

Exploring Self-esteem of Secondary School Teachers

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Self-esteem is a crucial aspect of human psychology. It encompasses an individual's evaluation of themselves, including feelings of self-worth, competence, and significance. The cognitive, affective and social aspects of teachers may have impact on the holistic development and wellbeing of the learners. The study's objective is to explore the self-esteem of teachers working in secondary schools. The sample consists of 256 secondary school teachers in Imphal West, Manipur. Self-esteem Scale developed by (Aricak, 1999) is used as tool for data collection. The data are processed, analysed and interpreted using appropriate statistical methods. The findings of the study revealed that secondary school teachers had moderate self-esteem. The study also did not identify any noteworthy disparities in self-esteem among secondary school teachers when considering gender, subject specialization, or teaching experience.

Keywords: Self-esteem, secondary school, secondary school teacher

Exploring Self-esteem of Secondary School Teachers

Self-esteem is a psychological and sociological construct, and researchers have identified it as a key factor in predicting various outcomes, including academic success. Self-esteem refers to an individual's global evaluation of their own worthiness. Barden (1994) mentioned self-esteem as the amount of genuine, honest respect one has for oneself and confidence in one's ability to achieve personal values, to think, manage challenges, and succeed. Individuals with high self-esteem tend to experience a range of positive results, such as better adjustment, more positive feelings, greater self-regulation, and more effective strategies for managing stress. Conversely, low self-esteem is often connected to negative consequences like depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Teachers with high self-esteem are more likely to adopt innovative teaching methods and overcome challenges, which can enhance their competency and job

satisfaction (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Teachers are pivotal to the educational system and their self-esteem may influence towards the behavioural and overall personality development of learner.

Secondary school teachers play a crucial role in shaping the development and well-being of adolescents. The substantial effect of the bond between teachers and students on student achievements has been a subject of research (Stewart, 2015). Teachers with high self-esteem are more likely to foster positive behaviours and attitudes in their students (Scott, 1996). Self-esteem is essential for both personal and social success. Research indicates a link between high self-esteem in teachers and positive outcomes such as greater teaching effectiveness, improved student achievement, and more positive relationships with students (Christou et al., 2001). On the other hand, low self-esteem among teachers has been associated with negative issues like

depression, difficulty concentrating, and feelings of hopelessness (Beer, 1987). Low self-esteem teacher may exhibit negative attitudes and engage in behaviours such as bullying (Zembar & Gursoy, 2012; Twemlow et al., 2006). Secondary school teachers are working with adolescents, and a positive self-esteem can lead to a more positive outlook and better problem-solving skills, benefiting both the teacher and their students.

Tabassum and Ali (2012) indicated a gender-based difference, with female teachers exhibiting higher professional self-esteem, but found no impact from subject stream or urban/rural setting. In contrast, Shah and Pathak (2014) determined that gender and teaching experience were not significant predictors of teachers' perceived self-esteem. Malathy and Nataraj (2018) reported that while secondary school teachers generally have average self-esteem, differences in self-esteem may exist among subgroups defined by gender and teaching experience. Results from the work of Vidhya and Subramaniam (2019) revealed significant differences in self-esteem among prospective teachers based on gender and medium of instruction. However, no significant differences were found in self-esteem among prospective teachers in terms of residence, marital status, academic qualification, or academic stream. Hatim and Shakir (2021) investigated the connection between professional commitment and self-esteem among secondary teachers. They concluded that gender and teaching experience had no significant impact on their self-esteem. Preetha George (2022) assessed relationships of the self-esteem of prospective teachers from different universities in Kerala with demographic variables. The study found that the majority of prospective teachers exhibited average self-esteem. Additionally, the research indicated that demographic factors influence the self-esteem of these future educators.

Perumal (2022), however, reported high self-esteem among prospective secondary teachers, with most demographic factors (gender, subject, student generation) showing no significant impact, except for the year of study.

Hypotheses of the Study

- H¹ - There is no high level of self-esteem among teachers at secondary schools.
- H² - No statistically significant variation in self-esteem exists among secondary school teachers by gender.
- H³ - Self-esteem levels among secondary school teachers are not significantly different based on subject stream.
- H⁴ - Teaching experience has no significant effect on secondary school teachers' self-esteem.

Method

Sample

The population of the study consists of secondary school teachers from Imphal west district and a sample of 256 teachers by adopting random sampling method. The teachers are categorized as male and female, teachers having less than 10 years as less experienced and teachers having equal to and greater than 10 years of teaching experience as experienced teacher, in stream as science and non-science teachers. The study is delimited to secondary school teachers of Imphal district only and data is obtained through only standardized tool.

Measure

This research employed a standardized self-esteem scale created by Aricak in 1999. The instrument evaluated five key aspects of self-esteem: "self-value, self-confidence, depressive effect, self-sufficiency, and success & productivity".

Results

H¹: There is no high level of self-esteem among teachers at secondary schools.

The results in table-1 shows that maximum number of secondary school teachers are having in the moderate range. Therefore, the assumption that secondary school teachers do not possess high levels of self-esteem has been supported. Consequently, the initial hypothesis (Ho1) is confirmed.

Table 1. Self-esteem levels of teachers at Secondary Schools

N	Low	Moderate	High
256	13.30%	70.70%	16.00%

H²: No statistically significant variation in self-esteem exists among secondary school teachers by gender.

Table 2. Mean scores of Self-esteems of Teachers at Secondary Schools by gender.

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E. Mean	t(254)	p-value
Male	90	112.1	10.65	1.22	0.08	0.93
Female	166	112.2	11.24	0.87		

The calculated mean scores of male and female teachers are 112.1 and 112.2 are found to be almost similar. The calculated value of 't' at 0.05 significance level and 254 degree of freedom is found to be 0.08 which is lower than the tabulated value of 1.97. So, the null hypothesis (Ho2) is accepted. Hence, there is no statistically significant variation in self-esteem among secondary school teachers by gender.

H³: Self-esteem levels among secondary school teachers are not significantly different based on subject stream.

The mean scores of science and non-science teachers are found to be 110.7 and 112.4. The calculated 't' value at 0.05 significance level and of 254 degree of freedom is found to be -1.942 which is lower

than the tabulated value 1.97. So, the null hypothesis (Ho3) is accepted. Therefore, self-esteem levels among secondary school teachers are not significantly different based on stream i.e. science and non-science secondary school teachers.

Table 3. Mean scores of Self-esteems of Science and Non-Science Teachers at Secondary Schools

Stream	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E. Mean	t(254)	p-value
Science	111	110.7	11.43	1.08	-1.942	0.53
Non-science	145	112.4	10.58	0.88		

H⁴: Teaching experience has no significant effect on secondary school teachers' self-esteem.

Statistical analysis given in table-4 revealed mean self-esteem scores of 113.3 for experienced secondary school teachers and 110.3 for their less experienced counterparts. The computed t-statistic (1.714) did not exceed the critical t-value (1.97) at a 0.05 significance level with 254 degrees of freedom. This outcome supports the null hypothesis, indicating that teaching experience does not have a statistically significant impact on the self-esteem of secondary school teachers. Consequently, no meaningful difference in self-esteem was observed between experienced and less experienced teachers.

Table 4. Mean scores of Self-esteems of Experienced and Less Experienced Teachers at Secondary Schools

Teaching Experience	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E. Mean	t(254)	p-value
Experienced	131	113.3	11.26	0.98	1.714	0.088
Less experienced	125	110.3	10.66	0.95		

Findings

- The self-esteem of teachers in the secondary schools of Imphal West district, Manipur is moderate.
- Regarding gender, subject stream, and experience, no substantial differences were observed in the self-esteem of secondary teachers in the Imphal West district, Manipur.

Discussion

Present study found that 70.70% of teachers exhibited moderate self-esteem, while only 13.30% had high self-esteem. This finding aligns with the findings of Sahoo et al. (2022), Malathy and Nataraj (2018), and George (2022), who also reported average or normal self-esteem levels among teachers. However, our results differ from those of Perumal (2022), who found high self-esteem among prospective secondary teachers. Furthermore, the study revealed that gender, experience, and stream did not significantly influence teachers' self-esteem in the secondary schools. This second revelation is largely consistent with previous research by George (2022), Perumal (2022), Vidhya and Subramonian (2019), Hatim and Shakir (2021), Shah and Pathak (2014), Zafar et al. (2014), and Reilly et al. (2014). However, only Vidhya and Subramonian (2019), Tabassum and Ali (2012), and Tabassum (2012) found differences in teacher self-esteem with respect to gender. With respect to other demographic variables, their findings are aligned with ours.

Conclusion

This study assessed the self-esteem of secondary school teachers, examining its relationship with gender, experience, and academic stream. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge on the self-esteem of secondary school teachers in Manipur. From a theoretical perspective, this research also clarifies existing literature on the self-esteem

of secondary school teachers and its connection to demographic variables. This information can be valuable for future researchers developing theoretical models that explore the connection between self-esteem and key aspects of the teacher work environment, such as productivity, attitude, and competence. Future research could expand upon this study in several ways. Expanding the study to include other districts of Manipur would provide a more comprehensive understanding of secondary school teachers' self-esteem across the state. Furthermore, future research could explore self-esteem among teachers at other educational levels, such as primary, higher secondary, or tertiary education. Finally, a comparative study could examine the correlation of self-esteem levels between different districts, potentially revealing regional variations and contributing factors.

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