What Factors Predict Teachers’ Problem-Solving and Their Seeking of Social Support?

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Teachers are critical to the delivery of high-quality instruction which facilitates effective pupil learning outcomes. The need for teachers’ to be rigorous and systematic as they go about solving real world classroom problems is emphasized in the literature. Other studies stress the importance of the social dimension in supporting effective teacher problem-solving. This study asked what factors impact upon teachers’ reported responses to stressful classroom situations: problem-solving and/or seeking social support. A large number of German teachers (n=1783) were surveyed in 2008 as part of a project looking at collaboration and stress. This data was analyzed statistically. Results showed that teacher problem-solving is predicted by level of self-efficacy and effectiveness of classroom management, whereas seeking social support is predicted by self-efficacy, gender and years of teaching experience.