

Exploring the Self Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of Aspiring Teachers in Special Education

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Abstract:

Education provided to the children with specific needs is termed as Special Education. This educational provision is provided to those children who differ from the average children socially, mentally and physically. The major requirement of these children with special needs is modifications in the usual practices termed as adaptations. Children with special needs whose disability level is mild or moderate can usually be taught and trained by teachers who could meet the needs of these children. This could be done in an inclusive setup. But those children with disability level as severe sometimes are remaining unidentified in the classrooms. These children with severe level of disability need to be taught and trained by teachers who are trained and specialized with different skills required to handle a child with special need. Hence teacher education in special education develops such teachers with special skills to deal the children with severe disabilities. Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence in any individual has impact on every walk of their life. Institutions that maximize the Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of an individual will always reap rich benefits. Special education teachers need to boldly face the challenges of working with children with special needs and the opportunity to establish positive relationships with them. The investigator has thus made an attempt in her research to find the "Self- Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the Aspiring Teachers in Special Education". The methodology adopted by the investigator for the present study is normative survey method. Data was collected from the samples in 12 Special Education Teacher Training Colleges and institutes from the seven districts in Tamil Nadu which included Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Salem, Trichy, Sivagangai, and Dindigul. Self-Efficacy questionnaire by Sorensen (1989) and Emotional Intelligence Inventory by Cyberia Shrink (2010) was adopted to gather the data from the above said sample. 350 special education student teachers in 12 special education teacher education Colleges and institutes in Tamil Nadu were taken for the present study. The major findings reveal that there is a significant interrelationship between all the dimensions of Self-Efficacy and also between all the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence of the Special Education Student Teachers. The findings also revealed that the Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the Aspiring Teachers in Special Education significantly correlated. This study is best suited for Tamil Nadu since according to the census 2001 it is the state where there is higher women population with special needs.

Keywords: Self Efficacy, Emotional Intelligence, Special Education, Student Teachers

Introduction:

Education provided to the children with special and specific needs is termed as Special Education. This educational provision is provided to those children who differ from the average children socially, mentally and physically. The major requirement of these children with special needs is modifications in the usual practices termed as adaptations in teaching strategies, accessible setting, adapted equipment, materials and interventions prepared to meet the needs of the children with special needs. Robert M.Smith and John.T. Neisworth, stated that "Special Education deals with the arrangement of educational variables that leads to prevention, reduction or elimination of the conditions that produce specific defects in the academic, communicative, locomotor and adjustive functioning of the children with special needs". According to 2001 census, nearly 21 million people in India are facing disability. This is about 2.1% of the entire population. Children with special needs whose

disability level is mild or moderate can usually be taught and trained by teachers who could meet the needs of these children. This could be done in an inclusive setup. But those children with disability level as severe sometimes are remaining unidentified in the classrooms. These children with severe level of disability need to be taught and trained by teachers who are trained and specialized with different skills required to handle a child with special need. Hence teacher education in special education develops such teachers with special skills to deal the children with severe disabilities. Self-Efficacy is the important component of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Core part of social cognitive theory of Bandura states that the Self-Efficacy belief is the thoughts that affect the functioning of any individual. Self-Efficacy can thus be said as the individual's judgements on their capabilities to organize and execute their action required to attain the designated type of performance. Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence in any individual have impact on every walk of their life. Institutions that maximize the Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of an individual will reap rich benefits. Special education teachers need to boldly face the challenges of working with children with special needs and the opportunity to establish positive relationships with them. Chan, David (2008) investigated the Emotional Intelligence and General Teacher Self-Efficacy to represent the personal resources facilitating active and passive coping of Chinese prospective and in-service teachers in Hong Kong. It revealed that the intrapersonal Emotional Intelligence and interpersonal Emotional Intelligence predicted significantly the active coping strategy. But though it was identified that the teacher Self-Efficacy interact with intrapersonal Emotional

Intelligence in the prediction of active coping teacher efficacy did not predict significantly the active coping strategy. Curby, Timothy, Brock Laura (2013) revealed that more consistent emotional support was related to better academic and social outcomes emphasizing the potentially important role of consistency in children's school experience.

Here the investigator made such an attempt in her research to find the "Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the Aspiring Teachers in Special Education".

1. Need and Significance of the Study:

Teachers in the field of special education usually work in different environment. Some teachers teach only special education students in their classrooms; some others work as special education resource teachers and offers help to the children in inclusive classrooms along with general education teachers. Some teachers work for several hours from the resource room separate from the general classroom. Considerably few special education teachers' work in residential schools, home schools or in hospital attached learning environment.

Special education teachers need to boldly face the challenges of working with children with special needs and the opportunity to establish positive relationships with them. It is a high reward to the teachers who help the students with special needs though the work is emotionally demanding and physically draining. The students when they need to choose their career many of them do not prefer to take special education courses. It is because of their various perceptions and lack of awareness about the programme. The student teachers who choose this subject in many situations shift their occupation to general education due to the physical and emotional demands of the subject and job that is caused.

Here the investigator made an attempt in her research to find the "Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the Aspiring Teachers in Special Education".

2. Objectives of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to find the,

- level of Self-Efficacy of the Special Education Student Teachers in Tamil Nadu
- level of Emotional Intelligence of the Special Education Student Teachers in Tamil Nadu
- relationship between Self-Efficacy and Emotional of the Special Education Student Teachers in Tamil Nadu

3. Methodology:

3.1 Hypotheses of the Study:

- There exists no inter relationship between the dimensions of Self-Efficacy of the special education student teachers
- There exists no inter relationship between the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence of the special education student teachers
- There exists no relationship between Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the special education student teachers

4.2 Geographical Area of the study and sample:

Data was collected from the samples in 12 Special Education Teacher Training Colleges and institutes from the seven districts in Tamil Nadu which included Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Salem, Trichy, Sivagangai, and Dindigul. 350 special education student teachers in 12 special education teacher education Colleges and institutes in Tamil Nadu were taken for the present study using purposive cluster sampling technique.

4.3 Tools used for the Study:

The data for the present study was collected using the Self-Efficacy questionnaire of Sorensen (1989) and Emotional Intelligence Inventory off Cyberia Shrunk (2010). The Self- Efficacy consisted of 24 items with three dimensions such as academic, emotional and social. The original Emotional Intelligence Inventory by Cyberia Shrink (2010) adopted consisted of 75 items. The tool was modified and the modified tool consisted of 35 items under five dimensions as emotion, understanding, intelligence, behavior and motivation. Both the tools were validated and the reliability was established through Cronbach alpha. The reliability coefficient was 0.89 for Self-Efficacy questionnaire, 0.67 for Emotional Intelligence Inventory.

4. Analysis and Interpretation:

Hypothesis: 1

There exists no inter relationship between the dimensions of Self-Efficacy of the special education student teachers

Table: 1 Inter relationship between the dimensions Self-Efficacy

Dimensions of Self-Efficacy	Academic	Social	Emotional
Academic	1	0.528** (<0.001)	0.386** (<0.001)
Social		1	0.546** (<0.001)
Emotional			1

Note: ** Denotes correlation is significant at 1% level

The correlation coefficient between the dimension academic and social is 0.528, between the dimension academic and emotional is 0.386 and between the dimension social and emotional is 0.546 which indicates that there is 53 percentage of positive relationship between the dimension academic and social, 37

percentage of positive relationship between the dimension academic and emotional, 55 percentage of positive relationship between the dimension social and emotional and significant at 1% level. Hence it is concluded that there exists a significant relationship between all the dimensions of Self-Efficacy.

Hypothesis: 2

There exists no inter relationship between the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence of the special education student teachers

Table: 2 Inter relationship between the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence	Emotion	Understanding	Behaviour	Intelligence	Motivation
Emotion	1	0.464** (<0.001)	0.497** (<0.001)	0.360** (<0.001)	0.142** (0.008)
Understanding		1	0.430** (<0.001)	0.383** (<0.001)	0.125* (0.019)
Behaviour			1	0.330** (<0.001)	0.272** (<0.001)
Intelligence				1	0.119* (0.026)
Motivation					1

Note: ** Denotes correlation is significant at 1% level

* Denotes correlation is significant at 5% level

The correlation coefficient between the dimension emotion and understanding is .0464, between the dimension emotion and behaviour is 0.497, between the dimension emotion and intelligence is 0.360 and between the dimension emotion and motivation is 0.142 which indicates 46 percentage of positive relationship between emotion and understanding, 50 percentage of positive relationship between emotion and behaviour, 36 percentage of positive relationship between emotion and intelligence, 14 percentage of relationship between emotion and motivation and is significant at 1% level.

The correlation coefficient between the dimension understanding and behavior is 0.430, between understanding and intelligence is 0.383 and between understanding and motivation is

0.125 which indicates that there is 43 percentage of positive relationship between the dimension understanding and behaviour and 38 percentage of positive relationship between understanding and intelligence and is significant at 1% level. There is also 12 percentage of positive relationship between understanding and motivation and is significant at 5% level.

The correlation coefficient between the dimension behaviour and intelligence is 0.330, between behaviour and motivation is 0.272 and between intelligence and motivation is 0.119 which indicates that there is 33 percentage of positive relationship between behaviour and intelligence, 27 percentage of positive relationship between behaviour and motivation and is significant at 1 % level. There is also 12 percentage of positive relationship between intelligence and motivation and is significant at 5 % level.

Hence it is found that there exists a positive relationship between all the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence.

Hypothesis: 3

There exists no relationship between Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the special education student teachers

Table: 3 Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence

Dimensions/Variable	Academic	Social	Emotional	Overall Self-Efficacy
Emotion	0.032 (0.546)	0.203** (<0.001)	0.113* (0.035)	0.143* (0.008)
Understanding	0.66 (0.221)	0.057 (0.289)	0.012 (0.829)	0.045 (0.401)
Behaviour	0.042 (0.433)	0.051 (0.340)	0.034 (0.531)	0.052 (0.332)
Intelligence	0.191** (<0.001)	0.111* (0.039)	0.096 (0.073)	0.163** (0.002)
Motivation	0.057 (0.292)	0.088 (0.100)	0.137* (0.010)	0.116* (0.030)
Overall Emotional Intelligence	0.077 (0.152)	0.114* (0.033)	0.069 (0.200)	0.106* (0.047)

Note: ** Denotes correlation is significant at 1% level

* Denotes correlation is significant at 5% level

The correlation coefficient between the Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy is 0.106 which indicates 11% of positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy at 5% level of significance.

The dimension wise analysis indicates that, there is a positive relationship between emotion and social Self-Efficacy, emotion and emotional Self-Efficacy, intelligence and academic Self-Efficacy, intelligence and social Self-Efficacy, motivation and emotional Self-Efficacy is also positively related with overall Self-Efficacy. Hence it is concluded that there exists positive relationship between Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence.

5. Results and Discussion:

6.1 Findings

- There exists interrelationship between all the dimensions of Self-Efficacy and also between all the dimensions of Emotional Intelligence
- There exists positive relationship between the Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the special education student teachers. It is also found that the above findings coincides with the findings of the study, “Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy as predictors of occupational stress among academic staff in a Nigerian University” conducted by Adeyemo in 2002 which states that there is a positive relationship between Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence.

6.2 Recommendations for the present study:

Workshops, conferences and seminars can organized periodically to develop the skills required to develop self efficacy and emotional intelligence. Quality of the programme has to be improved that will help to develop the Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of the student teachers. Periodic counseling sessions may be arranged for the student teachers which will help the student teachers to gain personal recognition about themselves. Awareness must be created among these students about their need and importance for the present society which includes the children with special needs.

6.3 Educational Implications:

The study throws light into the hearts of the special education student teachers about the need to improve the level of Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence which in turn will help in taking care of the Children with Special Needs. The study also helped the administrators of the special education institutions to know about the need and significance to promote the level of Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence of their students. The study also helps the policy makers to apprehend the need for training the special educators with high level of Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence. The study also helped the all the stakeholders to understand the role of special educators in training the Children with Special Needs and the components required in teaching and training.

6. Conclusion:

The exhaustive review of the related literatures showed the growing interest in Self- Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence. However there is no common agreement about how these aspects should be conceptualized and measured by researchers. This study is best suited for Tamil Nadu since according to the census 2001 it is the state where there is higher women population with special needs.

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