

## **INVESTIGATING THE COORELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEVEL OF SELF-EFFICACY AND GENDER**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Self-efficacy defined as people's belief about their capabilities to produce designated level of performance that exercise influences over events that affect their lives (Bandura 1977). Self-efficacy plays a vital role in students' lives and future. The reduction and improvement of self-efficacy will contribute towards their achievement in life. This present study was designed to investigate three main objectives. First, it examines the level of self-efficacy among secondary students. Second, it explores whether there is a statistically significant difference in the level of self-efficacy between male and female school students. Third, is there any correlation between self-efficacy and gender. A total of 122 students sampled from two schools in Muar participated in the survey, employing a 22-item questionnaire measuring General Self-efficacy (GSE) and Fertment Self-efficacy Scale. The items were pilot-tested before being administered to the respondents. The data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics, independent-samples t-tests and Pearson's product-moment correlation tests. The result showed that the majority of students experience a moderate level of self-efficacy. Regarding the comparison level of self-efficacy between male and female, the findings of the current study shows that, there are significant differences for both gender. In addition, with regards to the correlations between self-efficacy and gender, the study revealed that there are positive correlations.

**Keyword:** Self-efficacy, students, Gender

## **INTRODUCTION**

Self-efficacy defined as confidence in one's capability for organizing and implementing the cognitive, behavioral, or social skills necessary for successful performance of a task (Brunning, Colvin & Shell, 1995). It also refers to the people's belief about their capabilities to produce designated level of performance that exercise influences over events that affect their lives.(Bandura 1977). Self-efficacy plays a vital role in students' lives and future. The reduction and improvement of self-efficacy will contribute towards their achievement in life.

Students with low or high level of self-efficacy will display different attitudes in learning. Study done by Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, and Khalaileh (2011) have shown that when students have low level of self-efficacy, they have the potential to commit discipline problems at school. The self-efficacy which is centred in the mind, works to control the attention of the human discipline (Ashley & Rittmayer, 2003). These concepts were supported by Sanders and Wooley (2005). They investigated that self-efficacy is the best predictor of discipline problems. Thus, self-efficacy has the potential to guide human actions and behaviours. Students, who have high level of self-efficacy, will have more awareness about their learning and they will not commit discipline problems. From this statement, it could be understood that self-efficacy can be described as the key factor and cause of discipline problems. Therefore, it is important for the researcher to investigate students' self-efficacy.

### **Self-efficacy and gender**

Several studies report significant differences on level of self-efficacy between gender. Abdullah et al. (2006) conducted research on relationship between students' self efficacy and their English language achievement. In this study one of the variable that they investigate is gender. From the descriptive-correlational that conducted on 1,146 students from eight secondary schools in the

Petaling district, Selangor, they found that girls have higher self efficacy rather than boys. It revealed that there is statistically significant and there is a relationship between gender with the p-value 0.006. Besides that, McKenzie (1999), also found similar finding when he investigate that there is positive correlation between gender and level of self-efficacy. This finding based on his analysis using Pearson coefficient in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social; Sciences). Furthermore Tenaw (2013), also consistence with McKenzie in his study, when he find that there is significant difference in their self-efficacy between sexes. This find result from calculating using Pearson correlation.

However, in 2013, Shikullaku done on study about “The Relationship between Self – efficacy and Academic Performance in the Context of Gender among Albanian Students” sample for analysis The study consisted of 180 students, 78 men (43%) and 102 women (57%) with the participants age ranged from 19 to 31 years. In this study he found that there is no significant difference level of self-efficacy between male and female. In additions, abd-Elmotalieb and Saha (2013) revealed in their study that self-efficacy have negative significant relationship with sexes. The study was concerning about the link between perceived academic and mediating influence of academic self-efficacy on the climate and academic performance among students.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVE**

Generally, the purpose of this study is to determine the level of self-efficacy among secondary school students.

Specifically this study is going to:

1. To examine the level of self-efficacy possessed secondary school students.
2. To examine the differences level of self-efficacy between male and female secondary school students.
3. To investigate the correlations between level of self-efficacy and gender

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of self-efficacy possessed by secondary student's school?
2. Is there any significant difference in levels of self-efficacy between male and female secondary school students?
3. Are there any significant correlations between self-efficacy and students gender?

## METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher will use a quantitative research design. In order to collect data, the questionnaire, consisting of the informed consent letter, demographic background of participants, General Self-efficacy (GSE), Fertment Self-efficacy Scale will be distributed to all population. From the total population of two public the researcher will use a systematic random sampling to obtain 122 samples. The data obtained, will be analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social; Sciences) software. In analysing the data, the researcher will use descriptive statistic Independent t-test and Pearson's product-moment correlation tests.

## RESULT

Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of students. Out of the 122 students, 62 students, which is 50.8% of form two students and 60 which is 44.2% of Form four students. In terms of their gender, there were 65 male and 57 female students and they made up 53.3% and 46.7% of the sample respectively.

### *What is the level of self-efficacy possessed by secondary student's school?*

The mean score obtained will be compared with the range of 1 to 4 to determine the level of self-efficacy among the participants. The levels of self-efficacy can be categorized into three categories; low, intermediate and high. Table 2 shows the categories of self-efficacy level based on their mean score. Next, the level of self-efficacy among secondary students is shown in Table 3 and

the findings showed that 27.0 % (n=33) were at the high level while 3.3% (n=4) were at the low level. The highest score was at the intermediate level with 69.7% (n=85).

***Is there any significant difference in levels of self-efficacy between male and female students?***

Next, analyses were carried out to identify the level of self-efficacy among male and female students. From the descriptive analysis done on the male and female students, it showed that both the form two and form four students had intermediate mean level of self-efficacy with 2.62 (SD=0.36) and 2.91 (SD= 0.39) respectively. This indicated that the female students in had higher self-efficacy than their male students. The p-value .001 probability were smaller than the alpha level of 0.05. Thus, the result was statistically significant and reject the null hypothesis. It could be concluded that there was a significant difference in the level of self-efficacy between male and female students

***Are there any significant correlations between self-efficacy and students gender?***

Pearson's correlation procedures run on the summated scores of self-efficacy and gender constructs showed statistically significant positive relationships among them. The respondents' self-efficacy was significantly and positively correlated with gender ( $r = .361, p = .001$ ). However, the strength of associations among them was week. The results show that gender linearly correlated with self-efficacy, and affected the overall self-efficacy.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

The result found in this research has explained that majority of the students have a intermeditae level of self-efficacy. With the percentages 69.7% (n=85). Even though there are a few students who has a low self-efficacy but the percentage is small, less than five percent as compared to the whole sample.

In additions, its should be noted there is significant difference level of self-efficacy between male and female students. It indicated that the female students in had higher self-efficacy than their male students. This finding consistency with Abdullah et, al. (2006). In relations to the Pearson correlation coefficient about self-efficacy and gender presented positive relationship. This finding is inconsistency with some researches cited in the literature review. abd-Elmotaleb and Saha (2013); Shikullaku (2013) founded that there is negative significant between self-efficacy and gender.

Initially, the result of current study supports the finding of Tenaw (2013), when he reported that gender have a positive significant toward self-efficacy. In addition, McKenzie (1999) agreed that there is significant level of self-efficacy between 15 females students in Church of St. Stephen School as compared to the 16 males students.

## CONCLUSIONS

The current study revealed that most of the students experience intermediate level of self-efficacy. Referring to the comparative level of self-efficacy between males and females school students, shows there is significant difference. In additions this study, it also found that, there is a positive correlation between self-efficacy and gender. For further research may be conducted in other areas, using larger samples and qualitative methods.

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## TABLES

**Table 1**  
Demographic Characteristic of Students

Variables	Frequency	Percentages (%)
<b>Level of Study</b>		
Lower level	62	50.8%
Upper level	60	49.2%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	65	53.3%
Female	57	46.7%

**Table 2**  
Divisions of Students' Self- efficacy

Mean Score obtained	Level of self-efficacy
1.00 - 2.00	Low
2.01 - 3.00	Intermediate
3.01 – 4.00	High

**Table 3**  
Level of self-efficacy among secondary school students

Level of Self-efficacy	n	%
High	33	27.0%
Intermediate	85	69.7%
Low	4	3.3%
n	122	

**Table 4**  
t-test on mean total self-efficacy scores for between male and female school students.

Level of Study	n	Mean	SD	P
Male	65	2.62	0.36	.001
Female	57	2.91	0.39	

\*\* .Significant at the 0.5 alpha level

**Table 5**  
Pearson product moment correlation: Self-efficacy scores and gender

Relationship Between Variable	Correlation Coefficient ( <i>r</i> )	p-value	Strength of Association
Self-efficacy scores and gender	.361	.001*	Weak