ASSESSMENT OF THE TEACHERS' SELF-EFFICACY LEVEL IN ARAB SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MALAYSIA USING TWO DIMENTIONAL SCALE OF SELF-EFFICACY

Mervat Alasaad [1], Wail Said[*] [2]

[1] Department of Social Education, Facility of Education, University of Malaya,50603, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Email: mervat.um.81@gmail.com

[2] Department of Social Education, ,Facility of Education, University of Malaya,50603, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Email: wailismail@um.edu.my

[*] Corresponding Author

Article Info:

Abstract:

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of self-efficacy among teachers in Arab Secondary Schools in Malaysia and to validate the two-dimensional scale of self-efficacy including academic and social self-efficacy. Methods: A quantitative research methodology was adopted in this study. Data was collected using random sampling from 101 teachers working in Arab schools in Malaysia. The collected data were statistically analysed using the SPSS. Findings: The findings show a low level of academic self-efficacy and a high level of social self-efficacy among the teachers. Further, this study also validated the two-dimensional scale of teachers' self-efficacy with social and academic self-efficacy. Originality: To the best of the current study author's knowledge, this study is one of its own kind and no such study has been conducted before.

Keywords:

Teachers Self-Efficacy, Academic Self-Efficacy, Social Self-Efficacy, Social Learning Theory

Introduction

Teachers across the world face a host of new and ongoing demands resulting from increasing workloads, shifting policies and expectations, and societal changes (Haug & Mork, 2021; Top et al., 2021). The beliefs teachers hold about their capabilities to face these challenges play a strong role in influencing student learning and teachers' job commitment (Öçal, 2021). Since decades, it was claimed that teachers' self- efficacy beliefs can positively influence student learning and has been shown to demonstrate a profound influence on the daily lives of teachers and their students (Schmidt & Buchmann, 1983; Woodcock, 2021). Although considerable research has shown that teacher's self-efficacy has a strong influence on teachers and student's behaviours. But very few studies have explored the level and validity of teacher's self-efficacy of teachers from developing countries context. In particular, there is a need for new knowledge about the universality and generalizability of teachers' self-efficacy and allow future investigations to include the newly validated constructs in a more diverse range of settings (Klassen et al., 2009). It was noted that majority of the studies have been conducted in developed countries leaving the issue of generalizability from the developing countries perspectives. To overcome the challenges on level of teacher's self-efficacy and validity of the scales current study tried to fill the gap in the research by conducting empirical examination on the teachers. As, they are the most significant human inputs and important supporting elements of educational process. Also, to raise the educational process to an advanced level of quality and distinction, teachers have become the focus of attention of many recent educational and research studies, such as the study of (Haug & Mork, 2021; Top et al., 2021; Woodcock, 2021). Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigates the level of teacher's self-efficacy in Arab schools in Malaysia.

Teachers' Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1986) referred internal expectations of individuals beliefs as self-efficacy beliefs, which place individuals in the best position to achieve a certain objective. Prior studies demonstrated the correlation between self- efficacy and intellectual progress in a number of pursuits, including education, sports, and the workplace (Hatlevik et al., 2018; Marsh et al., 2019; Panadero et al., 2017). The concept of self-efficacy is the most important basic concept in cognitive and social theory, regarding teachers, it determines the ability level of the teacher to fulfil the personal achievements and extent of the impact of self-efficacy on the type of activities and tasks that should be performed to accomplish educational tasks and to override obstacles that obstruct the educational process. Activating and upgrading self-efficacy has a clear effect on changing the teacher's style in general from traditional relied on imitation and simulation to a diverse, sophisticated and effective teaching method (Andriani et al., 2018). Self-efficacy has been applied to behaviour in many domains including school, health, sports, therapy, and even snake phobia. In this regard, the empirical studies very supportive of the theoretical predictions. For example, high personal academic expectations predict subsequent performance, course enrolment, and occupational aspirations choice. Researchers claimed that the value teachers place on their own learning influences their performance and behaviour (Vongkulluksn et al., 2018). Teachers elf-efficacy have direct affect on the students such as how talented and motivated students feel, which then influences the subjects they take on, how much effort they devote to their work, how enthusiastic they are, and how they behave in the classroom (Canales & Maldonado, 2018). Teachers who have lower levels of self-efficacy struggle with students in problem-solving strategies.

Dimensions of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is one of the important variables that can determine an individual's behaviour and contribute towards the achievement of personal goals. Ghaly and Mahmoud (2012) claimed that that the individual possesses capabilities and special potential that contribute directly to an increase in achievement ability and high performance. Another study indicated with the same purpose that many class teachers view teaching science as a very difficult task by showing lower level of self-efficacy (Kostić-Bobanović, 2020).

Earlier studies conducted by the educational scientists in the 1970s aimed at gauging teachers' self-confidence and its impact on student performance (Cooper & Burger, 1980; Crowther & Preece, 1979). Students' effectiveness was takes into account in their impact calculation of teachers' self-efficacy (Astin & Scherrei, 1980). From these research, it was seen that the element of an individual's efficacy comprises of many factors such as skills, personal influence, environmental influence and social influence. Meanwhile these studies stressed on the external factors of self-efficacy. Researchers believe that self-efficacy is a multi-dimensional construct that includes individual and environmental level factors (Bandura, 1993). From these studies, it was concluded that there is much more psychometric work need to be done in the area of self-efficacy assessment. For example, information is needed on the validity of efficacy judgments in academic and social domains over time. Researchers claimed that there is a need of research to differentiate the constructs of self-efficacy , self-concept, self-esteem, and effectance motivation (Gresham et al., 1988; Nikula & Sibley, 2020). In addition, more factor analytic work along the lines of Marsh and Shavelson (1985) hierarchical multi-faceted model of self-concept should be conducted to determine the organization of self-efficacy. Gresham et al. (1988) initially attempted to measure and validate self-efficacy expectations in general academic and social domains. Their data was limited by the global nature of the criteria employed and the lack of generalizability of their results to other samples. They focus upon issues of reliability, scale refinement, factor structure, cross-sample generalizability, and the relationships between self-efficacy, self-concept, self-esteem, and social skills.

Social learning theory assumes that the behaviour of the individual, the environment, and social factors are overlapping with each other to a large degree, it is mutually determined by three influences; Subjective factors, which are the individual's beliefs about trends and abilities; Behavioural factors, which means the individual's response of when exposure to a specific situation; and Environmental factors which direct interactions with the individual (parents, teachers, friends). Considering the theoretical alignment and Gresham et al. (1988) demonstration of self-efficacy construct. The current study considered two dimensions of self-efficacy namely, Academic self-efficacy and social efficacy. In addition, (Gresham et al., 1988) recommended to investigate the generalizability of the both dimensions. The term Academic Self-Efficacy refers to *"the aptitude of a teacher to obtain notarized, scientific certificates that enable educational tasks to be carried out"*(Schunk & Pajares, 2002). However, Social Self-Efficacy refers to *"the self-efficacy that enables the teacher to deal with the enclosure community, representing surrounding individuals (administration, teachers, students, and parents) in such a good and consistent way overcoming all obstacles that may be encountered with these interactions"* (Anderson & Betz, 2001).

In examining social or academic self-efficacy very few studies have been conducted in middle eastern settings or south East Asian context. One of the study conducted by Sarhan (2020) identified the degree of self-efficacy of teaching competence teachers in Jordan, in light of

some variables and the most important results of this study were that there is a high degree of self-efficacy among UNRWA teachers in Jordan, the presence of differences according to the gender variable in favour of females, the existence of differences in the variable of academic qualification in favour of the bachelor. However, the researcher did not present the differences according to the variable of teaching experience, specialization, and classes taught by the teacher. Other Similar identified the level of perceived self-efficacy and its relationship with social skills among students of the second stage of basic education and found difference in the social self-efficacy of students between males and females (Perera et al., 2019; Sansone, 2017). The review of above literature has highlighted that social and academic self-efficacy has been examined separately but not been collectively used to validate the scale of teacher self-efficacy. Therefore, this study validates the scale of self-efficacy and measures the level of academic and social self-efficacy among the teachers in Arab schools in Malaysia.

Methodology

Study Approach
The study relied on the descriptive quantitative research methodology by applying a questionnaire contained 15 items distributed on the scale of academic self-efficacy, and 13 items distributed on the scale of social self-efficacy. The study population consists of secondary school teachers only, 104 male and female teachers from public and private Arab schools in Malaysia for the academic year 2019-2020.

Measurements
The researcher divided the implementation of the study into two main phases. The first phase is assessment of demographics, which includes (gender, years of experience, specialization, subject taught by the teacher). The second phase includes questionnaires related to measuring self-efficacy; the first Questionnaire is a measure of social self-efficacy, which consists of 13 items from Baqei (2016); and the second variable was academic competence, which consists of 15 items from Qatawi, Muhammad, Abu Jamous, Abdul Karim (2015). The researcher presented the study tool in its preliminary form to a group of experts (faculty members at the University of Malaya and other Universities). Amendments have been made to some of the questionnaire's vocabulary, as well as in terms of formatting and content, and the number of paragraphs in the questionnaire has been reduced from 17- to 15 items for the academic competence, and from 15 paragraphs to 13 paragraphs for social competence. To analyse the data SPSS Statistics, Version 22 was used.

Results

Demographics
Data collected from the respondents showed that majority of the participants were male. Based on the experience of the teachers, most of the teachers were having 5 to 10 years of experience. Majority of the teachers falls under the age group of 30 to 35 and lastly based on the academic qualifications, majority of the teachers had post graduate degrees.

Validity and Reliability

Reliability of the Questionnaire

The reliability of the study tool was tested to ensure that if the answers were repeated on the same person at the same time, the answer would be approximately the same (Al-Assaf, 1995). The researcher performed reliability test on the same research sample using Cronbach Alpha. The results from the Cronbach Alpha shows that if the standardized value is greater than 0.5, the variable instrument is reliable. Table 1 shows the Cronbah's Alpha of Academic and social self-efficacy.

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha of the Constructs

Dimensions Self-Efficacy	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability
Academic Self-Efficacy	.853
Social Self-Efficacy	.810

Table 1 shows that the reliability of the measurement tools is high. It is shown in the table that the value of the reliability ranges between (0.810 - 0.853), which indicated that both instruments are highly reliable, this is what reassured the researcher to apply them to the study sample.

Validation of the Study

Validity of the Constructs

Table 2 and Figure 1, shows the correlation coefficients between the total score of the measures of each questionnaire and the total score of the items of the questionnaire as a whole, this indicates that the correlation coefficients shown are a function at the level of significance (0.05), as the level of significance for each paragraph is less than (0.05). Thus, the measures are considered true of what has been measured.

Table 2: Validity of the Academic Self-Efficacy

Items	Questionnaire	Pearson Coefficient	Significance
ASE1	I rely on myself to make decision about academic assignments	0.876	0.0000*
ASE2	I need more time to finish my work duties	0.835	0.0000*
ASE3	I have the ability to prepare a summary for the science material being taught	0.836	0.0000*
ASE4	I strive to achieve educational and behavioral standards while teaching the science subject.	0.830	0.0000*
ASE5	I use different strategies to teach science according to the yearly planner	0.844	0.0000*
ASE6	I use technology while teaching science.	0.853	0.0000*

ASE7	I don't see an importance of prior preparation	0.852	0.0000*
ASE8	I seek professional development under the subject of science	0.832	0.0000*
ASE9	I am highly qualified to teach science subject.	0.840	0.0000*
ASE10	I can't handle work stress and obstacles.	0.846	0.0000*
ASE11	I can't control my reactions in the classroom	0.859	0.0000*
ASE12	I try my best to raise students' academic achievement	0.848	0.0000*
ASE13	I don't have enough class management skills	0.848	0.0000*
ASE14	I don't have enough skills to organize the lessons time	0.850	0.0000*
ASE15	I exchange experience with my colleagues who teach science subject	0.836	0.0000*

The table shows that the values of academic self-efficacy coefficients surpasses the minimum cut-off point, which means that the all other items of the scales are valid. Figure 1 shows the graph of validity.
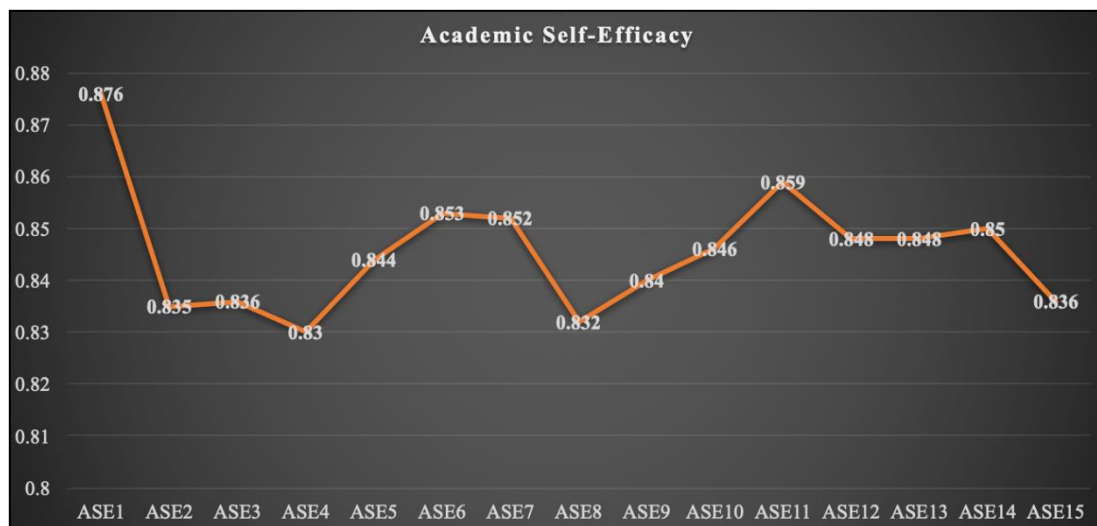

Figure 1: Validity of Academic Self-efficacy

Validity tests were also conducted on the assessment of correlation coefficient among the social self-efficacy item. The result of the test reveals that social self-efficacy coefficients surpasses the minimum cut-off point. which means that all items of the scales are valid. Table 3 and figure 2 shows the results of validity for social self-efficacy.

Table 3: Validity of the Social Self-Efficacy

Items	Questions	Pearson Coefficient	Significance
SSE1	I have the ability to form positive relationship with my students	0.679	0.0000*
SSE2	Teamwork is a successful and efficient work for me	0.658	0.0000*
SSE3	It is difficult for me to build good relationships with my colleagues at work.	0.783	0.0000*

| SSE4	I stay away from problems that happen in the teaching environment	0.692	0.0000*
SSE5	I have an effective convincing method for dialogues while conversing with my colleagues.	0.803	0.0000*
SSE6	I deal well with arising situations at work	0.742	0.0000*
SSE7	I accept criticism from my colleagues and administration	0.731	0.0000*
SSE8	I communicate and cooperate with students' parents to solve students problems	0.628	0.0000*
SSE9	I seek to organize extra-curricular activities	0.811	0.0000*
SSE10	I am always fair when dealing with my students	0.704	0.0000*
SSE11	I do my best to be close from my students	0.616	0.0000*
SSE12	It is difficult for me to continue in a non-cooperative school environment	0.793	0.0000*
SSE13	I do my best to be a role model and a positive example for my students	0.776	0.0000*
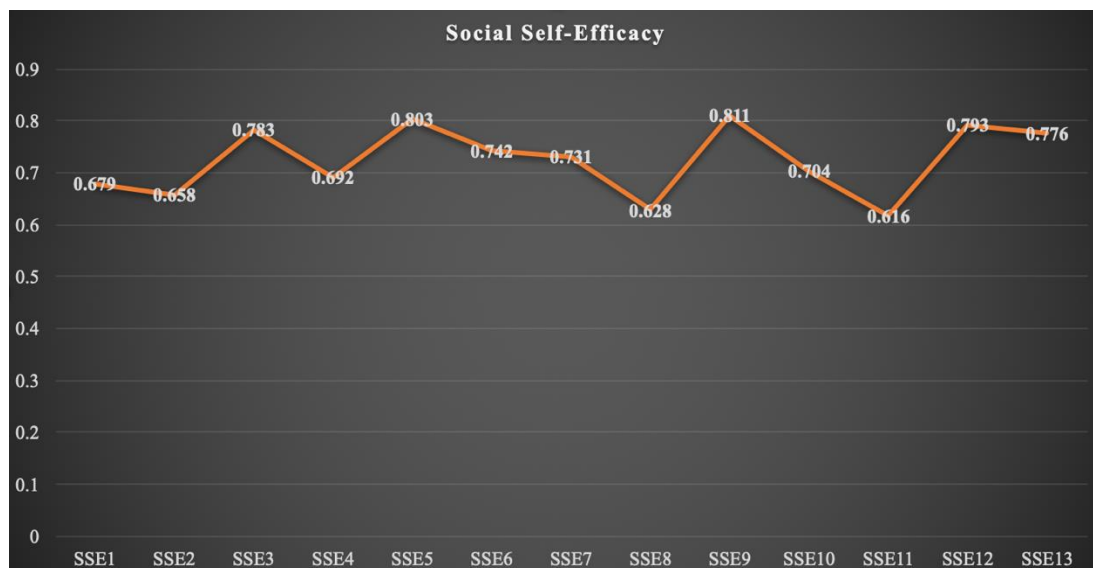
Figure 2: Validity of Social Self-efficacy

The Level of Academic Self-Efficacy

The descriptive analysis means, and standard deviation were used to find out the level of academic self-efficacy of the humanities and natural sciences teachers for the secondary school stage in Arab schools in Malaysia. Results of the descriptive statistics are shown in table 4 below:

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation for the Academic Self-Efficacy

Items	Questionnaire	Mean	SD	Score
ASE1	I rely on myself to make decision about academic assignments	2.693	1.251	Medium
ASE2	I need more time to finish my work duties	3.302	0.957	Medium
ASE3	I have the ability to prepare a summary for the science material being taught	2.612	1.96	Medium

ASE4	I strive to achieve educational and behavioral standards while teaching science.	2.688	1.237	Medium
ASE5	I use different strategies to teach science according to the yearly planner	2.587	1.189	Low
ASE6	I use technology while teaching science.	2.122	1.509	Low
ASE7	I don't see an importance of prior preparation	2.474	1.285	Low
ASE8	I seek professional development under the subject of science	2.730	1.245	Medium
ASE9	I am highly qualified to teach science subject.	2.114	1.534	Low
ASE10	I can't handle work stress and obstacles.	2.812	1.193	Medium
ASE11	I can't control my reactions in the classroom	3.342	0.817	Medium
ASE12	I try my best to raise students' academic achievement	2.653	1.357	Medium
ASE13	I don't have enough class management skills	2.706	1.009	Medium
ASE14	I don't have enough skills to manage class time.	3.500	0.871	High
ASE15	I exchange experience with my colleagues who teach science subject	3.136	1.538	Medium
	TOTAL	2.765	0.406	Medium

The mean and Standard Deviation of the scale had been calculated. As Table 4, the human and natural sciences teachers' estimates of academic self-efficacy are displayed which were in general at a medium level with a total Mean of 2.765; and Standard Deviation of 0.406, this indicates that the beliefs of science teachers for the secondary school stage in Arab schools in in Malaysia that their abilities to perform teaching tasks, planning, following-up, and implementing and organizing the activities, which contributes in obtaining the desired education results, were at a medium level, and not at a high level. Besides, the Table also indicates that teachers strongly feel that they have a lack of time management skills (Mean=3.5; SD=.871). Meanwhile, it was also found the teachers don't tend to use strategies (Mean=2.59; SD=1.19) and technology tools (Mean=2.12; SD=1.51) in teaching science.

The Level of Social Self-Efficacy

The mean and standard deviation was used for the level of social self-efficacy of the humanities and natural sciences teachers for the secondary school stage. Table 5 showes that teachers have a high level of social self-efficacy in general (Mean = 3.973; SD = 0.5696). This indicates that the beliefs of science teachers for the secondary school stage regarding their abilities to establish positive relationships with students on the one side, and with parents and colleagues on the other, and the possession of the quality of communication, whichcontributes in obtaining the desired education results, were at a high level.

Table 5: Mean and Standard deviation for the Social Self-Efficacy Scales

	Social Self-Efficacy Scales	Mean	SD	Score
1	I have the ability to form positive relationship with my students	4.380	0.817	Very high
2	Teamwork is a successful and efficient work for me	4.254	1.079	Very high
3	It is difficult for me to build good relationships with my colleagues at work.	3.859	1.099	High
4	I stay away from problems that happen in the teaching environment	4.239	0.783	Very high

5	I have an effective convincing method for dialogues while conversing with my colleagues.	4.254	0.731	Very high
6	I deal well with arising situations at work	2.437	1.349	Low
7	I accept criticism from my colleagues and administration	3.761	0.597	High
8	I communicate and cooperate with students' parents to solve students problems	4.338	0.584	Very high
9	I seek to organize extra-curricular activities	3.409	1.166	High
10	I am always fair dealing with my students	3.761	1.035	High
11	I do my best to be close from my students	4.704	0.518	Very high
12	It is difficult for me to continue in a non-cooperative school environment	4.143	1.146	High
13	I do my best to be a role model and a positive example for my students	4.114	1.043	High
	TOTAL	3.973	0.570	High

Relative Weight, Value of T-test

To measure the relative weight and one-sample t-test was conducted. Firstly, the test was conducted on the independent samples of academic self-efficacy scale. Secondly, the test was conducted on the independent samples of social self-efficacy scale.

The Academic self-efficacy Scale

The one-sample T-test was used to calculate the percentage and Mean of the items of the academic self-efficacy scale. As displayed in Table 6, the Relative Weight, the value of T test, and the Significance (2-tailed) for the academic Self-Efficacy were obtained. It was clear that the perception of all sample members was with a degree of agreement between medium and low; the relative weight percentages ranged between 66.85% and 42.28%. Besides, it was also clear that the perception of all sample members was with a degree of agreement between medium and low; the relative weight percentages ranged between 70% and 42.28%. In addition, this table shows that there was one item of 6.66% only of the total paragraphs came with a high level of competence, four items came with a low level of competence (26.66%), and 10 items came with an average of proficiency level (66.66%), while the averages mean ranged between 2.144 -3.500. This indicates that the teachers in Arab schools in Malaysia at the secondary level possessed the average academic self-efficacy in general.

Table 6: Relative Weight, Value of T-test, and Significance (2-tailed) for the academic Self-Efficacy

	Paragraph	Relative Weight	Value of T-test	Significance (2-tailed)
1	I rely on myself to make decision about academic assignments	53.878	-3.829	1.251
2	I need more time to finish my work duties	66.04	4.938	0.957
3	I have the ability to prepare a summary for the science material being taught	52.244	-4.681	1.296
4	I strive to achieve educational and behavioral standards while teaching science.	53.776	-3.903	1.237

5	I use different strategies to teach science according to the yearly planner	51.756	-5.424	1.189
6	I use technology while teaching science.	42.448	-9.097	1.509
7	I don't see an importance of prior preparation	49.47	-6.412	1.285
8	I seek professional development under the subject of science	54.612	-3.387	1.245
9	I am highly qualified to teach science subject.	42.286	-9.033	1.534
10	I can't handle work stress and obstacles.	56.244	-2.463	1.193
11	I can't control my reactions in the classroom	66.858	6.562	0.817
12	I try my best to raise students' academic achievement	53.062	-4.001	1.357
13	I don't have enough class management skills	54.122	-4.555	1.009
14	I don't have enough skills to manage class time.	70	3.007	0.871
15	I exchange experience with my colleagues who teach science subject	62.728	0.720	1.538

The Social self-efficacy Scale

The one-sample T-test was used to analyze the relative weight, the value of T-test, significant (2-tailed) of the items of the academic self-efficacy scale. Table 7 shows the occurrences of the scale paragraphs, the arithmetic mean, the relative weight, and the standard deviation of the scale paragraphs. It was clear that the perception of all sample members was with a degree of agreement between very high and low, and the relative weight percentages between 94.084% and 48.732%. Also, Table 7 shows that six paragraphs came with a very high level of competence which only 46.15% of the total paragraphs, and six paragraphs came with a high level of competence representing 46.15%, and only one paragraph came with a low level of proficiency (7.69%). And regarding the arithmetic averages, they ranged between 4.7042 - 2.4366. This indicates that the teachers in Arab schools in Malaysia at the secondary level possessed a high social self-efficacy in general.

Table 7: Relative Weight, Value of T-test, and Significance (2-tailed) for the Social Self-Efficacy.

	Items	Relative weight	Value of T-test	Significance (2-tailed)
1	I have the ability to form positive relationship with my students	87.606	14.234	0.81707
2	Teamwork is a successful and efficient work for me	85.07	9.793	1.07860
3	It is difficult for me to build good relationships with my colleagues at work.	77.184	6.585	1.09930
4	I stay away from problems that happen in the teaching environment	84.788	13.336	0.78312
5	I have an effective convincing method for dialogues while conversing with my colleagues.	85.07	14.443	0.73131
6	I deal well with arising situations at work	48.732	-3.518	1.34942
7	I accept criticism from my colleagues and administration	75.212	10.739	0.59677

8	I communicate and cooperate with students' parents to solve students problems	86.76	19.300	0.58416
9	I seek to organize extra-curricular activities	68.17	2.952	1.16591
10	I am always fair dealing with my students	75.212	6.194	1.03461
11	I do my best to be close from my students	94.084	27.718	0.51808
12	It is difficult for me to continue in a non-cooperative school environment	82.858	8.346	1.14570
13	I do my best to be a role model and a positive example for my students	82.286	8.937	1.04317

Discussion

The aim of current study was to assess the validity of the self-efficacy scale and to investigate the level of academic and social self-efficacy among teachers in Arab schools in Malaysia. The results show that the average response from teachers in Malaysia's Arab schools on academic self-efficacy was low (Mean= 2.67). Based on this result of teachers' academic elf-efficacy it can be concluded that teachers in Arab schools have poor classroom management skills, inability to make sound decisions due to students' behavioural problems, and low academic ability. Solving this problem requires teachers' growing capabilities, efforts and behavioural patterns to make the learning process possible and purposeful. At the same time, the educational autonomy of teachers related to the behaviour in the classroom affects the effort that teachers spend in teaching. Therefore, increase academic self-efficacy is needed to overcome these challenges (Chao et al., 2017).

The result from this study contradicts the findings of Baqei study (2016), as their study showed that the teachers control the emotions to a large extent in the classroom. This could explain psychological discomfort at work, and the lack of control over feelings as a measure of job satisfaction regarding living standards, social status, a sense of security, and work stability. The main issue is that most teachers work without a formal employment contract to guarantee their rights in the case of abusive behaviour by management such as dismissal without prior notice due to the lack of a clear policy for Arabic schools regarding how to deal with teachers.

The results presented that the averages of teachers' responses in Arab schools in Malaysia to study social self-efficacy was 3.97 with a high level of competence overall. Bandura's theories indicated that efficiency may result from the prior achievements of individuals, conviction in their ability to succeed, or through the imitation of the performance of other teachers (Bandura, 1986, 1993). The results of this study showed that most of the teachers can form good relationships with students and can be close to them. In order to have good social relations there is a need to have cooperation with others and working with multiple levels of people. This leads to establishment of multiple social networks within and outside the boundaries of work, resulting in to raising the value of the social competence. The Arab school administration in Malaysia is interested in improving relationships between teachers, students and their parents. These relationships are based on teachers, trust, and teacher compliance which makes the learning process better. Teachers, on the other hand, try to satisfy most students because most Arab schools are private and rely entirely on student fees. Further, it was concluded that teachers' self-assessments of the scale of social self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy represents teachers over all self-efficacy.

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended that teachers in Malaysian Arab schools need to be equipped with academic expertise, experience and cooperation between teachers. All these functionalities for teachers in Arab schools in Malaysia will be reflected positively on the learners and the entire education system. There is a need of strengthening teachers' self-efficacy in coping challenges through conducting courses, projects, workshops and educational programs under the supervision of educational experts. Responsibility, respectful and trusting relationship between teacher and student is needed for the effective learning processes.

Limitations & Future Recommendations

Subject to the limitations of the study, it was determined that the type of self-efficacy should further be explored to include more dimensions other than academic self-efficacy, and social self-efficacy. Further this study was only limited to secondary school teachers. For future studies it is recommended to assess self-efficacy scale by overing this limitation and to include other nationality schools in Malaysia.

Conclusion

This research was conducted to assess the level of teachers' self-efficacy among Arab schools in Malaysia. The findings show low level of academic self-efficacy and high level of social self-efficacy among the teachers. Further, this study also validated the two dimensional scale of teachers' self-efficacy with social and academic self-efficacy. To the best of current study authors knowledge, this study is one of its own kind and no such study have been conducted before.

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