

Teacher's personality and self-fulfilling prophecy

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the interaction of teacher's personality in accordance to self-fulfilling prophecy. Especially, the purpose of this survey is to investigate the role of teachers' self-fulfilling in the crucial of education and if and in which extend it is influenced by the personality of every teacher. No one can dispute that self-fulfilling prophecy is so important that it can determine the interactions between teachers and students. This specific investigation resulted from the literature review carried out and from conducting a quantitative survey on a sample of 291 teachers the period January- May 2024 in Greece. From the analysis that followed, it emerged that factors such as gender, age, political ideology, receptivity to experience, the degree of intragroup valence do not contribute to the strengthening of self-fulfilling prophecy.. On the contrary, the degree of social hierarchy and authoritarianism are decisive factors that affect teachers' self-fulfilling.

INTRODUCTION

No one can dispute that every teacher plays a crucial role in the life of each student from its first day in school. The achievement as well as the learning progress of students depends on the expectations of their teacher (Gentrup et al., 2020; Ready & Chu, 2015). That is, when teachers have low expectations from their students, the last ones will perform low achievements. On the other hand, when teachers have high expectations from their students, it will lead them to higher learning achievements (Boyd & MacNeill, 2020; Jeffries & Reed, 2021; Towson et al., 2020).

From the other hand, prejudice is a complex concept which can be interpreted through different approaches of psychology, Cognitive Approach, Personality Theory and Social Psychological Approach. It comes from the Latin term *præjudicium* and refers to positive or negative feelings towards other people depending on their social status (Ferber, 2023; Heffernan, 2022; Quito, 2024).

For many researchers the concept of the word "prejudice" is mainly associated with the manifestation of negative emotions and attitudes. More specifically, prejudice is considered to be a phenomenon between different groups, a negative orientation, something bad and a behavior (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1981; Ducklitt, 1992). According to other researchers (Allport, 1954), prejudice is "a dislike based on an incorrect and rigid generalization".

Inextricably linked to prejudice are considered Stereotypes, which are characterized as the mental components of prejudice and are defined as beliefs about the characteristics, traits and behaviors of members of a particular social group (Hamilton & Sherman, 1994) and are developed and maintained through the social roles (Eagly, 1995) or to justify the status quo (Sidanius & Pratto,

1999). Studies that have been done, argue that stereotypes lead to negative evaluation and discrimination of members who do not belong to the same group (Akrami, 2005).

In this particular research, it is attempted the interpretation of the teacher's prejudice and self-fulfilling through personality. In particular, it is attempted to be interpreted through theories, such as the Theory of Personality, the Theory of Conservative Ideology and the Theory of Social Hierarchy as well as its interpretation through the use of the Five Factors model. This choice is based on the results of contemporary research, where many studies have shown that the Five Factor Model, Conservative Ideology Theory and Social Hierarchy Theory can explain the disagreements concerning the topic of prejudice (Abromeit, 2022; Costello & Lilienfeld, 2021; McCrae & Costa, 1999; McCrae & Bodenhausen, 2000; McFarland, 2001).

The interpretation of teachers' bias and self-fulfilling based on personality and individual differences has been the subject of criticism and disagreement among researchers. There is research that has questioned the stability of the Right Conservatism variable (Reynolds et al., 2001), research that argues that prejudice and self-fulfilling is best explained by social status and by personality variables such as the degree of social hierarchy. However, there is a wealth of data that supports that personality of teacher contributes significantly to the prediction of prejudice and self-fulfilling (King & Mertens, 2023; Yilmaz & Argon, 2020; Zajda & Zajda, 2021), a fact that this research aims to study.

METHODS

In this research has been utilized the quantitative method so as to be measured the role of teacher's personality in fulfilling prophecy: in other words, how the Pygmalion effect, influence the position of teachers towards their students. The use of the quantitative method that is based on statistical comparisons aims to highlight the specific issue underlining the general laws and rules of thumb. In particular, it aims to discover the causes through objective measurement and numerical analysis of a representative sample. In general, this section describes how the study was conducted.

The aim of this research was to study the role of teachers' personality in self-fulfilling prophecy. More specifically, the following cases will be studied:

- H₁: Men's and women's teachers' personality toward self-fulfilling prophecy differs.
- H₂: The total Performance on Social Hierarchy, Total Performance on Authoritarianism, and the Total Performance on Ingroup Valence, affect the total Performance on teachers' self-fulfilling.

Participants in the research were 291 teachers, Greek citizens of both sexes. The population of the sample included 112 men (38.49 %) and 179 women (61.51 %).

Tools

As a tool for measuring the influence of teachers' personality on self-fulfilling was a seven-page questionnaire with three separate sections, based on already existing questionnaires and adapted specifically for the purpose of this research,. The three sections are described below

Attitudes questionnaire

In the section that is concerned to the attitude questionnaire, which is the first section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to answer a series of questions based on four different measurement scales.

More specifically, the measurement scales used in this section are the following: 1. The Social Dominance Orientation Scale 2. The Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale 3. The In Group Identification Scale. And finally the Modern Racial Prejudice Scale (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Araya, 2000; Dyrendal et al., 2021)).

Greek Personality Test

This particular section of the questionnaire is consisted of two smaller sub-sections. The first was about demographics such as gender and age, and the second was 94 questions about adjectives people use to describe themselves, which had to be answered using a five-point scale.

Questionnaire of Five Factors of Personality (BFI).

The last section of the questionnaire was based on an already existing questionnaire, The Big Five Inventory (Benet-Martinez, 2021). It included 44 questions that had to be answered using a five-point Likert scale. The aim of this section was to identify some personality traits that might match, or the opposite, with the interviewees' personality traits.

Procedure

The completion of the questionnaire took approximately 20 to 30 minutes and was preceded by a short introduction, explaining the purpose of this research, assuring, of course the participants anonymity and the preservation of their personal data.

Each time a questionnaire was returned, was noted the order in which the questionnaires were returned. When the process of completing and returning the questionnaires was completed, the questionnaires of all the participants in the survey were collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**Hypothesis 1**

H1: Men's and women's teachers' personality toward self-fulfilling prophecy differs

To study the above hypothesis it was used the t-test (for independent samples). The following tables 1,2 present the results of the analysis.

Table 1. Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Overall performance in self-fulfilling	Men	112	53,04	11,273	1,065
	Women	179	50,97	11,486	,858

Table 2. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's test for quality of variance		t-test for Equality of Means			95%Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)	Lower	Upper
Overall	Equal variance assumed	1,838	,176	1,506	289	,133	-,635	4,774
	not assumed				39,117	,132	-,626	4,764

$$t (291) = 1.506 , ns$$

From the results of Table 2, it is seen that the test of the equality of variances (variances) of the two groups (Levene's test) is not different (so the variances are equal). Consequently, we choose to use the p-value of the 1st line (equal variances assumed). Thus, we find that the t value (1.506) is not statistically significant ($p=0.176$), since it is greater than the lower limit of acceptance ($p=0.05$).

This means that there are no differences between the averages of men and women regarding their attitudes towards their overall performance on self-fulfilling. That is, men and women teachers do not differ in their attitudes toward overall self-fulfilling performance.

Hypothesis2

H₂: The total Performance on Social Hierarchy, Total Performance on Authoritarianism, and the Total Performance on Ingroup Valence, affect the total Performance on teachers' self-fulfilling.

To study the above hypothesis it is used the Multiple Regression Analysis. The following tables present the results of the analysis.

Table 3. Total Performance

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	,463 ^a	,215	,212	10,146	,215	79,010	1	289	,000
2	,471 ^b	,222	,216	10,118	,007	2,598	1	288	,108
3	,547 ^c	,299	,292	9,617	,078	31,779	1	287	,000

Table 4. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1(Constant)	36,645	1,802		20,338	,000
Overall performance in the social hierarchy	,431	,048	,463	8,889	,000
2(Constant)	33,246	2,771		12,000	,000
Overall performance in the social hierarchy	,411	,050	,442	8,233	,000
Overall intragroup valence performance	,168	,104	,087	1,612	,108
3(Constant)	27,695	2,811		9,851	,000
Overall performance in the social hierarchy	,294	,052	,317	5,693	,000
Overall intragroup valence performance	,006	,103	,003	,059	,953
Total performance authoritarianism	,257	,046	,325	5,637	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Total performance to self-fulfilling

As it is summarized in the table 3 of results entitled "Model Summary" the variable that has been added to the first block is the "Total Performance in the Social Hierarchy". The Adjusted R-square coefficient of this block is 0.212 which means that "Total Performance in Social Hierarchy" is responsible for 21.2. % of the variance of the "Overall Performance on self-fulfilling".

The variable that was added in the second block is the "Total Ingroup Valence Performance". The Adjusted R-square coefficient of this block is 0.216, which means that 21.6 % of the variance of the "Overall Performance on self-fulfilling" factor is attributable to the Overall Performance on Social Hierarchy and the Overall Performance on Ingroup Valence. This means that the variable "Overall Ingroup Valence Performance" predicts another 0.4% of the variance in the criterion variable.

The variable added in the third and last block is "Overall Performance on Authoritarianism". The Adjusted R-square coefficient of this block is 0.292, which means that all three variables explain 29.2% of the variance of the "Overall Performance on self-fulfilling" factor. This means that the

variable "Overall Performance on Authoritarianism" predicts another 7.6% of the variance in the criterion variable.

The Table 4 entitled Coefficients presents the relationship between the predictive coefficients and the criterion variable. More specifically, it allows us to determine whether the results of the predictors influence or do not influence the criterion variable. From the analysis of this table, we find that the Total Performance in Social Hierarchy positively affects the total performance in self-fulfilling as $\beta = 0.317$.

The predictor variable Overall Ingroup Valence Performance positively affects this overall performance on self-fulfilling as well, as $\beta = 0.003$. And finally, the predictive variable Total Performance in Authoritarianism also positively affects the overall performance in self-fulfilling, $\beta = 0.325$.

According to the results of this table, the three variables, Total Performance in Social Hierarchy, Total Performance in Ingroup Value and Total Performance in Authoritarianism positively affect the overall performance in self-fulfilling. The most significant variable of the three is Total Performance on Authoritarianism since the standardized beta regression coefficient has a larger value of $0.325 > 0.317 > 0.003$.

Also, from the same table 4 we can draw other conclusions regarding the level of importance of each variable. More specifically, according to the results of this table, of the three variables that are studied, only two variables are statistically significant, the Overall Performance in Social Hierarchy and the Overall Performance in Authoritarianism as the significance level of both variables is $p = 0.000$, smaller from the lower acceptance level, $p = 0.05$.

CONCLUSION

The primary objective of the present research was to study the effect of teachers' personality on self-fulfilling. More specifically, the aim was to study a number of variables such as gender, age, political ideology, authoritarianism, social hierarchy, ingroup valence and receptivity to experience and the extent to which each of these variables influence or not to self-fulfilling.

From the analysis of the preceding results and from the research hypotheses formulated, it was found the following ones:

More specifically, in hypothesis H1, which concerns the attitudes of men and women towards self-fulfilling, it has been found that gender is not an important factor, which strengthens self-fulfilling. This finding is explained by the fact that the existence of self-fulfilling in school is not related to gender, i.e. to whether someone is a man or a woman, but to the negative beliefs and stereotypical perceptions that are transferred from generation to generation or created in from a negative situation (King & Mertens, 2023; Towson et al., 2020; Zajda, 2022).

Finally, in case H2, were found the following results. Of the three variables that were investigated, only the variables, total performance in social hierarchy and total performance in authoritarianism affect self-fulfilling, while the variable total performance ingroup valence was not found to exert any effect on it. This finding is explained by the fact that according to the Theory of Social Hierarchy, society and school, specially, theoretically has the form of a pyramid. Teachers who have less qualifications tend to be more prone to adopt and manifest stereotypical perceptions and self-fulfilling behaviors, while those teachers who have more qualifications, such as postgraduate degree and doctoral diploma, tend to move away from the expression and manifestation of similar behaviors and feelings (Almadi, 2022; Boyd & MacNeill, 2020; Jeffries & Reed, 2021).

Also, in the part of the case concerning the authoritarianism factor, it has been found that authoritarianism is linked to self-fulfilling as the term itself contains the concept of prejudice. In other words, we would say that the more authoritarian a teacher is, the more attached they are to prejudices and self-fulfilling and by extension to the manifestation of stereotypical perceptions and behaviors. (Altemeyer, 1998; Bloom, 2023; McFarland, 2001).

Limitations and directions for future research

While this research provided a detailed analysis of personality factors that influence self-fulfilling and prejudice, there are some limitations. Firstly, one of the limitations of the present research concerns the population sample. More specifically, the sample of the present research is heterogeneous mainly in terms of the geographical distribution of the teachers who participated in the research. Also, the time of conducting the research was carried out in a non-predetermined time frame, which may have a negative effect on the immediacy of the answers. For these reasons, future research is deemed necessary, which will include a wider range of factors to investigate, such as place and educational level, which influence the formation of a teacher's personality and, by extension, prejudice and self-fulfilling. Also, it is considered necessary to study the changes that have taken place in society after COVID-19 and have contributed to the elimination or no of stereotypical perceptions and prejudices.

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