

The relationship between classroom behaviour and teacher efficacy

[Sociology](#)



According to B. F. Skinner (1948) Reinforcement is responsible for response strengthening-increasing the rate of responding or making responses more likely to occur. A reinforcer is any stimulus or event following a response that leads to response strengthening.

Reinforcers are situationally specific: They apply to individuals at given times under given conditions. Students typically find reinforcing such events as teacher praise, free time, privileges, stickers, and high grades. One never can know for certain whether a consequence is reinforcing until it is presented after a response and we see whether behaviour changes. A positive reinforcer is a stimulus that, when presented following a response, increases the future likelihood of the response occurring in that situation. A negative reinforcer is a stimulus that, when removed by a response, increases the future likelihood of the response occurring in that situation.

Self-Efficacy refers to personal beliefs about one's capabilities to learn or perform actions at designated levels. In assessing self-efficacy, individuals assess their skills and their capabilities to translate those skills into actions.

Self-efficacy is a key to promoting a sense of agency in people that they can influence their lives. Self-efficacy and outcome expectations do not have the same meaning.

Self-efficacy refers to perceptions of one's capabilities to produce actions; outcome expectations involve beliefs about the anticipated outcomes of those actions.

Students may believe that a positive outcome will result from certain actions but also believe that they lack the competence to produce those actions.

Bandura defined teacher efficacy as a teacher's " Judgment" of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated.

The study of teacher efficacy is a little over two decades old and began with RAND researchers' evaluation of whether teachers believed they could control the reinforcement of their actions. As stated by Gibson & Dembo, regarding teacher behaviours, efficacious teachers persist with struggling students and criticize less after incorrect student answers.

Teachers with high efficacy tend to experiment with methods of instruction, seek improved teaching methods, and experiment with instructional materials.

As reported by Guskey & Passaro, a teacher might have a high sense of individual efficacy but lower teaching efficacy if he or she believes that most student learning is due to home and environmental factors outside of the teacher's control.

Woolfolk and Hoy (1990) suggested, that, " Researchers have found few consistent relationships between characteristics of teachers and the behaviour or learning of students. Teachers' sense of efficacy ... is an exception to this general rule".

As collective teacher efficacy is strengthened, teachers continue to improve educational opportunities for students. Collective teacher efficacy also seems important for teachers' job satisfaction and retention in teaching.

Retaining teachers in the profession—a critical priority given the teacher shortage in many areas will be aided by creating an environment in which teachers' sense of agency is fostered and their efforts lead to positive changes.”

The growing body of research on teacher self-efficacy suggests that it may account for individual differences in teacher effectiveness.

Teacher self-efficacy has been found to be consistently related to positive teaching behaviour and strong pupil achievement, pupils learn more from teachers who have high self-efficacy, and highly self-efficacious teachers are more likely to use open-ended questions, inquiry methods, or small group learning activities for students.

They are also being more persistent at a task, take more “ Risks”, and are more likely to use innovative elements in their teaching. Teachers with high self-efficacy also are more open to new ideas, more willing to adopt innovations, are less likely to experience burn-out, support pupils' autonomy to a greater extent, and are more attentive to low ability students.

Finally, teachers with high self-efficacy exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have a greater commitment to teaching and are more likely to remain in the teaching profession.