

# THE IMPACT OF TEACHERS' LOCUS OF CONTROL AND SELF-EFFICACY ON STUDENTS' EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES.

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## ABSTRACT

*Student educational outcomes depend significantly on teachers' locus of control and self-efficacy. This research investigates how these psychological attributes affect classroom management, instructional effectiveness and student performance. The research uses secondary school educator survey data to study whether correlations exist between teachers' belief that they will be able to make an impact on student success. However, the findings indicate that teachers with an internal locus of control and high self-efficacy exhibit better classroom engagement, student motivation, and academic achievement. Recommendations for professional development initiatives that both promote and attenuate teacher efficacy and control beliefs are made in the conclusion of the study.*

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## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Teachers are important to students' success not just in their lessons, but also in their psychological disposition. Locus of control and self efficacy are two psychological factors that determine the effectiveness of a teacher. These characteristics affect how teachers conceptualize the role in student learning and how teachers implement teaching strategies and strategies aimed at supporting the teaching of students (Achhnani & Amareliya, 2020). Controlled locus is the degree to which the individual considers himself able to affect or control the outcomes. Teachers who have an internal locus of control believe they have the ability to control student success through their efforts, instructional methods, and classroom management strategies (Bandura, 1977). Proactive teaching approaches, giving an extra hand to struggling students and looking for more flexible solutions for educational understanding are also more likely to do by them. Meanwhile teachers with external locus of control believe that student success or failure is not in their control and that external factors such as socioeconomic conditions, parental involvement or school infrastructure are the determining factors. These teachers may lack power in solving the academic challenges, this would result in reduced motivation and less efforts on classroom performance improvements (Arsini, Ahman, & Rusmana, 2023). One of the crucial factors in the teaching effectiveness is the self/efficacy, meaning the amount a teacher believes in his/her capability to perform such tasks! Teaching with high self efficacy such as employing diverse and innovative pedagogical strategies, have greater prevalence of student engagement and exhibit better classroom discipline are all probable in teachers with high self efficacy (Bandura & Wessels, 1997). The teachers in these programmes really believe that they can influence how the students live their lives, and that passion is translated into an enthusiasm, persistence and ability to adapt which inform their teaching practice. For instance, teachers having low self efficacy can lack confidence as teachers, prefer traditional or rigid method of teaching and they may face difficulty in controlling the class behaviour which will eventually lead to poor teaching learning outcomes for students (Atibuni, Ssenyonga, Olema, & Kemeza, 2017).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Locus of Control

Rotter proposed locus of control to be an aspect of social learning theory in the early 1966 (Nowicki et al., 2021). It was postulated that the learned LOC is defined as the dissimilar perceptions of individuals of the causes for events within their lives, as some possess the believe that the results are possibly controlled by their own behaviour. Tyler et al., (2020) states that whilst others may have an external LOC as it is believes that the results

are possibly controlled by the power or chance beyond themselves. LOC was focused within the domain of educational psychology when the individuals tries to highlight the influence on the worried teachers and the learners within a learning context (Deliveli & Balçıkanlı, 2023). Rose and Medway (1981) have presenting one of the first pioneering studies which attempted to find out either the teachers perceived LOC impact the performance of students. To assess the level of perceived by the instructors external or internal over the future failure or success of the learners, the researchers were available to develop the TLC-Teachers LOC scale in which multiple aspects were covered such as the ability of learner, with a LOC internally which is those who perceived that they may have regarding the learners background and teachers professionalism along with others. On the basis of their findings, the students with teachers having an internal LOC which is those who perceived as that they have several level of control over the academic performance of their students in which they may be probably more successful within their selected academic field other than the students having teachers with a LOC externally (Cai & Tang, 2021).

### **Self-Efficacy**

The concept of self-efficacy is retrieved from the Bandura (1977) as per the social cognitive theory. Self-efficacy as per famous theorist including Bandura is that the level of confidence is the one which an individual has upon her or his capability to carry out particular tasks to attain a specific result. Yang and Du (2024) states that within the RAND Corporation, the self-efficacy of teacher's research started within the 1970s as they found out that the self-efficacy of a teacher was positively linked to the students' performance followed by their readiness to utilise innovations within a classroom. Based on these first results, Bandura's social cognitive theory provided a methodical viewpoint on the topic of teachers' and students' self-efficacy (Ijeoma Evelyn, Edith Obianuju, Peter Ndubisi, & Patience, 2022). According to Bandura, there are four main information sources that affect instructors' opinions about their own efficacy: According to Bandura (1997), they are (a) individual performance achievements, (b) experiences that are modeled, (c) verbal reinforcement, and (a) affective and physiological reactions. These sources of knowledge regarding self-efficacy then influence instructors' ideas about their ability to complete their jobs, which in turn influences their decisions, efforts, and perseverance in teaching, all of which have an impact on students' learning and success (Engin, 2020).

### **Combining Locus of Control and Self-Efficacy**

Researchers began attempting to understand the relationship between locus of control and self-efficacy when the first studies that looked at these two factors and their interaction influence on teachers and students involved in the educational process arose. Since self-efficacy and locus of control are constructs that show an individual's belief of personal control over events and outcomes, they actually relate to one another. Among the first authors to examine the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and locus of control were Woolfolk and Hoy (1990). Additionally, the scientists found those instructors with an internal LOC also showed better levels of self-efficacy, which is favourably correlated with students' performance and instructional tactics (Hassan, Nawaz, & Akbar, 2021). This suggests that teachers who have an internal locus of control will be very confident in their ability to improve student learning in the classroom and will be prepared to handle change (Ghanad, 2023).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

To examine the relationship between teachers' psychological traits, more specifically teachers' locus of control and self efficacy and students' academic outcomes, the research design used in this study was a quantitative survey based research design. The quantity was selected to make data collection more objective and to perform the statistical analysis on the relationship of teacher attributes with student performance. By using this design, patterns and correlations that can provide evidence based conclusions on the role that psychological traits play in this education can be identified.

The study used correlational research design and its aim was to find out the relationships among variables and not causation. To find out whether there was a correlation between teachers' self efficacy and locus of control and student's on academic outcomes, on student engagement and on behavioral issues within the classroom, a correlation analysis was conducted. Findings from this study could be used to inform policy recommendations and professional development efforts to enhance teacher effectiveness (Cherry, 2023).

### Participants

The study talked about sampling 200 secondary school teachers from different educational institutions involving both private and public schools. To make sure there is fair representation by different teaching backgrounds, academic disciplines as well as student demographics, a random sampling technique was employed. That is, participants had to meet the inclusion criteria:

- Obtain at least one-two years of experience of holding teaching position in a secondary school in order to understand student learning processes and instructional challenges.
- Public or private institutions can teach and have the opportunity to compare how different educational environments have an effect on the traits of the teachers (Jerrim, Sims, & Oliver, 2023).
- Be open to complete the required survey instruments as a part of the study.

The results were reflective of different school environments, socio-economic contexts and institutional factors that might shape the relationship between teacher attributes and student performance by having this diverse sampling strategy (Kader, 2022).

### Materials and Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data in order to measure teachers' psychological attributes and their effect on student performance using aforementioned standardized and validated instruments. There were the following components of the survey.

#### Rotter's Locus of Control Scale

- The scale was used to find out whether a teacher has an internal or external locus of the control.
- Forced choice items were employed in the questionnaire in which teachers selected those statements that were closest to their beliefs about the effect that they have had on their students learning.
- The more internal locus of control were scored higher while the stronger external locus of control were scored lower.

#### Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

In particular, this tool was used to assess how teachers measure their self efficacy within the three key areas.

- Confidence in administering the best instructional strategies.
- Ability to maintain discipline in the classroom and a productive learning environment.
- Capable to motivate students and facilitate active participation.
- A Likert scale from 1 (low efficacy) to 9 (high efficacy) was used for participants responses (Li, 2023).

#### Student Performance Metrics

- Student grade records in subjects taught by participating teachers were used as a measure of academic performance.
- Teacher evaluation of students participation in the class such as attendance, response rates, and assignment completion was used to measure the classroom engagement.
- Subjective assessment by teachers on student motivation levels was added on to contribute qualitative insights on how their teaching style influenced learning outcomes.
- The data that was collected using these standardized instruments was able to be measured into teachers' psychological traits in a comprehensive manner while also ensuring the reliability and validity of the data received.

### Procedure

There were four phases in the study;

#### Survey administration

- Locus of control, self efficacy and instructional approaches were measured with an online survey that invited participants.
- To enable people to give honest answers and remove social desirability bias, the survey was anonymous.
- The questionnaire could be filled out in two weeks, in order to obtain a good amount of participation.
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#### Collection of Student Performance Data

- Anonymized academic records and engagement scores for students were asked from teachers (Murray & Staebler, 1974).

- Quantitative measures (e.g. attendance rates, participation levels) quantify as well as qualitative measures (e.g. teacher observations of student motivation) also consider how classroom engagement is measured.
- Data protection and confidentiality at all costs were assured through obtaining ethical approval for the study.

#### **Data Cleaning and Processing**

- Inconsistencies, missing data or extreme values were checked to see whether they might skew results.
- The standardized performance data of the students were used to permit meaningful comparison.

#### **Standard analysis**

- Teacher self efficacy and locus of control scores were summarized using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation).
- Relationships between teacher traits and student academic performance were identified through correlation analysis.
- In order to examine the predictive power of teacher self efficacy and locus of control on student success, a multiple regression analysis was run.

#### **Ethical Considerations**

- This study was performed under the ethical standards of the relevant institutional review board and was approved under ethical approval. To protect participants, the following steps were taken.
- All teachers were given a complete informed consent form regarding the study's purpose, procedures and data confidentiality measures.
- Voluntary Participation - Teachers had the right to withdraw at any time as no consequence to them (Nowicki, Iles-Caven, Kalechstein, & Golding, 2021).

Consequently, the study followed these ethical guidelines to ensure that participants are protected against their rights and data privacy during the research process.

This study adopts a rigorous, objective and ethical manner on how teachers' psychological traits influence student outcomes. This research combines validated psychological scales and actual student performance data to inform the theory of teacher self efficacy and locus of control in education. The implications could support the development of targeted professional development programs designed to increase teacher confidence, instructional effectiveness and students' learning experiences (Öqvist & Malmström, 2018).

## **RESULTS**

### **1. Locus of Control and student performance**

In the study, it is discovered that internal locus of control teachers have more engaged students and more academic success. Within this range of teachers, 78 percent of them use active learning strategies such as group discussion and problem solving activities to make their classrooms more interactive. They also have fewer behavioral issues than teachers who have an external locus of control (52%) and who are more inclined to blame such things as home environment or social status for a student's performance. These findings indicate that teachers are more proactive and effective at teaching when they believe that they can affect students' outcomes (Rose & Medway, 1981).

### **2. Self-Efficacy and class**

Highly self-effective teachers are more adaptive in their instructional practices using high quality evidence based teaching strategies to increase student learning. This confidence of their own skills helps them modify the lessons plan, use different instruction and adopt effective classroom management techniques and end up with a more ordered and productive classroom (Tyler, Heffernan, & Fortune, 2020).

On the other hand, the study also found a strong positive correlation between teacher self efficacy and student achievement ( $r = +0.62$ ,  $p < +0.01$ ), which means that there was a tendency that the more the teacher is self effective, the more they would achieve the students. Further, more efficacious teachers enable higher classroom discipline and create a more nursery like learning climate. These results confirm the premise that self-efficacy has very strong influence on the effectiveness of teaching and student outcome and underscore the imperative that development of teacher training be focused on improving self efficacy and classroom management skills (Schwarzer, 1995).

### Comparative analysis

| Teacher Attribute        | High Self-Efficacy & Internal Locus | Low Self-Efficacy & External Locus |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Classroom Engagement     | 85% participation rate              | 57% participation rate             |
| Use of Active Strategies | Frequent                            | Rare                               |
| Student Academic Gains   | Consistently high                   | Moderate to low                    |

## DISCUSSION

### Interpreting the Findings

The study finds that teacher psychology matters a great deal in students' success. Proactive instructional strategies are more likely to be adopted by teachers that have an internal locus of control, which is defined as teachers who believe they can shape student outcomes. Through their challenges, these educators believe that challenges are about growing and hence they 'transpose' to change their teaching techniques to meet with the diverse needs of the students. Reflective teaching practices, seeking professional development, creating supportive classroom environments to improve student motivation and performance are things they do (Uzun & Karatas, 2020). Moving to the other end of the spectrum of locus of control, external teachers, that is to say the teachers who attribute student success to external factors such as socioeconomic conditions or administrative policies, show lower levels of instructional engagement. Less initiative to resolve student difficulties can be the product of this one belief system, essentially maintaining the patterns of disengagement. The contrast between the two perspectives underscores the necessity that professional development and targeted training initiatives be strategically focused on creating an internal locus of control within the teachers themselves (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990).

### Comparison with Previous Studies

This is in line with Social Cognitive Theory promoted by Bandura whereby people with high self-efficacy will persist when faced with challenges. Teachers with high self-efficacy are willing to explore different approaches to teaching and employ evidence-based strategies so that they can create student centered learning environment which leads to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Xu, 2023).

Over and over again, previous studies have made clear that self-efficacious teachers foster student autonomy and resiliency, adding to the merry-go-round of the positive effect teacher mindset has on student achievement. Research shows that teachers who believe that they can impact student learning tend to inspire higher academic achievement and engagement among their students. These findings are extended by evidence from this study of the quantitative correlation between teacher psychological traits and student performance.

### Limitations and Future Research

However, some limitations need to be recognized on the study. One of the main limitations is relying on the use of self-reported measures, potentially leading to bias due to social desirability effects: participants report their responses based on what they think people expect. Cross sectional research design also does not allow us to ascertain the causation between teacher attributes and the student outcomes.

Longitudinal studies should be conducted so that teacher self-efficacy and locus of control can be studied and tracked to learn about how these factors evolve over time and how they affect student achievement in the future. The second is the development and implementation of interventions to deepen teacher self-efficacy. Future studies could test professional development programs to enhance teacher confidence as well as instructional adaptability with the goal of generating actionable insights for educational policy and teacher training (Yang & Du, 2024).

## CONCLUSION

Teacher locus of control and teacher self-efficacy have important relationships with student academic outcome. This paper finds that educators who are convinced of their ability to facilitate student success are more engaged, more effective teachers, and engage their classrooms more effectively. Consequently, the findings support the

need for teacher training programs that encourage psychological empowerment and professional growth. Investing in teacher efficacy has the potential to make a huge difference in student learning, thus it is an area that lends itself to major attempts at educational reform.

### Key Recommendations

- Training teachers with developing an internal locus of control and increase of self-efficacy: Professional Development Programs.
- Pre-service Training – A NCTR implementation of pre-service cadet training and a pre-educator training program.
- Schools – Ensure existence of an institutional support – either as teacher autonomy and innovation in order to give freedom to develop their efforts.
- Longitudinal studies evaluating interventions to increase the teacher self efficacy and the control beliefs.

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