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FILIPINO TEACHERS SENSE OF EFFICACY IN INCLUSION CLASSES

***Junhel Dalanon**, D.M.D., M.A.T., Ed.D.*

Associate Professor, College of Dentistry, Southwestern University PHINMA

***Yoshizo Matsuka**, D.D.S., Ph.D.*

Professor, Department of Stomatognathic Function and Oral Reconstruction,

Tokushima University Graduate School of Oral Sciences

ABSTRACT

Self-efficacy beliefs produce their effects through cognitive, motivational, affective, and selective processes. These processes usually operate in concert rather than on their own. In 2016, cross-sectional survey method to determine the teachers' sense of efficacy (TSE) in inclusion classes was done in a rural, private, basic-education school in the Philippines. Thirty basic education teachers were the respondents of this enquiry. The results suggest that the respondents' professional preparation in terms of highest education attainment is basic. Seminars and trainings attended remain below average, which shows the satisfaction of the respondents at limiting the time spent for seminars. A very good cognitive process, motivational process, affective process, and selective process was recorded. There is no significant difference between the respondents' professional preparation and their sense of efficacy. The findings of this study may not corroborate with their results which could mean that some factors that equally affect the TSE and cultural differences should be taken into consideration. This study is intended to supplement the database of self-efficacy research.

Keywords: teachers sense of efficacy, self-efficacy, inclusion classes, filipino

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion Classes

The movement toward inclusion has created an emphasis on educating students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Data from the U.S. Department of Education (1996) have indicated that approximately 73% of students with disabilities receive their instructional program in general education classrooms and resource room settings, and that 95% of the students with disabilities are served in general education schools. The recent reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P.L. 105-17) also includes general provisions that encourage the placement of students with disabilities in inclusive settings Based on Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, personal efficacy affects life choices, level of motivation, quality of functioning, resilience to adversity and vulnerability to stress and depression. Studies have shown that self-efficacy is a moderate predictor of performance across many different behaviors. These findings are particularly valuable because they speak to the broadness of the self-efficacy construct and its widespread usefulness in understanding human change.

Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy

Teacher efficacy is made up of two dimensions: teaching efficacy and personal efficacy. Teaching efficacy, which will be the focus of this investigation, is the belief that one's teaching can affect certain educational outcomes. A teacher's efficacy beliefs are related to their behavior in the classroom and the amount of effort they invest in teaching. There is a relationship between what a teacher believes and how they interact and work with students in the classroom.

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Bandura's (1977) social learning theory states that "psychological procedures, whatever their form, serve as means of creating and strengthening expectation of personal efficacy". An efficacy expectation is the "conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce outcomes" (Bandura, 1977, p. 193).

Dimensions of Self-Efficacy

Efficacy expectations have three dimensions that have implications for individual performance. These dimensions in which efficacy expectations can differ are magnitude, generality, and strength. Magnitude refers to the level of difficulty of a task as the efficacy expectations of individuals may extend to simple tasks, some of moderately difficult ones, or include a very difficult task. Generality refers to how far the efficacy expectation is extended to or generalized to different situations. Strength refers to the power the efficacy expectation has, as weak efficacy expectations can easily be dismissed by a person, while strong efficacy expectations may enable a person to continue with a difficult task despite the adversity being faced.

Sources of Self-Efficacy

The first and most powerful source is performance accomplishment which refers to personal mastery experiences. The second source of information is vicarious experience which refers to the fact that efficacy expectations also are developed from observing others perform tasks without negative consequences. The third source of information is verbal persuasion which refers to the use of verbal suggestion in order to convince an individual into believing that he or she successfully can handle a task that has overwhelmed him or her in the past. The fourth foundation of evidence which develops efficacy potentials is emotional arousal. This term refers to the fact that in the face of difficult situations a person becomes emotionally and physiologically aroused and this occurrence can provide information about personal skills and level of ability (Bandura, 1977). People use these four sources of information to judge their level of self-efficacy in any given situation.

Self-Efficacy Measurement

Measurement of self-efficacy is possible. There is no all-purpose measure of perceived self-efficacy. Efficacy is realm specific and a task-oriented conviction of an ability, oversimplifications can't be made. Initial research on efficacy as it relates to the field of psychology and education today was completed which was evaluating educational programs. Items were constructed for this evaluation project based on Rotter's (1966) theory of social learning. Teacher's level of efficacy was calculated based on their total score from two questions. These items include the teachers' ability to affect students' performance and teachers' perseverance in handling difficult students or tough situations. Results of both studies indicated that the higher a TSE, the more students learned and made academic gains in reading. In its greatest significance, teacher efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs about their ability to influence student outcome. Academics have recognized teacher efficacy as a crucial factor for refining teacher education and promoting educational reform for decades (Ashton, 1984). In studies done abroad, teacher efficacy has been found to predict student achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1986), student motivation (Pajares, 1997), and students' own sense of efficacy (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988). Moreover, teacher efficacy has been associated with the teachers' passion for teaching (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998), teachers' high self-assurance levels and positive attitudes (Guskey, 1984), and their inclination to experiment with new approaches (Guskey, 1988).

In the Philippines, results of one study show that the personality characteristics of a teacher influences his teaching performance, effective teaching characteristics, and teaching efficacy (Magno & Sembrano, 2007). Another study showed that problems encountered in inclusion classes by teachers are linked to emotional, educational preparation, and performance difficulty (De Guzman, 2009). These problems are associated with the sources of efficacy. Decreasing the likelihood of barriers in teaching and their subsequent effects will be a direct effect of increasing the level of TSE.

METHODS

Study Design

This study utilized the cross-sectional survey method to determine the teachers' sense of efficacy in inclusion classes. Initially, teachers were made to answer the questionnaire to gather information pertaining to their demographic profile. Furthermore, teachers were made to answer the efficacy related long form to gauge the teachers' level of efficacy.

Sample Size and Sample Selection

Through convenience sampling, a total of thirty basic education teachers were gathered. A rural, privately funded, basic education school was the research locale of the study during the school year 2015-2016. The school is a general education school offering special education inclusion classes in pre-school, elementary, and high school department.

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Data Collection Procedures

Two standardized questionnaires were used, the Professional Accomplishment Questionnaire for Respondents (PAQR) and the Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale – Long Form (TSSES-LF). The PAQR is a simple tool that gauges the professional qualifications and other relevant data of the respondents, while the TSSES-LF aims to gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities (Hoy, W. 2001). One numerical value will not be indicative of the perceived self-efficacy of a teacher since the scale is indicative of the range of perception a teacher identifies. This consists of 30 questions related to a teacher's perceived efficacy in relation to the 4 efficacy activated processes. The options range from Nothing (1-2), Very Little (3-4), Some (5-6), Quite A Bit (7-8), and A Great Deal (9). Questions 2, 7, 10, 11, 14, 18, and 29 pertain to the cognitive process; questions 4, 12, 13, 20, 22, 24, and 25 to the motivational process; questions 6, 9, 15, 19, and 21 to the affective process; and questions 1, 3, 5, 8, 16, 17, 23, 26, 27, 28, and 30 to the selection process.

Overview of the study was introduced during a faculty meeting. Teachers who were interested in participating was asked to fill-up the transmittal letter. Teachers who are interested in participating were contacted and individual interviews were scheduled. The process of collecting data from individual teachers took approximately 20-30 minutes in the format of an individual interview. The interview was piloted with two teachers. First, teachers were provided with a verbal overview of the study. The researcher stated that the purpose of the study is to investigate teachers' knowledge of students with special needs in the classroom and whether or not they have the optimum level of perceived efficacy. Second, teachers were asked to complete the professional accomplishment questionnaire independently. Third, the teachers completed the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy – Long Form measure related to teaching students with special needs independently.

Data Analysis Plan

To summarize the data on professional preparation, frequency with percentage distribution was used. The weighted mean of the degree of teachers' sense of efficacy was obtained and interpreted. To determine whether there is a significant relationship between the teachers' professional preparation and sense of efficacy, chi square test for association was used. Data was processed using IBM SPSS statistics, version 19 (IBM Corporation: Chicago, IL, USA, 2010). An associated p-value less than 0.05 was considered significant.

RESULTS

Professional Preparation of the Teachers

It could be noted that the majority (66.7%) of the teacher-respondents do not have the necessary educational qualifications. Only a diminutive portion comprises those that have educational units in SPED (6.7%) and those that have M.A. in SPED (3.3%) (Table 1).

Seminars and Trainings Attended

the data obtained and presented in table 1 shows that majority (46.7%) of the respondents have obtained the minimum number of days for seminars attended. A close percentage (30%) constitutes those that attended a 5-day seminar only (Table 1).

Table 1. Professional Preparation of the Teachers

Highest Educational Attainment	f	%
Bachelor's Degree	20	66.7
Bachelor's Degree with units in Special Education (Bachelors)	2	6.7
Bachelor's Degree with units in Special Education (Masters)	5	16.7
Master's Degree in other specialization	2	6.7
Master's Degree in Special Education	1	3.3
Seminars and Trainings Attended		
5-day seminar (8hrs per day)	9	30.0
10-day seminar (8hrs per day)	4	13.3
25-day seminar (8hrs per day)	3	10.0
1-4 day seminar (1-5hrs per day)	14	46.7

Degree of Teachers Sense of Efficacy

The overall TSE of the respondents scored very good (GWM=7.10, SD=0.633) on the scale. Specifically, the cognitive processes (GWM=7.09, SD=0.609), motivation processes (GWM=7.20, SD=0.785), affective processes (GWM=7.38, SD=0.823), and selection processes (GWM=6.90, SD=0.817) were also very high (Table 2).

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Table 2. Teachers Sense of Efficacy

Efficacy Activated Processes	GWM	SD
Cognitive	7.09	0.609
Motivation	7.20	0.785
Affective	7.38	0.823
Selection	6.90	0.817
Overall Sense of Efficacy	7.10	0.633

Professional Preparation and Teachers Sense of Efficacy

With a computed chi-square value of 14.704, professional preparation of the respondents yielded no significant relationship with TSE (df=12, p=0.258) (Table 3).

Seminars Attended and Teachers Sense of Efficacy

With a computed chi-square value of 11.338, seminars attended by the respondents yielded no significant relationship with TSE (df=9, p=0.253) (Table 3).

Table 3. Relationship of Teachers Sense of Efficacy with Professional Preparation and Seminars Attended

Correlation	Computed chi-square	df	p-value
TSE and Professional Preparation	14.704	12	0.258
TSE and Seminars Attended	11.338	9	0.253

DISCUSSION

Self-efficacy beliefs produce their effects through cognitive, motivational, affective, and selective processes. These processes usually operate in concert rather than on their own. The findings of the study show that the respondents' professional preparation in terms of highest education attainment is basic. It shows that most of the teachers are contented with obtaining a bachelor's degree regardless of a degree/unit in SPED. Seminars and trainings attended remain below average, which shows the satisfaction of the respondents at limiting the time spent for seminars.

A very good cognitive process was observed, although academic content modification is good. Courses of action are initially shaped in thought, and then serve as guides for action. The capability for self-motivation and purposive action is above average as reflected through a very good motivational process. This is interpreted that reasons for past performances can affect beliefs of personal efficacy. Teachers who believe that they can exercise control over events do not conjure up calamities and frighten themselves. This was in relation to a very good affective process. Although the results showed a very good selective process, information dissemination, behavior management, and special needs instruction needs to be improved.

There is no significant difference between the respondents' professional preparation and their sense of efficacy. The findings of this study may not corroborate with their results which could mean that some factors that equally affect the TSE and cultural differences should be taken into consideration. For instance, the academic performance of the students directly under the supervision of the respondents should be taken into account. Second, the differences in the nature of the graduate school education between research locales should be given weight. Moreover, culture biases should be pointed out and analyzed to put more importance to controlled variables that may yield a logical result.

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