secondary school teachers. A comparative survey method for descriptive research was used. A total of 147 secondary school teachers were selected through a random sampling method. Analysis of variance was used for data analysis. The key finding of this study is that among male and female teachers with high, moderate, and low competency levels, there are no significant differences in self-efficacy. Government teachers show no significant differences in self-efficacy with respect to their competence levels, but private teachers show an apparent pattern. Private teachers differ only in terms of high and low levels of self-efficacy; neither high nor medium self-efficacy levels differ from one another.

Keywords: Assessment skills, Content knowledge, Job performance, Pedagogical property, Teaching efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers are the backbone of any education system and their competence and self-efficacy are crucial determinants of student achievement and overall educational quality (Bandura, 1997). In the realm of education, the dynamic interplay between teacher competence and self-efficacy has significant implications for the quality of instructional delivery and, consequently, the academic achievement of students. Secondary school teachers tasked with nurturing adolescents' intellectual and social development play a pivotal role

in shaping the educational landscape. The intricate relationship between teacher competence, the amalgamation of knowledge, skills and pedagogical prowess, and self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to achieve desired outcomes, has been a subject of scholarly interest and debate.

In the context of this study, secondary education is a critical phase of learning, where students develop essential skills and knowledge that shape their future academic and professional pursuits. Teacher competency is the ability, knowledge, and skills required to organize, carry out, and evaluate the learning of students. It includes a variety of elements, such as subject matter proficiency, pedagogical understanding, and classroom management abilities. Conversely, a teacher's self-efficacy is their level of confidence in their capacity to accomplish tasks, oversee classes, and influence students' learning. Studies have indicated that educators who possess elevated levels of competence and self-efficacy are more inclined to establish captivating learning spaces, adjust to evolving educational contexts, and foster the success of their students.

The purpose of conducting research on teacher competence and self-efficacy among secondary school teachers is to investigate the intricate relationship between these two constructs, ultimately aiming to enhance teaching quality and student outcomes. By exploring the dynamics of teacher competence and self-efficacy, this research seeks to identify areas where teachers may require support and development programs. Moreover, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge, providing insights for policymakers and educational leaders to create conducive environments that foster teacher growth, confidence, and effectiveness, ultimately leading to improved educational experiences and outcomes for secondary school teachers.

Despite the significance of teacher competence and self-efficacy in enhancing teaching quality, research reveals a notable gap in understanding their interplay among secondary school teachers. While existing studies have explored individual concepts, few studies have investigated the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy, particularly in the context of secondary education. Specifically, the current literature lacks a comprehensive model that elucidates how teacher competence influences self-efficacy and vice versa, leaving a significant research gap. Moreover, few studies have empirically examined the predictive power of teacher competence and self-efficacy beliefs on teachers' attitudes toward their profession, highlighting the need for further investigation to bridge this knowledge gap.

Numerous studies have explored the individual components of teacher competence, such as subject matter expertise, classroom management skills and instructional strategies. Effective teaching is crucial for fostering student learning and development. This theory forms a theoretical foundation for

understanding the nexus between teacher competence and self-efficacy. For instance, Bandura's social cognitive theory posits that an individual's beliefs in their capabilities affect their motivation, behavior, and perseverance in the face of challenges. This necessitates teachers to possess the necessary pedagogical skills and knowledge and a strong belief in their ability to teach effectively, also known as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

However, there is a limited understanding of the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy, particularly in secondary education. While some studies have reported a positive correlation between these two variables (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Guskey, 1988), others have reported more complex relationships (Marsh, 1990). This suggests that the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy is multifaceted and may be influenced by various factors, such as teaching experience, subject specialization, and the school context (Guskey, 1988).

Research has established a positive relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy (Hoy, 2019). Teachers who could maintain discipline, manage student behavior, and create an engaging learning environment reported higher levels of confidence in their teaching abilities (Bhatt & Rao, 2024). Similarly, it was observed that teachers with higher competence levels are better prepared to face challenges and consequently have greater confidence in their teaching abilities (Gupta, 2024). Teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to implement effective instructional strategies, demonstrate positive classroom management skills and maintain strong relationships with their students (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). While the positive impact of teacher self-efficacy on student outcomes is well established, less is known about how teacher competence contributes to this relationship. Teacher competence refers to teachers' knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively deliver instruction and support student learning. This encompasses a range of factors, including content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, classroom management skills, assessment skills, and relationship-building skills.

On the other hand, teacher self-efficacy is a teacher's belief in his or her ability to perform tasks associated with his or her role effectively. This includes their confidence in their ability to plan and deliver lessons, motivate, and engage students, manage challenging behaviors, collaborate with colleagues and parents, etc.

Understanding the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy is critical for several reasons:

Improved student outcomes: Research suggests that teachers with high levels of competence and self-efficacy are more likely to positively impact student learning and achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Hattie, 2008).

Increased teacher satisfaction and retention: Teachers who feel competent and confident in their abilities are more likely to experience job satisfaction and remain in the teaching profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

Development of effective professional development programs: By understanding the specific ways in which teacher competence contributes to self-efficacy, researchers and educators can develop more effective professional development programs that target both knowledge and skills development and support the growth of teacher self-efficacy.

Understanding the precise nature of the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy is crucial for several reasons. First, it can inform the development of targeted professional development programs that effectively address both aspects, leading to a more holistic and impactful approach to teacher growth. Second, a clearer picture of this relationship can help identify potential challenges faced by teachers with different levels of competence and self-efficacy, paving the way for tailored support and interventions (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Ultimately, a deeper understanding of this relationship can contribute significantly to improving teacher effectiveness and, consequently, student achievement.

Therefore, this study aims to provide a comprehensive quantitative analysis of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) between teacher competence and self-efficacy in secondary school teachers. By examining a large sample of teachers and controlling for potentially influencing factors, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of the intricate interplay between these two key variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite the wealth of research on these constructs independently, there is a discernible gap in the literature concerning the quantitative examination of their correlation among secondary school teachers. This study seeks to address this gap by employing a rigorous quantitative analysis to explore the intricate relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy in the context of secondary education.

The relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy has been a subject of significant research in the field of education. This review explores some of the key findings and perspectives from the relevant literature, highlighting the importance of understanding this complex interplay for improving teacher effectiveness and student learning. Handrianto et al. (2024) result showed a significant and positive correlation between Teaching competency and teacher self-efficacy in drug awareness. Devi et al. (2023) reported that self-efficacy and teaching practices significantly influence readiness to become teachers directly, whereas self-efficacy does not directly

impact readiness through an interest in teaching, unlike teaching practices, which indirectly influence readiness through an interest in teaching. Orakci et al. (2023) reported that teachers have high self-efficacy levels and feel efficient in their teaching. This information is crucial, as it raises awareness of the importance of self-efficacy in the teaching profession and contributes to further research and qualified teacher training. Alibakhshi et al. (2020) concluded that high self-efficacy affects teachers' teaching practices, learners' motivation, and achievement. Understanding teachers' opinions on self-efficacy beliefs is essential for effective teaching. Lauermann (2021) reported significant ambiguity in the understanding and evaluation of teachers' competence beliefs in empirical research. Yang (2024) revealed that online teaching competence significantly predicts emotion regulation and digital burnout, whereas self-efficacy significantly impacts these factors. Emotional regulation mediates the relationship between these variables, highlighting the intricate connections that shape teachers' experiences in the digital teaching environment. Sharma and Patel (2024) found that mentorship programs that provide guidance and support to teachers further contribute to their sense of self-efficacy. The findings of Meiyanti et al. (2022) support three conclusions: first, there is a strong positive correlation between teacher effectiveness and self-efficacy; second, there is a strong correlation between teacher effectiveness and pedagogic competence; and third, there is a strong correlation between teacher teaching effectiveness and both self-efficacy and pedagogic competence. It is possible to conclude that increasing pedagogical competency and self-efficacy increases the effectiveness of teacher instruction.

Kaur (2022) explored the correlation between teaching competence and self-efficacy in secondary school teachers, focusing on gender differences and school type. The results revealed significant differences in teaching competence and self-efficacy between government and private secondary school teachers, with female teachers showing greater teaching competence and self-efficacy than male teachers. However, a positive relationship was found between teaching competence and self-efficacy among secondary school teachers. Phaik et al. (2023) reported that structural model analysis revealed a positive significant association between emotional competence, self-efficacy, and commitment; additionally, the relationship between emotional competence and teacher commitment was partially mediated by teacher self-efficacy. Marcano et al. (2022) examined the correlation between socioemotional competence and self-efficacy in prospective secondary school teachers. The results revealed adequate socioemotional competencies and high self-efficacy perceptions, with both scales being positively correlated. Higher levels of socioemotional competence were found in women and teachers aged 40-50 years with more teaching experience. Experience positively influenced

self-efficacy perceptions, with women showing higher levels than men. The study concluded that developing socioemotional competence is crucial for improving teaching performance. Ramakrishnan et al. (2022) reported that teachers who have a positive teaching style have greater self-efficacy and are more comfortable utilizing a range of instructional modalities. Furthermore, the study revealed that self-efficacy contributes to instructors' increased competence in their line of work. In actuality, the results indicated that teachers' favorable attitudes toward the teaching and learning process were improved by self-efficacy. In addition, the research revealed that self-efficacy and teaching style are two elements that support a teacher's competency in terms of knowledge, comprehension, and abilities. Yim (2023) revealed that vicarious experiences may be just as significant as experiences of teaching skill mastery as a source of teaching self-efficacy for pre-service teachers. Furthermore, a practicum that fails to fully account for cultural sensitivities and maximize the interaction between teaching self-efficacy derived from vicarious experiences and personal self-efficacy for learning variables will not substantially increase teachers' social competence or learning. Not only are there distinct sources of teaching self-efficacy that influence the development of distinct domains of self-efficacy, but pre-service and experienced teachers also differ in this regard.

The reviewed literature provides limited insights into the potential moderating or mediating variables that may influence the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy. Therefore, the identified research gap highlights the need for a quantitative analysis that explores the correlation between teacher competence and self-efficacy and considers contextual factors that may shape and influence this relationship within the dynamic landscape of secondary school teaching. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing targeted interventions, informing educational policies, and enhancing teacher training programs to improve overall teaching effectiveness in secondary education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A better understanding of the relationship between self-efficacy and teacher competency is important for evaluating the overall effectiveness of teachers. Understanding the connections between these elements might help develop more efficient teaching strategies.

Teacher competence and self-efficacy are crucial determinants of teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Moreover, secondary school teachers play a vital role in shaping students' academic and personal development. Research suggests that teacher competence and self-efficacy are interconnected, but the nature of this relationship remains understudied.

Understanding the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy can inform teacher education and professional development programs. Such programs can enhance teacher confidence, instructional skills and overall teaching quality. Improved teacher competence and self-efficacy can lead to better student outcomes, increased student motivation and reduced achievement gaps.

The development of strategies to enhance instruction and, ultimately, student performance can be guided by these data. A positive correlation between teacher competency and self-efficacy may indicate that offering educators support and professional development can result in more motivated and satisfied teaching staff. As a result, retention rates and the overall quality of education could increase.

Therefore, the study's findings may have an impact on educational policies at the municipal, state, or even school level. Using these data, policymakers can design and implement initiatives that enhance teacher competency and self-efficacy, leading to a more effective and durable educational system. The findings from this study can fill any gaps in the body of knowledge about the relationship between teacher competency and self-efficacy in the secondary school setting. It adds to the growing corpus of information about factors influencing the teaching–learning process and teacher effectiveness.

By exploring the relationship between teacher competence and self-efficacy, this study aims to provide valuable insights for teacher development, school administration, and educational policy making.

METHOD

A quantitative research design was employed to gather numerical data that were analyzed statistically. For the collection of the data, the Teacher Competency Scale and Self-efficacy Scale were used by the researcher. These tools are constructed and standardized by the researcher herself. In this study, a comparative survey method for descriptive research was used.

Participants

The target population is secondary school teachers from the Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh. A total of 147 U.P. Board teachers at the secondary level were selected as a sample from the Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh.

Hypotheses

1. There was no significant difference between the self-efficacy of teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency among male teachers at the secondary level.

2. There was no significant difference between the self-efficacy of female teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of competency at the secondary level.
3. There is no significant difference between the self-efficacy of government teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of competency at the secondary level.
4. There is no significant difference between the self-efficacy of private teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of competency at the secondary level.
5. There was no significant difference between the self-efficacy of teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency at the secondary level.

RESULTS

1. To compare the self-efficacy of male teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

We hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in the self-efficacy of male teachers with high, moderate, or low competency at the secondary level. This hypothesis was tested for male secondary-level teachers, who were classified into three groups, viz. - high, moderate, and low teacher competency based on the mean ± 1 S.D. (Mean = 163.57 and S.D.=18.10). Male secondary level teachers with teacher competency scores ≤ 145.47 were classified into the low-teacher competency group, whereas those with teacher competency score ≥ 181.67 were classified into the high-teacher competency group. The secondary-level male teachers with teacher competency scores greater than 145.47 but less than 181.67 were included in the secondary-level male teachers with moderate teacher competency group.

ANOVA was used to compare self-efficacy among secondary-level male teachers belonging to these three groups. The results are shown in Table-1.

Table 1: Summary of the ANOVA results showing differences in the self-efficacy of male teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Table Value
Between Groups	1339.774	2	669.887	2.556	3.098
Within Groups	23583.925	90	262.044		

** 0.05 Significance level*

Table 1 shows that the value of the F ratio (= 2.556) is not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be accepted. This means that male secondary-level teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency do not differ from one another in self-efficacy.

2. To compare the self-efficacy of female teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in the self-efficacy of female teachers with high, moderate, or low teacher competency at the secondary level. This hypothesis was tested for female secondary level teachers, who were classified into three groups, viz. - high, moderate, and low teacher competency based on the mean ± 1 S.D. (Mean = 163.56 and S.D. = 14.86). Female secondary level teachers with teacher competency scores ≤ 148.69 were classified into the low-teacher competency group, whereas those with teacher competency scores ≥ 178.42 were classified into the high-teacher competency group. The secondary-level female teachers with teacher competency scores greater than 148.69 but less than 178.42 were included in the secondary-level female teachers with moderate teacher competency group.

ANOVA was used to compare self-efficacy among secondary-level female teachers belonging to these three groups. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of the ANOVA results showing differences in the self-efficacy of female teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Table Value
Between Groups	464.735	2	232.368	1.021	3.179
Within Groups	11606.098	51	227.571		

** 0.05 Significance level*

Table 2 shows that the value of the F ratio (= 1.021) is not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be accepted. This means that female secondary-level teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency do not differ from one another in terms of self-efficacy.

3. **To compare the self-efficacy of government teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency at the secondary level.**

We hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in the self-efficacy of government teachers with high, moderate, or low teacher competency at the secondary level. This hypothesis was tested for government teachers at the secondary level, who were classified into three groups viz. - high, moderate, and low teacher competency based on the mean ± 1 S.D. (mean = 164.25 and S.D.=18.52). Government teachers at the secondary level with teacher competency scores ≤ 145.73 were classified into the low teacher competency group, whereas those with teacher competency scores ≥ 182.76 were classified into the high teacher competency group. The secondary-level government teachers with teacher competency scores greater than 145.73 but less than 182.76 were included in the group of secondary-level government teachers with moderate teacher competency.

ANOVA was used to compare self-efficacy among secondary-level government teachers belonging to these three groups. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of the ANOVA results showing differences in the self-efficacy of government teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Table Value
Between Groups	1116.047	2	558.024	2.387	3.108
Within Groups	19167.764	82	233.753		

** 0.05 Significance level*

Table 3 shows that the value of the F ratio (= 2.387) is not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be accepted. This means that government teachers at the secondary level with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency do not differ from one another in terms of self-efficacy.

4. **To compare the self-efficacy of private teachers with high, moderate, and low competency at the secondary level.**

We hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in the self-efficacy of private teachers with high, moderate, or low competency at the secondary level. This hypothesis was tested for private teachers at the secondary level, who were classified into three groups, viz. - high, moderate, and low

teacher competency based on the mean ± 1 S.D. (Mean = 162.63 and S.D. = 14.57). Private teachers at the secondary level with teacher competency scores ≤ 148.06 were classified into the low teacher competency group, whereas those with teacher competency scores ≥ 177.20 were classified into the high teacher competency group. Secondary-level private teachers with teacher competency scores greater than 148.06 but less than 177.20 were included in the group of secondary-level private teachers with moderate teacher competency.

ANOVA was used to compare self-efficacy among secondary-level private teachers belonging to these three groups. The results are shown in Table-4.

Table 4: Summary of the ANOVA results showing differences in the self-efficacy of private teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Table Value
Between Groups	1973.834	2	986.917	4.760	3.153
Within Groups	12232.376	59	207.328		

** 0.05 Significance level*

Table-4 shows that the value of the F ratio (= 4.760) is significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. This means that private teachers at the secondary level with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency differ from one another in terms of self-efficacy. Therefore, "t" after ANOVA was used in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Post-ANOVA

S.N	Group	N	M	SD	T	Df	Table Value
1	High	30	164	14.67	1.16	49	2.01
	Medium	21	155	35.34			
2	High	30	164	14.67	2.42	39	2.02
	Low	10	150	16.37			
3	Medium	21	155	35.34	0.44	30	2.04
	Low	11	150.90	16.37			

Table no. 4.1 shows that there is no significant difference between the high, medium, medium, and low self-efficacy of private secondary school teachers, but there is a significant difference between the high and low self-efficacy of private secondary school teachers.

5. **To compare the self-efficacy of teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.**

It was hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in the self-efficacy of teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level. This hypothesis was tested for secondary-level teachers, who were classified into three groups, viz. - high, moderate, and low teacher competency based on the mean ± 1 S.D. (Mean = 163.56 and S.D. = 16.93). Teachers at the secondary level with teacher competency scores ≤ 146.64 were classified into the low teacher competency group, whereas those with teacher competency scores ≥ 180.49 were classified into the high teacher competency group. Secondary-level teachers with teacher competency scores greater than 146.64 but less than 180.49 were included in the group of secondary-level teachers with moderate teacher competency.

ANOVA was used to compare self-efficacy among secondary-level teachers belonging to these three groups. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of the ANOVA results showing differences in the self-efficacy of teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency at the secondary level.

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	F-ratio	Table Value
Between Groups	767.793	2	383.896	1.526	3.059
Within Groups	36227.772	144	251.582		

** 0.05 Significance level*

Table 5 shows that the value of the F ratio (= 1.526) is not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be accepted. This means that teachers at the secondary level with high, moderate, and low levels of teacher competency do not differ from one another in self-efficacy.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the data via analysis of variance (ANOVA) across different categories of teachers with different levels of competency provides valuable insights into the relationship between teacher competency and self-efficacy. There was no significant difference in self-efficacy among male secondary teachers with high, moderate, and low teacher competency. As a result, the null hypothesis is supported for male teachers, meaning that levels of competency do not significantly influence self-efficacy. The findings in

female teachers show that female teachers with high, moderate, and low competency levels have no significant differences in self-efficacy, indicating acceptance of the null hypothesis in the present study. The null hypothesis that government secondary teachers are subject to competency level does not vary in terms of self-efficacy. The rejection of the null hypothesis implies that there are variations in self-efficacy among private secondary school teachers with high, moderate, and low levels of competency. Subsequent post-ANOVA t tests revealed that the significant difference was specifically between high self-efficacy and low self-efficacy, whereas no significant differences were found between high self-efficacy and medium self-efficacy or between medium self-efficacy and low self-efficacy. Overall, the results for secondary school teachers are not significant enough to wrap out the analysis. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted, showing that there are no appreciable variations in self-efficacy among teachers of different competency levels, irrespective of their gender and employment sector (government and private).

IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the quantitative analysis examining the correlation between teacher competence and self-efficacy for secondary school teachers have significant educational implications, particularly in the context of gender and the employment sector (government and private). The acceptance of the null hypothesis across various categories of teachers underscores certain key implications for educational practice and policy.

The study revealed that gender-neutral efforts to increase teacher competency can lead to the uniform development of self-efficacy among secondary school teachers. In government schools, there is a consistent level of self-efficacy among teachers regardless of their competency levels. However, in private schools, there are variations in self-efficacy levels among teachers with different competencies, emphasizing the need for tailored professional development programs. Specifically, support should be targeted toward educators with lower self-efficacy levels, as there is a significant difference between high- and low-competency private school teachers. Educational stakeholders in the private sector should be attentive to variations in self-efficacy levels among teachers with differing competencies, and tailored continuous professional development programs should be implemented to bolster their confidence and efficacy in the classroom. The significant difference in self-efficacy between high- and low-competency private schoolteachers emphasizes the need for targeted support for educators with lower self-efficacy. Overall, efforts to increase teacher competence, particularly in the private school sector, should be prioritized to improve confidence and efficacy in the classroom.

SUGGESTIONS

The results of the quantitative analysis provide valuable insights that can guide educational practitioners, policymakers, and administrators in tailoring interventions to enhance teacher competence and self-efficacy. The gender-neutral impact on self-efficacy in the consistent scenario in government schools and the differentiated needs in private schools offer nuanced considerations for the development and implementation of effective educational strategies. Investments in professional development programs aimed at enhancing teacher competence have the potential to positively impact teachers' belief in their capabilities across various contexts. Educational institutions and policymakers can focus on competency-building initiatives without discerning between male and female teachers, fostering a gender-neutral approach to professional development. Policymakers and school administrators can use this insight to design targeted interventions that enhance teacher competence, fostering a stable and confident teaching workforce within government schools. Continuous professional development program are holistic approaches and can lead to a more confident and effective teaching workforce.

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