

INVESTIGATING TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY AMONG NCOE-TRAINED TEACHERS IN EASTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA

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This study examines the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers trained at Sri Lanka's National Colleges of Education (NCOEs) currently employed in the Eastern Province. The study employs a survey research design using a quantitative approach. Utilizing the stratified sampling technique, 230 trained teachers were selected from 2332 trained teachers in the Eastern Province. The study utilized the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) to assess self-efficacy in student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Analysis revealed interesting patterns. Teachers reported the highest mean score (7.21) for self-efficacy in classroom management, indicating a moderate to high level of confidence in this area. Scores for student engagement (5.62) and instructional strategies (5.84) suggest teachers are "somewhat confident" in these domains. This suggests that NCOE programs effectively equip teachers with classroom management skills, but there may be room for improvement in fostering student engagement and implementing diverse instructional strategies. Furthermore, the study found no statistically significant differences in self-efficacy beliefs based on teacher gender. These findings regarding gender are noteworthy as they differ from some previous research. Further investigation is needed to understand the reasons behind this discrepancy and explore the factors influencing self-efficacy beliefs among male and female NCOE-trained teachers in Sri Lanka. This research contributes to a better understanding of teacher self-efficacy in the Sri Lankan context. Based on these findings, the study recommends tailoring NCOE programs to address student engagement and instructional strategies, establishing mentorship and professional development opportunities, and highlighting successful teachers as role models. By implementing these recommendations, teacher training institutions can empower teachers with the confidence and skills needed to create a more effective and engaging learning environment for students in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province. Therefore, it is recommended that teacher training programs incorporate strategies to enhance self-efficacy beliefs, particularly among female teachers. Training institutions like NCOEs focus on developing teachers' self-efficacy in teaching specific subjects, and continuous professional development initiatives should be implemented to support and strengthen teachers' self-efficacy beliefs.

Keywords: Teacher, self-efficacy beliefs, instructional strategies, student engagement, classroom management