



How Confident are our Pre Service Teachers of Primary Training Colleges - A Peep into the Effect of Academic Performance on the Confidence Levels

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Abstract

Confidence is an imperative attribute for teacher quality. A confident teacher is able to transact the curriculum in an effective manner and this plays a role in enhancing the achievement of students. The main objective of the research is to study the effect of achievement with reference to gender and area on the confidence level of pre service teachers of primary training colleges. The study draws its sample from the primary training colleges of Gujarat Region. The sample is drawn through stratified random sampling technique and consists of 320 pre service teachers. Survey method is employed to carry out the research. Tool of the study is Pre service Teachers Confidence Scale developed by Sharma D. (2010). The reliability coefficient of the scale through test retest is 0.82. It is a five point rating scale having 50 statements. Main components of the scale are content, teaching work, teaching commitment, co-curricular activities, behavior with colleagues and evaluation competencies. The study found that 37% of the Preservice teachers contained Good confidence level and 58% of teachers have medium confidence level. Only 4% of teachers had very good confidence level. Significant difference was observed in the confidence of Pre service male as well as the female high and low academic achievers belonging to urban area and the confidence of high academic achievers is found to be more as compared to that of low academic achievers. Further no significant difference was observed in case of Pre service male as well as the female high and low academic achievers belonging to rural area.

Keywords: Academic Differences, Achievement, Gender Differences, Regional Differences, Pre service teachers, Confidence level.

Introduction

Primary teaching has being a matter of concern since Independence. Indian government has continuously put in efforts and funds to promote primary education in the country. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for primary education and recent Right to Education Act are some of the glaring examples of intensity of the determinations exhibited by the governments. Recent drives for appointing primary teacher has motivated lots of students to pursue minimum teacher qualification courses like Diploma in Primary Education, Bachelor of Education and other in-service and pre service programs and trainings.

In such a situation it becomes important to focus not only on the basic teaching competencies of the teachers but also on their soft skills like communication and presentation skills .Confidence level plays an important role in enhancing the self-esteem of a person and also in improving the soft skills. Confidence is a self-assuredness that arises out of competence in subject matter, knowledge of young children and practice. Confidence develops from mastery experience, vicarious experience, persuasion and psychological states (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1993). Teachers with high self-confidence have been proved to be effective in transacting the curriculum and self confidence levels has significant effect on teaching (Kalain& Freeman, 1994). Confidence also helps to determine ones action (Sodak&Podell, 1996). Beginning teachers does not know the subject in a way that allows them to teach in a better way (Reynold, 1995). This results in low confidence among the pre service teachers.

Thus the purpose of this study is to study the effect of confidence on the academic performance of the pre service teachers. The study aims to gain an insight into difference in academic performance that may occur due to the different confidence levels among the pre service teachers. The study also explores this difference with reference to region and gender.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the confidence of pre service teachers of Primary Teacher Training College.
2. To investigate the effect of high and low achievement on the confidence of Pre service teachers of Primary Teacher Training College with reference to gender.
3. To investigate the effect of high and low achievement on the confidence of Pre service teachers of Primary Teacher Training College with reference to area.

Hypothesis of the Study

Ho₁ There shall be no significant difference in the confidence scale scores of the male pre service teachers having high and low achievement studying in Primary Teacher Training College of urban area.

Ho₂ There shall be no significant difference in the confidence scale scores of the female pre service teachers having high and low achievement studying in Primary Teacher Training Colleges of urban area.

Ho₃ There shall be no significant difference in the confidence scale scores of the male pre service teachers having high and low achievement studying in Primary Teacher Training Colleges of rural area.

Ho₄ There shall be no significant difference in the confidence scale scores of the female pre service teachers having high and low achievement studying in Primary Teacher Training Colleges of rural area.

Research Review

Confidence

Confidence has been variously defined and widely linked to different psychological attributes. It is, "a set of attitudes, judgments that a person brings with him or herself when facing the world. It includes beliefs as to whether he or she can expect success or failure" (Coppersmith (1981) as cited in Harris, 2009,p.9). It may be referred as a set of attitudes and beliefs that one has towards the self. General self-confidence is developed during the age of childhood and emerges from the accumulation of inter and intrapersonal experiences (Harris, 2009; Brown, 1994).

Academic Performance

Academic Performance is mostly demonstrated in terms of examination performance (Cambridge University Reporter, 2003), examination grades at the end of a particular semester program (Okah, 2010), observable or measurable behaviour of a person (Simpson & Weiner, 1989). Academic performance is mostly measured through the written or oral tests conducted during various assessment periods in an academic year.

Confidence and Academic Performance

Review of literature reveals that self- confidence as an attribute develops as a result of interaction between several factors including personal experiences and social interaction. Researches have proved that self-confidence also influences learning to a great extent and it may assist or hinder academic performance.. No language learning activities will be carried out successfully without it (Huitt, 2004&Khodadad, 2003, cited in Hayti 2008,; Brown, 1994). When there is low self-confidence, learners suffer from uncertainty, insecurity, fear and social distance". (Rubio,2007, p.7). "Students' self-confidence is clearly related to students' activities and academic results" (Jakobsson (2006)

Further a teacher is required to have strong oratory skills which will help the teacher communicate effectively and interact effectually in the class with the students. Oral communication is, "an interactive process in which an individual alternately takes the roles of speaker and listener"(Yamani et al, 2013). Psychological factors like fear of making mistakes, shyness, and lack of confidence hinder student from speaking (Juhana, 2012). There are significant effects of anxiety and self-confidence on L2 learners' oral performance" (Park and Lee, 2004). There is a positive, significant correlation between general self-confidence and academic achievement and oral

achievement (Mohammad, 2012). Motivation and linguistic self-confidence do have an impact on oral interaction (Molberg, 2010).

Student confidence is correlated with the academic performance (Shoemaker, 2008) and Self-confidence also strongly influences achievement during high school careers. (Tavani&Losh, 2003). Rahimi and Farvardin (2009) found high correlations between self-confidence and teacher evaluation.

Thus it becomes imperative to say that teacher confidence plays an important role in enhancing the abilities to transact curriculum in the class. A measure of teacher confidence in some way is related to the effectiveness of classroom teaching which in turn may be linked to the types of students that we are producing year after year.

Type and Area of Research

The present study is behavioral research as the results can be applied in practice. Further the study belongs to the area of psychological testing as it attempts to study the confidence level of primary teachers. Since the sample selected is pre service teachers the study can be attributed to primary level of education.

Population and Sample of Study

The population of the study is 2100 pre service teachers studying in 40 primary teacher training colleges of Gujarat.

The sample of the study is 320 (200 male and 120 female) primary Pre service teachers studying in first year of seven primary teacher training colleges of Banaskantha region of Gujarat India.ⁱ The sample was selected through stratified random sampling technique.

Variables of the Study

Table 1: Variables of the Study

1	Independent Variable	
	Achievement	High Achievement
		Low Achievement
	Gender	Male Pre service teachers
		Female Pre service teachers
	Area	Urban
		Rural
2	Dependent Variable	Pre service teachers Confidence

Tool of the Study

- Primary Pre service Teachers' Self Confidence Scale developed by Sharma D. (2010) was used as the tool for the study.

- The scale measures self-confidence on – content, teaching work, teaching commitment, co-curricular activities, behavior with colleagues and evaluation competencies. Scoring was done on five point rating scale.
- Primary Pre service Teachers' Self Confidence Scale has twenty five negative and twenty five positive statements with a five point rating scale. The scoring for positive statements is 5,4,3,2,1, and for negative statements is 1,2,3,4,5.
- Reliability coefficient of Primary Pre service Teachers' Confidence Scale by test retest method is 0.82. This value indicates that the inventory had a good reliability.
- The tool has established face validity.

Method of Research

Present study utilized survey method of research for collecting the data. The scale was administered in the pre-defined primary teacher training colleges. Prior permission for administering the test was taken. The subjects were given the scale after establishing a rapport with them. The data collected was tabulated and exposed to statistical treatment.

Statistical Treatment of the Data

The quantitative data was processed and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequency distribution and histogram was prepared from the data. Hypothesis was tested using t test in Excel tool pack.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution for Urban Pre service Male and Female Low and High Academic Achievers on Confidence Level

Frequency Interval	High Academic Achievement Male	Low Academic Achievement Male	Cumulative Frequency	High Academic Achievement Female	Low Academic Achievement Female	Cumulative Frequency
221-230	1	0	1	1	1	2
211-220	1	2	3	3	1	4
201-210	6	4	10	4	3	7
191-200	8	2	10	6	4	10
181-190	8	5	13	10	3	13
171-180	5	6	11	7	7	14
161-170	8	7	15	2	7	9
151-160	4	11	15	12	12	24
141-150	1	16	17	5	10	15
131-140	0	5	5	0	2	2
	42	58	100	50	50	100

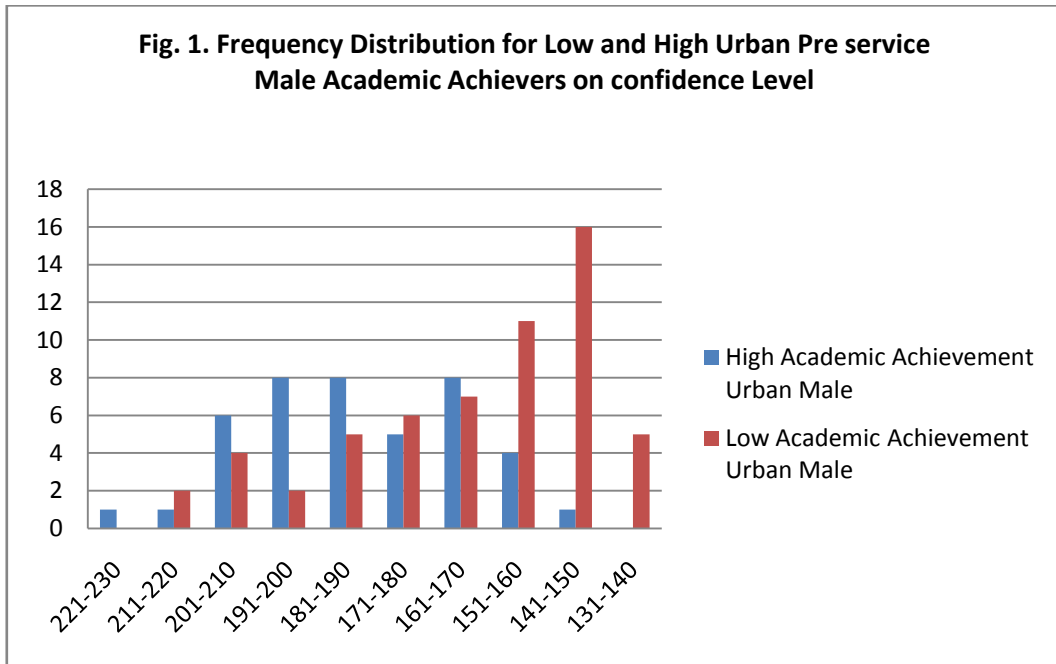


Fig. 1 Frequency Distribution for Urban Pre service Male High and Low Academic Achievers on confidence Level

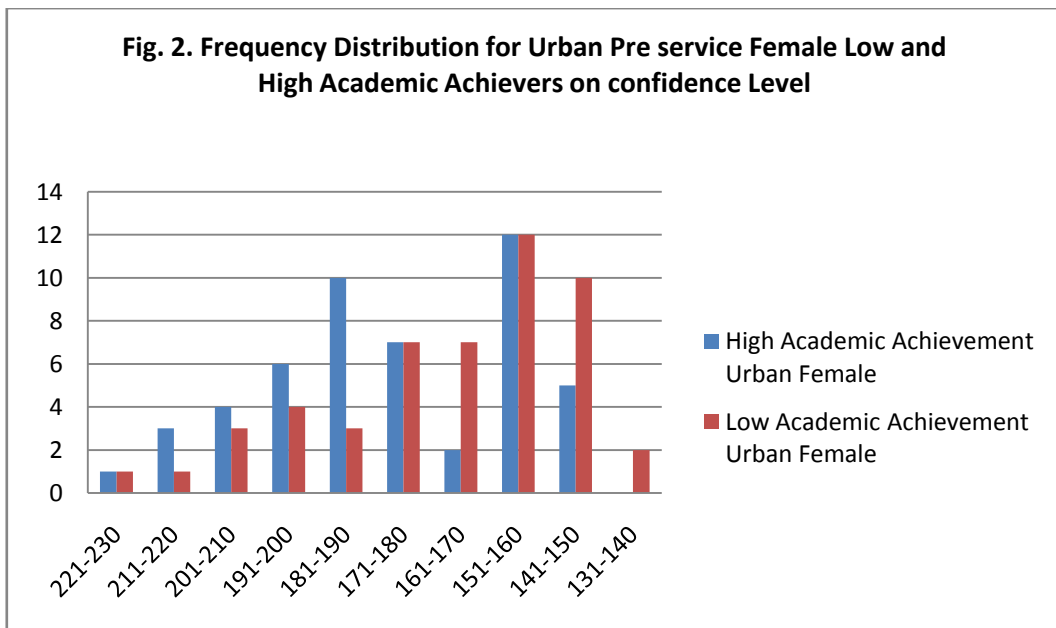


Fig. 2 Frequency Distribution for Urban Pre Service Female High and Low Academic Achievers on Confidence Level

Table 3: Frequency Distribution for Rural Pre Service Male and Female High and Low Academic Achievers on Confidence Level

Frequency Interval	High Academic Achievement Male	Low Academic Achievement Male	Cumulative Frequency	High Academic Achievement Female	Low Academic Achievement Female	Cumulative Frequency
231-240	0	0	0	0	1	1
221-230	0	0	0	0	0	0
211-220	0	1	1	0	1	1
201-210	2	0	2	0	1	1
191-200	1	3	4	2	2	4
181-190	2	1	3	5	2	7
171-180	4	1	5	7	0	7
161-170	6	2	8	6	2	8
151-160	9	9	18	12	6	18
141-150	7	9	16	5	7	12
131-140	1	2	3	0	1	1
	32	28	60	37	23	60

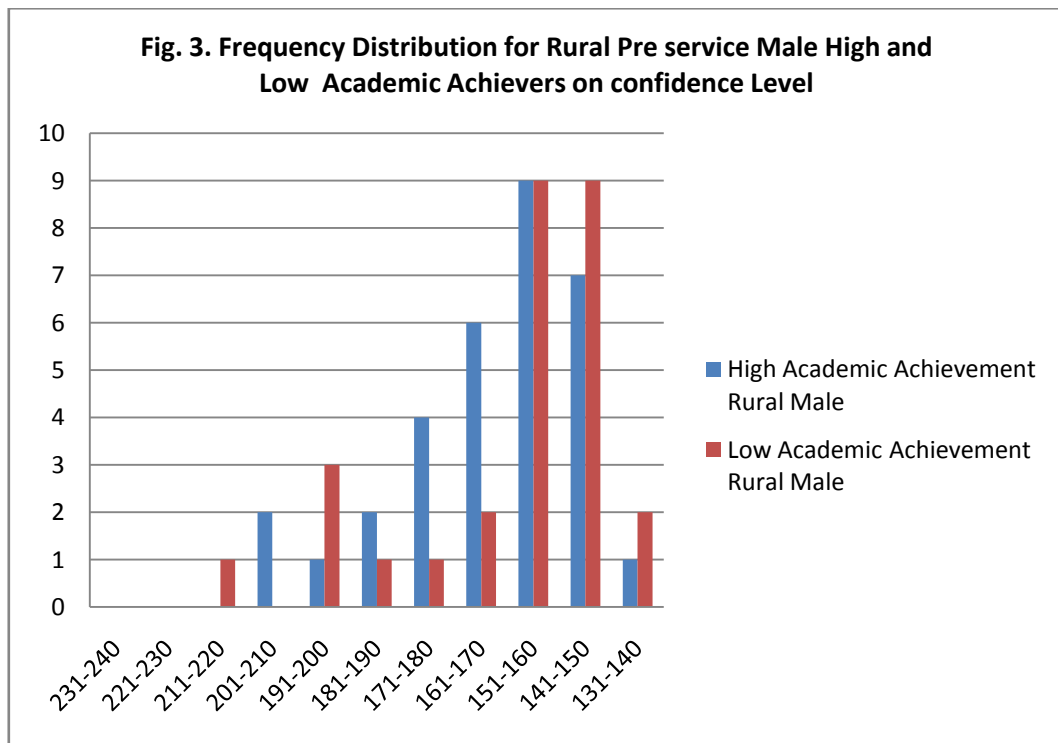


Fig. 3 Frequency Distribution for Rural Pre Service Male High and Low Academic Achievers on Confidence Level

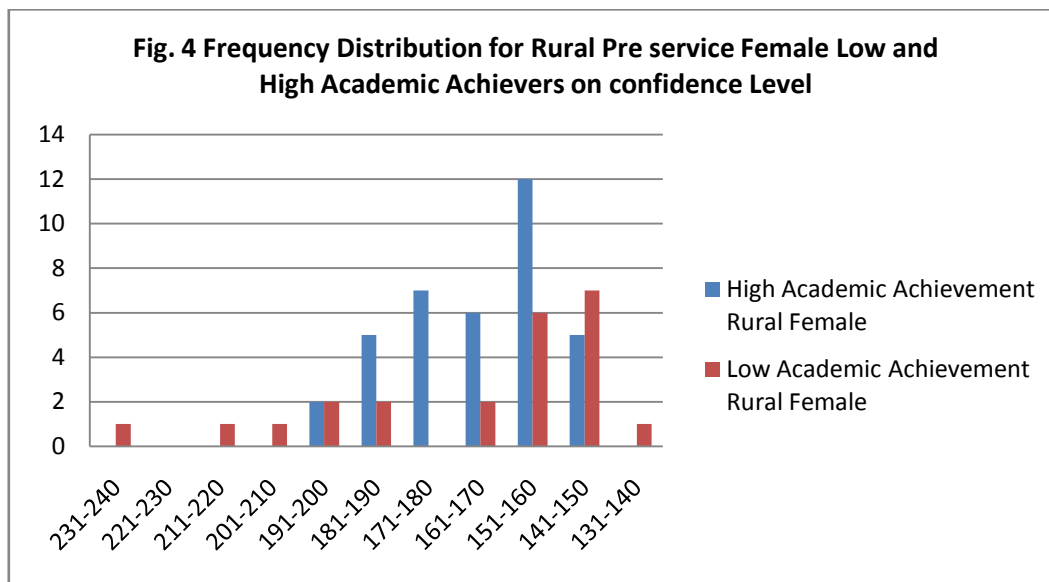


Fig. 4 Frequency Distribution for Rural Pre service Female High and Low Academic Achievers on confidence Level

Verification of Hypothesis: Effect of Achievement, Region and Gender on the Confidence Level of Pre service teachers

Hypotheses were verified in order to study the differences in confidence level with reference to high and low achievement. Mean, standard deviation, standard error of deviation, t value and its significance level were calculated in order to study the effect.

Table 4: Effect of Achievement, Region and Gender on the Confidence Level of Pre service Female and Male High and Low Academic Achievers

	Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	SED	t Value	Significance
Ho₁	Urban Male H.A.	42	182.55	18.56	2.86	4.49	S
	Urban Male L.A.	58	163.86	21.83			
Ho₂	Urban Female H.A.	50	178.32	21.95	3.10	2.50	S
	Urban Female L.A.	50	167.30	22.07			
Ho₃	Rural Male H.A.	32	164.19	17.45	3.09	0.99	NS
	Rural Male L.A.	28	159.36	20.50			
Ho₄	Rural Female H.A.	37	164.62	14.25	2.34	0.53	NS
	Rural Female L.A.	23	167.43	26.62			

From Table 4 it can be inferred that Ho₁ and Ho₂ are rejected while Ho₃ and Ho₄ are not rejected. Thus it is inferred that there is significant difference in the confidence of Pre service male and female high and low academic achievers belonging to urban area.

Further it is also inferred that there is no significant difference in the confidence of Pre service male and female high and low academic achievers belonging to rural area.

Results & Discussion

1. There is difference in the confidence of Pre service male high and low academic achievers belonging to urban area and the confidence of high academic achievers is found to be more as compared to that of low academic achievers.
2. There is difference in the confidence of Pre service female high and low academic achievers belonging to urban area and the confidence of high academic achievers is found to be more as compared to that of low academic achievers.
3. There is no difference in the confidence of Pre service male high and low academic achievers belonging to rural area. Further the mean confidence level of high academic achievers is found to be more as compared to that of low academic achievers.
4. There is no difference in the confidence of Pre service female high and low academic achievers belonging to rural area. Further the mean confidence level of low academic achievers is found to be more as compared to that of high academic achievers.

The reviews discussed earlier show different results by different researchers highlighting the need of further study in this area. It was found that self-confidence of females is lower than that of the males in achievement situation (Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974; Lenney, 1977). In another study no difference was found in the female and male student's perception of interpersonal self-confidence but significant differences were found between self-confidence and gender identity (Zuckerman, 1985; Chusmir, Koberg & Stecher, 1992). Studies have attributed gender gap to psychological factors particularly role of confidence (Bertrand, 2011). The study here clearly reveals significant impact of achievement on the confidence level of urban male and female pre service teachers. Interestingly achievement level does not appear to effect confidence of rural male and female pre service teachers. Thus the different results highlight the need to further study the effect of intervening variables on the confidence of the pre service teachers.

Educational Implications

The study highlights the differences in confidence of the Pre service teachers belonging to rural and urban areas. It reveals that the competing environment of the urban areas develops more anxiety and unease among the pre service teachers and thus creates an impact on them. This further affects their transacting ability in the classroom. These differences further percolates into difference in performance in the class. Thus there is a need to provide stimulating teaching learning environment and more opportunities of classroom exposures so that the low achievers may gain confidence in presentation and communication skills. This will help them improve their teaching and transacting skills.

Further confidence of Urban Pre service High achievers Male >Urban Pre service High achievers Female>Urban Pre service low achievers Female =Rural Pre service low achievers Female>Rural

Pre service High achievers Female>Rural Pre service High achievers Male>Urban Pre service low achievers male>>Rural Pre service low achievers male. Interestingly both rural and urban pre service low achievers female score better on the confidence levels as compared to rural pre service high achievers male and female as well as urban and rural pre service low achievers male.

Thus there is a need to further probe the factors affecting the confidence level besides achievement levels, region and gender. High confidence scores of rural and urban pre service low achievers female can be attributed to their extrovert personality and opportunities to participate in the co-curricular activities during the pre-service program.

In spite of all this there is a need to provide the diverse teaching learning environments along with the content enrichment opportunities in rural as well as urban areas so as that confidence can be developed among Pre service teachers. This can be achieved by enhancing the training provided on content mastery and micro teaching skills. Further there is a need to provide hands on experiences in communication skills and personality development. There is also a need to provide more exposure towards organization of co-curricular activities and evaluation techniques.

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