



Assertiveness of Prospective Teachers

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Abstract:

This study was done in order to review the level of assertiveness of our aspiring and upcoming teachers. According to Cartensen et al., social competence (including assertiveness) constitutes a generic precursor that could be utilized to identify prospective teachers who might need further support to overcome the challenges of teaching. Therefore, being an assertive teacher helps s/he to be confident in their teaching, classroom management, keep up professional ethics, and serve as a good role model for their students. This study was done with a sample of 212 student-teachers belonging to different teacher education colleges in Chennai. The gathered data were analyzed using statistical techniques. The results of the study conclude with some significant differences in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers.

Keywords: Assertiveness, teacher, student-teacher

Introduction:

In general, assertiveness is characterized by being self-assured and confident, rather than being aggressive. In psychology and psychotherapy, it is a learnable skill and is a form of communication. According to Dorland's Medical Dictionary, assertiveness is defined as: 'a form of behavior characterized by a confident declaration or affirmation of a statement without need of proof; this affirms the person's rights or point of view without either aggressively threatening the rights of another (assuming a position of dominance) or submissively permitting another to ignore or deny one's rights or point of view.' With that in mind, this 21st century generation students, requires assertive teachers whom the students can model.

A positive teacher demonstrates excellence in her work and expects the same from her students. Non-verbal indicators related to teacher assertiveness include increased use of gestures and smiles, increased vocal volume, increased eye contact, and faster speaking speed. Variables related to the verbal aspect of assertiveness include increased use of humor in the classroom and a sense of immediacy. To explain the relationship between assertiveness and teacher acuity, Thomas et al. (1994) found that students rated teachers as more assertive when a combination of positive and reactive behavior was used in the classroom.

Need for the Study:

Assertiveness is one of the major requirements of being a teacher. Teacher assertiveness is usually associated with task orientation, so teachers who are active in the classroom tend to exhibit more authority and control. As a result, students often perceive positive teachers as more competent. Her focus is on completing classroom assignments and homeworks. Assertiveness is one of the three main aspects explored under the rubric of a teacher's social communication styles (including

responsiveness and versatility). It is related to the ability to make demands and defend one's position. It includes the willingness to stand up for one's beliefs without violating the rights of others.

In the classroom, confident teachers demonstrate confidence in speaking and presenting, facilitate class discussion, demonstrate effective class leadership, and present an overall positive and authoritative image. A teacher's assertiveness varies continuously from high-level to low-level behavior. When measured together with responsiveness, teacher proactivity indicates the effectiveness of communication. So, teachers' assertiveness is important for the further upliftment of our education system.

According to **Cartensen et al. (2020)**, in their study 'Assertiveness and adaptation: Prospective teachers' social competence development and its significance for occupational well-being', sheds light on the relevance of social competence for beginning teachers and (the antecedents of) its development in the context of teacher education.

According to **Kabat et al. (2020)**, in their investigation 'Assertiveness in Teacher Communication', the young professionals should be trained to include beneficial elements of building their own image, to learn how to interpret their own and others' behaviours, to give less critical appraisals, to better draw the right conclusions from the constructive criticism heard, leading to responsible activity, and to solve educational events and tasks.

Objectives:

1. To find the assertiveness of prospective teachers.
2. To find the significant difference in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers based on the sub groups:
 - a. Gender
 - b. Year of Study
 - c. Educational Qualification
 - d. Personality type of the student-teacher

Hypothesis:

There is no significant difference in the assertiveness of prospective teachers based on the sub groups:

- a. Gender
- b. Year of Study
- c. Educational Qualification
- d. Personality type of the student-teacher

Method and Sample of the Study:

Survey method was employed for this study and a random sampling technique was used in the selection of a sample of 212 student-teachers including both first years and second years belonging to various colleges of education in Chennai.

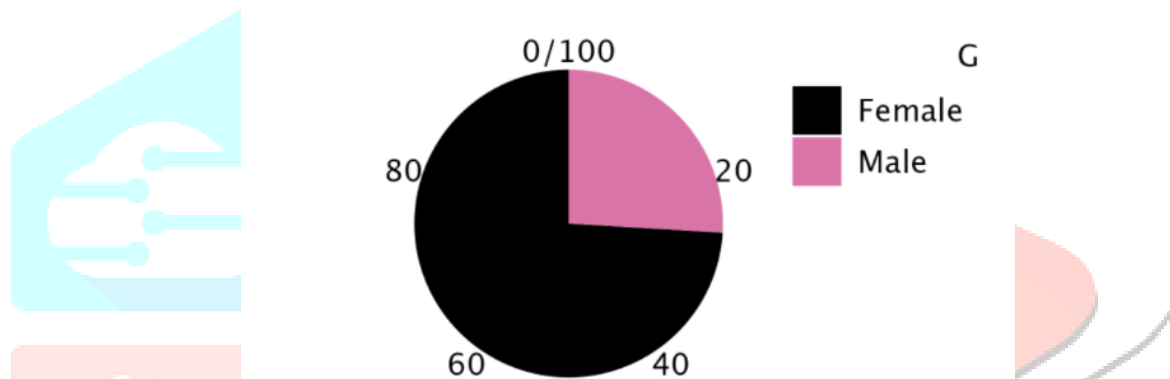
Tool used for the study:

The tool used for the study is a standardized tool that was formulated by Robert E. Alberti and Michael L. Emmons for the book 'Your Perfect Right- A Guide to Assertive Living' in the year 2005. The tool has 35 items with a Likert scale with 4 points such as never, sometimes, usually and always, to which the respondent has to choose the option that is more relatable to him.

Analysis & Interpretation:**Frequency Tables****Table 1: Frequencies for Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	157	74.057	74.057	74.057
Male	55	25.943	25.943	100.000
Missing	0	0		
Total	212	100.000		

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**Figure 1:** Graphical representation of the number of samples belonging to the sub group : Gender**Table 2: Frequencies for Year of Study**

Year	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
I yr	74	34.906	34.906	34.906
II yr	138	65.094	65.094	100.000
Missing	0	0		
Total	212	100.000		

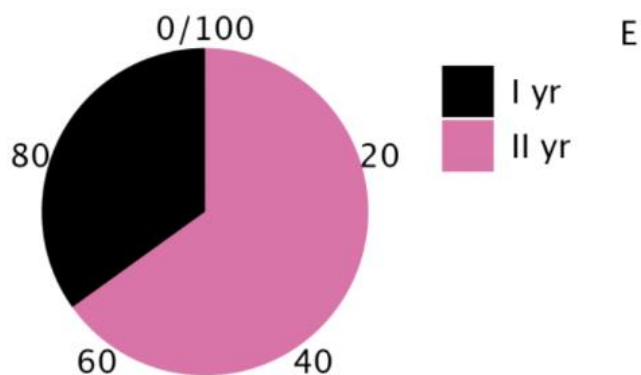


Figure 2: A graphical representation of the number of samples in the subgroup: Year of Study

Table 3: Frequencies for Educational Qualification

Ed. Q	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PG	104	49.057	49.057	49.057
UG	108	50.943	50.943	100.000
Missing	0	0		
Total	212	100.000		

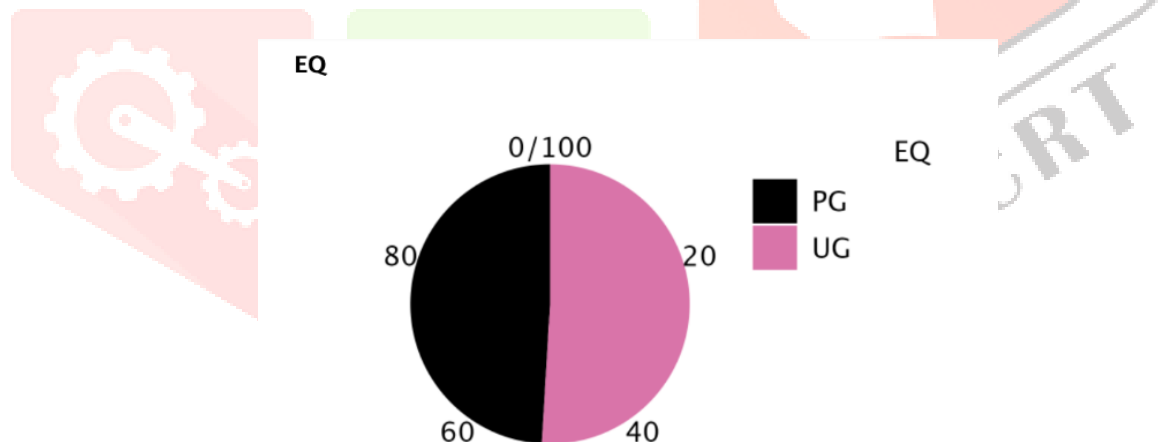


Figure 3: A graphical representation of the number of samples in the subgroup: Educational Qualification

Table 4: Frequencies for Personality Type

Personality	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Ambivert	87	41.038	41.038	41.038
Extrovert	66	31.132	31.132	72.170
Introvert	59	27.830	27.830	100.000

Missing	0	0		
Total	212	100.000		

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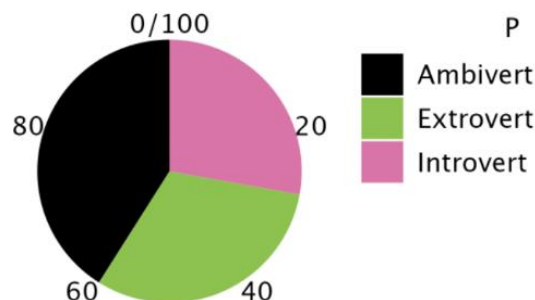


Figure 4: A graphical representation of the number of samples in the subgroup: Personality type

Analysis & Interpretation for Assertiveness

Table 5: t-test to find the significant difference in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers based on Gender

Gender	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Female	35.777	7.781	-0.826	210	0.416
Male	36.727	5.889			

From the above table, it is understood that the p-value is greater than 0.05, which means the null hypothesis is accepted. That means, there is no significant difference in the assertiveness of prospective teachers based on the gender of the student-teacher.

Table 6: t-test to find the significant difference in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers based on Year of study

Year of Study	Mean	SD	t	df	p
I year	33.946	6.434	-3.080	210	0.002*
II year	37.138	7.566			

From the above table, it is understood that the p-value is less than 0.05, which means the null hypothesis is rejected. That means there is a significant difference in the assertiveness of prospective teachers based on the year of study of the student-teacher. It shows that the second year students seem to be more assertive than the first year students.

Table 7: t-test to find the significant difference in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers based on Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Mean	SD	t	df	p
UG	35.426	6.892	1.210	210	0.228
PG	36.644	7.724			

From the above table, it is understood that the p-value is greater than 0.05, which means the null hypothesis is accepted. That means, there is no significant difference in the assertiveness of prospective teachers based on the educational qualifications of the student-teacher.

Table 8: F-test to find the significant difference in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers based on their personality type

Cases	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Personality Type	483.441	2	241.721	4.647	0.011*
Residuals	10871.441	209	52.016		

From the above table, it is apparent that the null hypothesis should be **rejected** because the **p-value is less than 0.05**. Therefore, there is a significant difference in the assertiveness of the prospective teachers based on their personality types. To identify which group differed the most, Games- Howell Post-Hoc test is applied.

Table 9: Post - Hoc (Games - Howell Test) to compare and find the differences in the values

Comparison	Mean	SD	p -value
Ambivert	36.908	8.013	0.994
Extrovert	37.030	6.709	
Ambivert	36.908	8.013	0.018*
Introvert	33.593	6.465	
Extrovert	37.030	6.709	0.012*
Introvert	33.593	6.465	

From table 9 and figure 6, the following interpretations can be made: Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore,

- There is a significant difference in the assertiveness of prospective teachers among the student- teachers who are ambiverted and introverted in nature. Student-teachers who are Ambiverted show higher levels of assertiveness when compared to the introverted student-teachers.
- There is a significant difference in the assertiveness of prospective teachers among the student- teachers who are extroverted and introverted in nature. Student-teachers who are extroverted show higher levels of assertiveness when compared to the introverted student-teachers.

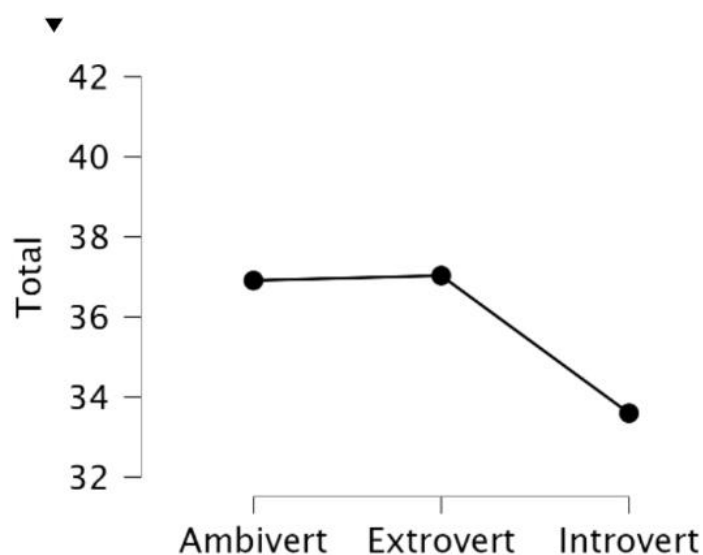


Figure 5: Graphical representation of the difference in values based on the samples' personality type

Findings:

From the analysis and interpretations given above, the following findings can be assured:

- No assumptions can be made that there are differences in the level of assertiveness between the genders. Both men and women exhibit the same level of assertiveness.
- Second years (who are currently in their internship and who have completed their internship) exhibit a higher level of assertiveness than the first years. This is seemingly so, because they have started working (or have worked) in a professional school environment during their internship, and have exhibited some confidence to speak up for themselves.
- Educational qualification is not a factor on the level of assertiveness a student-teacher exhibits. Whether s/he has done UG or PG, assertiveness is an internal motive that works for the sake of the individual.
- Personality of the individual is a major decider on how a person's assertiveness. Student-teachers who are ambiverted and extroverted tend to be more assertive than their introverted peers.

Suggestions:

Upcoming student-teachers require some form of training that would help them be mentally ready to face professional expectations and have their own set of professional ethics to stand by. Technology being the main reason for the high percentage of introverted individuals, the pandemic has further made our youngsters go behind closed doors, always trying to be in their comfort zone. Equipping them mentally and emotionally is as important as equipping them with knowledge. Self-reflection time, evaluating their own thoughts and opinions, might help them stand for or speak up for what they know is right.

Conclusion:

Teaching profession requires prospective teachers to be trained in all aspects, including cognitive, emotional, social and physical regards. It is important for the teacher education colleges to concentrate on the emotional and social upliftment of the to-be teachers. Prospective teachers must be assertive in order to excel in all aspects of their professional development in the teaching field. Children these days do not require any form of knowledge sharing as it is readily available everywhere, they need more than cognitive development. Children should be trained to be assertive and emotionally intelligent, so that they could be the real pillars of our country's future development. Therefore, teachers need to be equipped in such regards as it is expected by every stakeholder of the education system.

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