

Self-efficacy in Classroom Management among Primary Special Education Teachers A Field Study

فاعلية الذات في إدارة الصف لدى معلمي الأقسام الخاصة الابتدائية
دراسة ميدانية

Rafika Hafdallah ^{1*}, Rokaia Azag, Amina Tahraoui³

¹ Blida University 2 (Algeria); alibenalirafika@gmail.com

² Blida University 2 (Algeria); rokaya_mail@yahoo.fr

³ Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University (Saudi Arabia); ATahraoui@pnu.edu.sa

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the level of classroom management self-efficacy among primary special education instructors and the disparities in this level based on experience and educational background. The scale of self-efficacy in the classroom was administered to a sample of 30 primary special section teachers in the city of Blida for the purpose of this study.

According to the findings, the participants had a high level of self-efficacy. Furthermore, no differences in self-efficacy were found in relation to the teaching experience or academic qualification variables.

Keywords: class management; self-efficacy; special education; academic qualification; experience.

المخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى الكشف عن مستوى فاعلية الذات في إدارة الصف لدى معلمي الأقسام الخاصة الابتدائية ، وعن الفروق في هذا المستوى حسب الخبرة والمؤهل العلمي، ولقد طبقنا مقياس الفعالية الذاتية على عينة من 30 معلماً من الأقسام الخاصة الابتدائية بمدينة البليدة لتحقيق أهداف الدراسة.

بينت نتائج الدراسة أنّ مستوى الفعالية الذاتية في إدارة الصف لدى معلمي الأقسام الخاصة الابتدائية مرتفع، وليس هناك أي فروق تعزى لمتغير الخبرة لصالح من هم أكثر خبرة، كما لا توجد فروق تعزى للمؤهل العلمي للمعلم.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

إدارة الفصل، فاعلية الذات، التربية الخاصة، المؤهل العلمي، الخبرة.

* Author Corresponding.

1 – Introduction

The primary education stage is known to be the first step on the student's path toward acquiring the knowledge and skills needed for a bright future. This phase of education is the core basis that prepares students for the following stages and is considered, along with the family, as their second environment contributing to their personal growth. In the educational process, the teacher and the student constitute the two main actors in achieving the desired results of education that can lead to the aspirations and requirements of society.

In recent years, primary education in Algeria has witnessed many reforms, especially at the level of teaching curricula, until it reached what is known as the “Second Generation Curricula.” This new form is characterized by the intensity of the program as well as the large number and complexity of the lessons, which require tremendous efforts from the school professors to deliver information to students and facilitate its understanding.

These primary schools include several special sections dedicated to students with special needs of all kinds. With the recent emergence of global interest in this category of learners, special education teachers have received considerable attention from many studies that address the issues of children with disabilities. Educational institutions and charities have adopted this interest by providing qualified teachers who can bear the burden of teaching this unique type of students (Abu Hummus, Al-Sarabi, and Hijazi, 1988).

In fact, the special education teacher must have several qualities and characteristics to fully perform his task, like being mature, qualified, adequately trained, friendly, and fair, and having access to his own entertainment resources. It is also not preferable to change one's place of work but rather increase this teaching experience gradually. In addition, he must know the importance and value of time and how to use it wisely in the classroom. Moreover, the teacher needs to be confident, cheerful, and optimistic about tomorrow's future. He must be wise enough to make the right decisions in challenging situations (Al-Ayed, 2003).

Special education sections are different from regular classes as they require special treatment and teaching methods. Thus, the teacher makes extraordinary efforts to manage his class, and students usually need educational and psychological support so that they assimilate the lessons and complete the activities assigned to them.

In this context, classroom management is a continuous process that ensures effective, organized, and positive learning within the classroom environment (El Ajiz and Al-Banna, 2007, 5). It plays a vital role in achieving the success of communication and interaction between teachers and students, which is reflected positively in the performance of students and teachers in school activities (Abu Khalil, 2001). Thus, mastering the classroom management skill reduces classroom problems, making the students less troubled and aggressive and pushing them to behave appropriately (Hamdan, 2007).

The success of classroom management depends on several factors; the most important is the teacher's personality and his ability to control his emotions, especially his anger regarding what happens in the classroom. One of the most important mechanisms related to strong personality in individuals is self-efficacy. It is an important motivation component in individuals to carry out any work or activity as it helps them face pressure and overcome the challenges (Jultan, 2013). Self-efficacy in classroom management gained the attention of research over the last years, as it has an impact on students' achievement, and it refers to "the extent to which a teacher is competent in maintaining classroom order, organizing a classroom, and gaining and maintaining the attention and participation of all the students." (Byrne, 2017). According to a study conducted with Jordanian teachers on the relationship between self-efficacy and classroom management styles, personal teacher efficacy has the highest and most significant relationship with classroom management styles. In contrast, general teacher efficacy is "correlated insignificantly with each classroom management style." (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, and Khalaileh, 2011,)

Furthermore, self-efficacy can be developed and maintained through “mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, psychological and emotional states, and social persuasion.” (Hicks, 2012), and it is one of the driving forces of behavior. The individual who believes in his ability is more active and has high self-esteem. This represents a cognitive mirror for the individual and makes him feel able to control the environment, as the individual's beliefs about this ability are reflected in his actions, adaptive methods, and self-confidence in addressing life difficulties. The self represents the individual's orientations and feelings about himself i.e., the self as an actor, and on the other hand, it is linked to the set of Behavioural processes that control behavior and compatibility i.e., the self as a subject. (Ibrahim, 1996, 200).

Bearing this in mind, this study investigates self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of primary special education sections by answering the following research questions:

- What is the level of estimation of self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of primary special sections?
- Are there any differences in the level of estimation of self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of primary special sections due to the variable of experience?
- Are there any differences in the level of estimation of self-efficacy in classroom management of teachers of primary special sections due to the academic qualification variable?

The Research Hypotheses:

- The level of estimation of self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of primary special sections is high.
- There are statistically significant differences in the level of estimation of self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of primary special sections due to the variable of experience.

–There are statistically significant differences in the level of estimation of self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of primary special sections due to the educational qualification variable.

The Research Objectives:

*Exploring the estimation level of self-efficacy in classroom management among teachers of special primary sections.

*Exploring the differences between teachers of primary special sections with more than five years of experience and those with less than five years in estimation level of self-efficacy in classroom management.

*Exploring the differences between teachers of primary special sections in the estimation level of self-efficacy in classroom management due to the variable of academic qualification.

The Significance of the Study:

–Highlighting the remarkable efforts made by this category of teachers with disabled students, which requires them to work hard and create unique methods to deliver information and ensure its comprehensibility.

–Enriching research in the field of self-efficacy and classroom management of special education teachers due to lack of studies in this area, especially in Algeria.

2– Method and Tools:

Since “self-efficacy” is the main theme of our paper, we provide below its conceptual and operational definitions.

Conceptual Definition:

Self-efficacy reflects the processes of guidance, leadership, and efforts made by members of the educational process in the classroom, and during this interaction, specific behavioral patterns emerge. These efforts should focus on providing a suitable environment to reach the desired goals by defining the roles of teachers and students and organizing the class environment (chairs, tools,

devices) to create an enjoyable and purposeful learning process. Classroom management is a branch of school management and is a process that aims to provide an effective organization within the classroom (Mokhamara and Abu Samra, 2012, 256).

Operational Definition:

Self-efficacy refers to the confidence and conviction held by the special section teacher about his ability to manage the class for the success of the teaching-learning process through his ability to maintain order, create an interactive atmosphere between pupils, and control their behavior in the class. It is operationally expressed through the score obtained by teachers on the measure of self-efficacy in classroom management created by Mazaini (2019). Its properties were verified in the local environment.

-The Measure Used in the study:

This scale was established by Mazaini (2019) and aims to measure self-efficacy in class management among junior teachers in the intermediate and secondary levels; it was applied to a sample of 293 teachers from the city of Ain Defla. The scale consists of 27 items related to teachers' perceptions of their ability to manage their class, distributed over four dimensions: maintaining order and discipline, positive interaction with students, engaging students, and responding to inappropriate behavior.

The dimension of maintaining order and discipline is represented in items: 2-3-14-21-22-23-24-27.

Positive interaction with students' dimension is represented in items: 4-6-10-11-16-17-18-19-26.

Engaging students' dimension is represented in items: 1-5-8-13-15-20.

Responding to inappropriate behavior is represented in items: 7-9-12-25.

The measure items for this study were designed according to the 5 points Likert scale, which ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The method of correction is as follows:

Table (1) : Method of Correction

	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
Positive	5	4	3	2	1
Negative	1	2	3	4	5

Psychometric Properties:

The scale validity was verified in several ways: validity of the criteria, factorial validity, criteria consistency validity, and internal consistency validity. Correlation coefficients between each item and the level to which it belongs ranged between 0.38 and 0.67, and both are significant at 0.01. The scale's reliability was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which was 0.80.

Psychometric properties of the scale through its application in the local environment:

The researchers verified the psychometric properties of the scale by applying it to a sample of 30 teachers who teach in special sections, and the results are provided below:

Validity: The scale's validity has been verified through the peripheral comparison (Discriminant validity). The scale scores for the pilot study were arranged in descending order; 27% of the upper category and 27% of the lower category were selected, then the differences between the two groups were calculated by a t-test.

Table (2) : The validity of the comparison between the upper group and the lower group on the self-efficacy scale

Number	mean	Standard deviation	t-value	Sig	Significance level	Degree of freedom

Self- efficac y	Lower categor y	8	101.12 5	8.288	-				14
	Upper categor y	8	121.37 5	3.113	6.46 9	0.0 0	0.000		

According to the table, the mean of the upper class on the self-efficacy scale was (121.375), while the mean for the lower group was equal to (101.125). The standard deviation of the higher category is (3.113), and for the lower category, it is (8.288), while the t-value to determine the differences between the two groups attained (-6.469). Based on this, we note that there are differences between the upper group and the lower group at the level of significance (0.05) because the significance (Sig) is (0.00), which is less than (0.05). Thus, the self-efficacy scale has a high degree of validity.

Reliability:

The researchers calculated the scale reliability by applying the Cronbach alpha equation, and the results were as follows:

Table (3) : Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale of self-efficacy in classroom management

Number of items	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
27	0.841

The table shows the value of Cronbach's alpha, equal to (0.841), confirming that the self-efficacy scale is characterized by a high degree of reliability.

3– Results and Discussion

Table (4) : Results of the T test to compare the theoretical mean and level of participants' responses to the measure of self-efficacy in classroom management

measure	Sample size	mean	range	t-test	Degree of freedom	Statistical signifiacne	Estimation level
Self- efficacy	30	111.53	27– 68.99 63– 98.99 99– 135	67.8	29	0.000	high

We notice from the table above that the mean of the study sample was estimated at (111.53), belonging to the range (99–135), meaning the level of estimation is high, and the value of the calculated t-test was (67.78) with a degree of freedom of (29), which is statistically significant at the significance level of 0.01. Accordingly, the level of self-efficacy in classroom management among the study sample is high.

The results of this study are in line with both Al-Rudainiyah study (2017), which indicated a high level of self-efficacy of teachers in Al Batinah North Governorate (Saudi Arabia), and a study by Al-Fakhouri (2018), which indicated a high degree of perceived self-efficacy among teachers of blind students in the Northern governorates of Palestine.

The study conducted by Al-Shehri and Al-Naeem (2020) examined the differences between the self-efficacy of teaching and the general self-efficacy according to several variables. The results demonstrated that both types of

self-efficacy have been achieved moderately. This is similar to Hamidi's study (2019), where the degree of the perceived self-efficacy of special education teachers in the city of Jeddah was average.

Lee, Patterson, and Vega (2011) investigated California special education teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy and its relationship with teacher training quality. The findings revealed that teachers' perceptions indicate a medium efficacy level, which is higher for males and more experienced teachers versus females and less experienced teachers. Moreover, there is a correlation between teachers' perceptions of their self-efficacy and teachers' confidence in the training programs and the acquired knowledge and skills. (Zidane, 2004, 214).

Table (5) : Value of the "t" test to determine the differences in Class management self-efficacy of the study sample due to the variable of experience

experience	Sample size	mean	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	t-test	sig	decision
Less than 5 y experience	25	110.48	8.97	28	-1.459	0.156	insignificant
More than 5y experience	5	116.80	7.98				

Table 5 shows clearly that the mean for the teachers' category of less than five years' experience is (110.48) while for the teachers' category of more than five years' experience, it is (116.80). It can be said that there are differences between the two groups, while the value of the differences t-test attained (-

1.459) at the significance level (0.156), which is a value greater than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, we accept the alternative hypothesis stating that there are no differences related to the variable of experience in classroom management self-efficacy among the sample participants.

The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Jad Al-Rub and Muhammad Abdullah's study (2011), which demonstrated that there were no statistically significant differences in self-efficacy of special education teachers in Taif Governorate according to the specialization, experience, and age. They explain this by the improvement in the training of special education teachers who are trained at the bachelor's and postgraduate levels and supervised by experts. They can become certified teachers only when they successfully complete the academic program, and they also receive training during the service. Therefore, all these innovations led to the fading of differences.

However, our findings are not in line with those of Al-Shehri and Al-Naeem's study (2020), which revealed differences in self-efficacy due to the variable of experience favoring the more experienced teachers. It also does not agree with Hamidi's study (2020), which showed statistically significant differences among special education teachers in the primary, intermediate, and secondary levels due to the variable of experience favoring teachers with more than ten years of experience.

Our findings are also inconsistent with those of Yilmaz's study (2004) that investigated the link between self-efficacy for classroom management among novice and experienced teachers' and students' perceptions of the classroom management ability of their teachers'. Questionnaires and interviews were used for collecting data, and the findings reveal that teachers' efficacy in classroom management is high. Differences were found between novice and experienced teachers in classroom management self-efficacy, whereas no difference was identified in their "efficacy for personal teaching and external influences." As for students, they do not perceive any difference between novice and experienced teachers in terms of classroom management. The study did not find any

“significant relationship “between the levels of efficacy among teachers and the perceptions of students (Yilmaz 2004).

Table (6) : The value of the “T” test to determine the differences in Class management self-efficacy among the participants due to the variable of academic qualification

Academic qualification	Sample size	mean	Standard deviation	Degree of freedom	t-value	Significance level	decision
BA	18	113.94	6.38	28	1.870	0.072	Not significant
MA	12	107.91	11.28				

According to table 6 above, the mean for the academic qualification category of bachelor’s degree is (113.94), and for the academic qualification category of master’s degree, it is (107.91). It can be said that there are differences between the two groups, while the value of the differences t-test reached (1.870) at the significance level (0.072), which is a value greater than the significance level (0.05). Therefore, we accept the alternative hypothesis, which states no differences in classroom management self-efficacy among the study sample participants due to the academic qualification variable.

This study's findings agree with what was indicated in the Al-Rudainiyah study (2017), which revealed no significant differences between the mean scores of the teachers regarding motivation, self-efficacy, and psychological health according to academic qualification in the Sultanate of Oman.

Nevertheless, our findings are not in line with Al-Othman and Al-Ghunaimi’s study (2013) on the self-efficacy of instructors teaching students with autism disorder and their attitudes towards students. The findings revealed statistically significant differences between the mean scores on the self-efficacy scale depending on age, educational level, years of experience, the severity of the disability, and participation in training courses on disability.

Main Findings:

According to this field study on a sample of special sections' teachers, and based on the literature review on self-efficacy in classroom management, we came to the following findings:

– Teachers of special sections (a sample of primary schools in the city of Blida as a case study) have a high level of self-efficacy for classroom management.

There are no differences in classroom management self-efficacy among teachers of special sections attributable to the experience variable.

There are no differences in classroom management self-efficacy among teachers of special sections attributable to the academic qualification variable.

4- Conclusion

This study explored the level of classroom management self-efficacy among teachers of primary special education sections and the differences in this level according to experience and academic qualification. The self-efficacy scale was applied to a sample of teachers of primary special sections in the city of Blida. Findings revealed a high level of self-efficacy among the participants. No differences in self-efficacy related to the teaching experience and the academic qualification variables were detected. As this study was limited to one educational level and one city, we hope that more studies will be conducted on a broader scope such as secondary and higher education levels, including different towns and cities, to promote the inclusion of special-needs people into regular educational settings, which is a recent educational trend, especially in Algeria. Researchers should endeavor to conduct academic scientific research to highlight the three central factors involved in the educational process: the teacher, the student, and the teaching methods, and to address the significant issues related to special education. This would open wide horizons towards greater opportunities and a better future for disabled students.

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