

Mismatched Teachers and the Dynamics of Their Self-Efficacy: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract

Social cognition theory of Bandura states that human actions are the result of interactions among personal, behavior, and environment that influence each other. Meanwhile, the regulation that requires the teachers in Indonesia to fulfill their teaching obligation for at least twenty four hours face-to-face per week, has resulted in an increase in the number of mismatched teachers whose the educational qualifications and competencies are not matched with the subject they teach. By using a qualitative approach through an exploratory design, this study aims to explore the dynamics of self-efficacy that experienced by mismatched teachers. The participants in this research were five mismatched teachers at a vocational school in Bandung Barat Regency, West Java-Indonesia, with various in gender, age, years of service, and certification status. This exploratory study tried to expose through the results of preliminary research that the researchers discovered the different phenomenon of psychological dynamics, especially the various responses of self-efficacy of the five teachers. The researchers hope that this research will become a starting point for conducting more in-depth studies of the dynamics of teacher self-efficacy (especially mismatched teachers) and the factors that influence it, in the future, so that besides being able to survive well in their profession, the mismatched teachers can still give their best performance for their students.

Keywords: *Exploratory Study; Mismatched Teacher; Teacher Self-Efficacy*

Introduction

Bandura in (Kardong-Edgren, 2013) has provided an understanding of the term self-efficacy as an individual's belief in his/her ability to exercise some form of control over the individual's own functioning and occurrences in the surrounding environment. In addition, Baron et al., (2003) have defined self-efficacy as an individual's ability to maximize his/her competence to perform a task, achieve targets, and overcome various obstacles. The results of the following studies show that high self-efficacy is very important for a teacher to have, including: (1) teacher self-efficacy increases teacher's confidence in their ability to manage classes and involve students in learning (Wang et al., 2015); (2) self-efficacy gives teachers higher job satisfaction (Moè et al., 2010; Klassen & Tze, 2014); (3) teacher's self-efficacy reduces the level of fatigue he feels (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010); (4) self-efficacy reduces the frequency of physical illness symptoms experienced by teachers (Schwerdtfeger et al., 2008); (5) teacher self-efficacy increases commitment to their profession (Chesnut & Burley, 2015); (6) teacher self-efficacy improves the quality of teaching and academic achievement achieved by students (Holzberger et al., 2013); (7) self-efficacy reduces the teacher's intention to quit the profession (Klassen & Chiu, 2011); (8) one of the four teacher adjustment profiles, namely self-efficacy affects student outcomes, including disruptive behavior and academic achievement (Herman et al., 2017).

According to Chapter 4 Verse (3) Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Number 15 Year 2018, concerning Fulfilling the Workload of Teachers, Principals and School Supervisors, states that a teacher has a workload of at least 24 hours of Face-to-Face lessons per week. This

policy affects teachers who will or have joined the Teacher Certification Program. For schools with a limited number of study groups, it will affect the lack of teaching hours so that they will face difficulties in participating in the Certification Program. To overcome this problem, the teachers are 'forced' to teach the subject which are not linear with their competence and educational qualifications, or better known as mismatched teacher. So that in order to carry out this role, they must still have self-efficacy beliefs that they are able to design situations, environments, and learning processes that are joyful, effective, and efficient so that educational goals can still be achieved optimally. By considering the results of the studies mentioned above, the researchers intend to investigate the dynamics of self-efficacy experienced by mismatched teachers while carrying out their duties.

Methods

In this study, the researchers used a qualitative approach with exploratory design. Exploratory research is a research method that is carried out to identify facts about a phenomenon that many people are not familiar with (Elman et al., 2020), where one of the techniques used is to review preliminary studies. The researcher collected specific data from five participants by asking questions related to the dynamics they felt as mismatched teacher then analyzed them by considering the three dimensions of teacher self-efficacy. The interviews with the five participants were conducted at separate places and at separate times. The five participants are teachers who teach at a Vocational High School in Bandung Barat Regency, West Java. In this case, through this sampling technique, the researcher explored information related to the dynamics of teacher self-efficacy mismatched from participants with various backgrounds of gender, age, length of teaching experience, and teacher certification status, the researcher collected samples of phenomena that are considered relevant (Tongco, 2007).

Findings dan Discussion

In the preliminary study, the researchers asked the question, "How do you feel when you are assigned to be a teacher who teach other subject that are not appropriate to your educational qualifications and competencies?" to participants who are five mismatched teachers at the beginning of the Academic Year 2022/2023. This question was asked to find out information about the psychological dynamics that participants felt when they were assigned as a mismatched teacher.

The following are the responses submitted by the participants in responding to the question above:

- 1) **Teacher AP, male, 27 years old, 3 years teaching experience, has not certified as educator yet.** This young Teacher AP has no difficulty in carrying out his role as a mismatch teacher. Not only optimistic, Teacher AP also has the ability to manage students and the desire to improve their abilities in developing teaching strategies. In other words, AP teachers have a good level of self-efficacy on the dimensions of classroom management and instructional strategies dimensions.
- 2) **Teacher EDW, male, 31 years old, 5 years teaching experience, has already certified as educator.** Teacher EDW is optimistic that over time, he will be able to develop learning strategies well, and this shows that the AP teacher has a good tendency of self-efficacy in the dimension of teacher engagement as indicated by his determination to learn things he has not mastered as material for teaching.
- 3) **Teacher NW, female, 34 years old, 12 years of teaching experience, and currently participating in the Teacher Education Program to obtain an educator certificate.** Even though Teacher NW is still young, she admits the difficulties in carrying out her role as a mismatch teacher. Teacher NW's response indicates that she experienced symptoms of anxiety which were marked by feelings of worried and nervous during the teaching process, and even worried that her knowledge was still limited so it could be make a mistaken in conveying the concept of the lesson. In other words, the self-efficacy of Teacher NW tends to be low on the dimension of teacher-engagement and the dimension of instructional strategies.
- 4) **Teacher TLY, female, 48 years old, 18 years of teaching experience, has not certified as educator yet.** This response shows that by being a mismatched teacher, the Teacher TLY seems to have

symptoms of burnout which is characterized by physical and psychological exhaustion, and feels that being a mismatch teacher is a very heavy burden for her. This indicates that the self-efficacy level of Teacher TLY tends to be low on the teacher-engagement dimension. In addition, Teacher TLY also feel stressed and do not believe in her-own abilities when standing in front of students while teaching. In other words, the self-efficacy level of Teacher TLY on the classroom management dimension also tends to be low.

- 5) **Teacher STN, male, 58 years old, 30 years of teaching experience, has already certified as educator.** Teacher STN also appears to be showing symptoms of burnout which is indicated by his desire to retire soon. Nearing two years of retirement, the Teacher STN feels a heavy burden and is not ready to become a mismatch teacher. This response shows that the self-efficacy of Teacher STN on the teacher-engagement dimension tends to be at a low level.

Discussion:

From the five participants who gave various responses, the researchers found that: (1) the level of teacher self-efficacy is influenced by the age and length of the teacher's teaching experience. Young mismatched teachers (teachers with less than ten years of service) have a high self-efficacy tendency when compared to teachers with longer working experience, due to the optimism and enthusiasm of young mismatched teachers to be able to carry out teaching tasks properly. Bandura (1997) states that the affective processes experienced by individuals also shape self-efficacy which influences them to take action. With this affective process, young mismatched teachers are able to cope with various pressures at work; (2) the level of teacher self-efficacy is not affected by the gender and certification status of the teacher. In this case, differences in gender and certification status (already or not having an educator certificate) are not related to the high or low levels of mismatched teachers' beliefs about their ability to carry out their teaching duties; and (3) the motivational process factor is one of the processes that mismatch teachers go through in forming their self-efficacy beliefs in increasing their efforts to overcome challenges at work (Bandura, 1997).

Conclusion

Teacher self-efficacy is a motivational construct. That is, the high or low level of self-efficacy possessed by an individual teacher is very dependent on the construct s/he has built her/himself about her/his ability to increase her/his motivation so that s/he can carry out all aspects contained in the three dimensions of teacher self-efficacy. For the mismatched teachers, their belief and confidence in their ability to carry out their duties properly and be able to deal with all the obstacles that accompany it, will affect the quality of teaching and learning in the subject that are not in accordance with their educational qualifications and competencies.

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