

Original Paper

Self-Efficacy and Mathematics Performance of Students' in the New Normal in Education

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Abstract

The new normal that was previously unfamiliar has become standard in almost all colleges and universities where classes are being held in purely online scheme is calling us to develop not just essential skills but attitudes that can help us to adapt and thrive in an uncertain future. The study aimed to determine the level of self-efficacy of students and their academic performance during the new normal in education to be used as baseline data in recommending strategies to help increase the level of student's self-efficacy thereby improving their academic performance. Descriptive research design using the quantitative techniques was used with 183 out of 366 students using Raosoft Sample Calculator at 5% margin of error and they were identified using Gimkit application. Google forms was used to distribute the instrument. To meet the objectives, data was statistically treated using frequency/percentage, weighted mean, T-test, ANOVA, and Pearson's r. Thus, following results; Majority of the respondents connects to WIFI and most of them have good quality of connectivity. They exhibit mid-level self-efficacy. Most of them have satisfactory to very satisfactory academic performance. There is no significant difference on their assessment of their level of self-efficacy when grouped according to types of connectivity except for performance accomplishment. Whereas, there is significant difference on their self-efficacy when they are grouped according to quality of connections. Moreover, there is significant relationship between level of self-efficacy and level of academic performance during the new normal except for performance accomplishment. By and large, the suggested strategies are believed to help increase the respondent's level of self-efficacy thereby increasing their level of academic performance.

Keywords

academic performance, new normal, self-efficacy

1. Introduction

Now is one of the most challenging pivotal phases in education due to the unexpected crisis that the world experienced. Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) has a huge impact in the life of many people particularly in education where the traditional face-to-face mode of learning delivery are prohibited. It is because as precautionary measures, the government ordered social distancing to flatten the curve of infected by COVID-19. Schools in the Philippines only due to reopen when a vaccine for COVID-19 has been found, educational authorities are racing to devise a distance learning regime for 27 million students in August, 2020 (Reuters, 2020). Educational experts suggested different learning modalities as alternative learning platform to avoid the hindrance of continuous learning of the students. Higher education institutions had to change their learning modality from face-to-face classes to distance learning. This put the teachers in the place of working from home wherein managing time and class schedule is at their own decision. This situation has tested the resiliency of the education sector. In this case both students and teachers were caught unaware and do not have much time to prepare but they both embraced the situation halfheartedly if not wholeheartedly.

As a society in the new normal, we need to ensure that the basic physical, social-emotional, and psychological needs of students are meant before they can even start learning and give students the time to adjust to the new ways of learning (Tuscano, 2020). But even before the pandemic, it is a fact that college learning experience is unique and considered struggle to most if not to majority of students especially when it comes to their mathematics subjects. This was confirmed by Penano-Ho (2004) using the National Achievement Test result as one of the proofs wherein the Philippines ranked 41st out of the 45 countries in as far as mathematics performance is concerned. The thinking that Mathematics is a difficult subject worsens the situation of Mathematics in the education system. Some students express disinterest and unwillingness in the subject. Instead of being challenged, they have resigned to the idea that they just cannot make it. In addition to this, the students' inability to comprehend and master mathematical concepts and develop skills leads to low achievement in Mathematics, weak attainment of higher-level skills, and unsatisfactory academic performance. Despite the efforts on curricular changes and the introduction of other teaching strategies to develop a better curriculum and improve the educational system, there are proofs that revealed poor results in Mathematics examinations. Years past and still the same problem persists. The continuous occurrence of the problem is reflected in the latest NAT results (a national examinations being taken by students who are about to start their college life) which showed that there is a deteriorating competency as revealed by the mean percent score of 50.70% in 2004-2005, 47.82% in 2005-2006, and 46.37% in 2011-2012 which seems to be elusive compared to the 75% goal of DepEd. Students' eventual failure in the subject are very much alarming and need immediate attention.

Looking on this view, these serious problems in Mathematics and Mathematics performance must be addressed systematically. Though some students are successful in this subject it is a fact that others struggled even more especially during this time of pandemic. The complexity of factors that can influence math performance was evident when Singh (2010) ascertains that high achievement in mathematics is a function of many interrelated variables related to students, families, and schools. But there are also certain factors which are believed to allow some students to succeed academically such as academic self- efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce the desired outcomes. This is an individual's belief in his or her innate ability to achieve goals. This determines whether an individual will be able to exhibit coping behavior and how long effort will be sustained in the face of obstacle (Bandura, 1997). The level of self-efficacy can be used to determine whether a task will be initiated, the amount of effort that will be extended and the level of persistence to complete the task when faced with obstacles and immersive experiences. Having this quality among students during this time of uncertainty may help them cope in their mathematics learning struggles.

Mathematics performance is the degree of success attained by the student based on his mathematics achievement or on tests designed to mastery of subject matter (Collins & O'Brien, 2011). This represent performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environment, specifically in school, college, and university. It is commonly defined and measured through examinations (Cambridge University Reporter, 2003)

Students with higher mental ability will most likely achieve more goals and complete a task. Relative to this fact, student with high level of academic performance may also manifest a high level of self-efficacy. This was confirmed by Bandura (1997) who found out that level of academic performance of the students is akin to self-efficacy. In academic setting, students' belief in their self-efficacy with regard to learning are found to affect their perceived self-efficacy for academic achievement which in turned influences the academic goals they set for themselves and their final academic achievement (Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martines-Pons, 1992; Ayotola & Tella Adedeji, 2009). Students may have different levels of self efficacy and may perform differently according to various teaching methods (Chan & Choi, 2013). Further and Dullas (2010) implied that self-efficacy is a good predictor of academic performance in Mathematics and was validated by Akram and Ghazanfar (2014), Hasan Hossain, and Islam (2014) who found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance.

The new normal that was previously unfamiliar has become standard in almost all colleges and universities where classes are being held in purely online scheme is calling us to develop not just essential skills but attitudes that can help us to adapt and thrive in an uncertain future. It is on this context that the researcher who is a mathematics educator and an advocate of "Maslow before Bloom battle cry in education opted to indulged in this study with the end in view of recommending strategies

to increase the level of self-efficacy of students”.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to determine the level of self-efficacy of students and their academic performance during the new normal in education to be used as baseline data to recommend strategies to help increase the level of student's self-efficacy thereby improving their academic performance.

Specifically, the study seek answer to the following objectives:

- 1) To determine the online capability of the respondents during the new normal in terms of;
 - 1.1) type connectivity and
 - 1.2) quality of connectivity.
- 2) To determine the level of efficacy of students in terms of;
 - 2.1) performance accomplishment;
 - 2.2) vicarious experience;
 - 2.3) social persuasion; and
 - 2.4) emotional states.
- 3) To determine the level academic performance of students as revealed in their performance in mathematics.
- 4) To determine significant difference on the level of self-efficacy of the students when they are grouped according to their online capability during the new normal.
- 5) To determine significant relation between student's level of self-efficacy and their level of academic performance in mathematics.
- 6) To propose strategies to help increase the level of student's self-efficacy thereby improving their level of academic performance.

2. Method

The researcher used the descriptive research design using the quantitative techniques. Descriptive research involves collecting data to answer questions concerning the current status of the study. It is also a valid method for researching specific subjects and as a precursor to more quantitative studies (Shuttleworth, 2008). Thus, the researcher believed that this design is suited to help determined the relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance.

The respondents of the study are the students taking up mathematics subject during the Academic year 2020-2021. Out of 336 students under the supervision of the researcher 183 samples were determined using Raosoft Sample Calculator at 5% margin of error. The respondents were identified using Gimkit application.

The researcher patterned the items from the concepts of Guide for Constructing Self-efficacy Scales (Bandura, 2001) and Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). The instrument uses the 5-point Likert Scale with categorical response; Exactly True, Moderately True, Unsure, Barely True, and Not at All True that corresponds to Very High, High, Mid-Level, Low, and

Very Low Level of Self-efficacy. Since there are some items that have been revised the instrument was subjected to validation and exhibited a reliability index result of .958. Meanwhile, the grade in the student's academic performance was based on their performance during the Midterm Examinations of the Academic Year 2020-2021. According to Cambridge University Reporter (2003), academic performance is frequently defined in terms of examination performance. The researcher used the google sheet form to distribute the instrument to the identified respondents. To meet the objectives the data was statistically treated using frequency/percentage, weighted mean, T-test, ANOVA, and Pearson's r.

3. Result

3.1 Distribution of the Respondents on their Online Capability

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents on Their Online Capability in Terms of Types of Connectivity during the New Normal

Online Connectivity	Frequency	Percentage
(Wireless Fidelity) WiFi	102	55.7
Mobile Data	81	44.3
Total	183	100

Table 1 shows that majority which is 102 or 55.7 percent of the respondents are using wireless Fidelity Connection (WIFI) and 81 or 44.3 percent relies on Mobile Data connection. This figure tends to reveal that the students are capable of being connected to the internet which in turn will enable them to attend online classes.

Table 2 shows that 54 or 29.5 percent of the respondents have excellent internet connections, 69 or 37.7 have good, 40 or 21.9 have poor, and 20 or 10.9 have very poor connections. This result conveys that even if they have the capacity to connect to the internet it certainly doesn't mean that they can have the chance to properly attend to their online classes.

Table 2. Distribution of the Respondents on Their Online Capability in Terms of Quality of Connectivity during the New Normal

Online Connectivity	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	54	29.5
Good	69	37.7
Poor	40	21.9
Very Poor	20	10.9
Total	183	100

Limitations brought about by poor to very poor connections is seemingly apparent. But things being equal and based on observations, those who are connected to WIFI have the chance for good to excellent quality of connections compared to those who relied on Mobile Data connections.

3.2 Respondent's Assessment on Their Level of Self-Efficacy

Table 3 displays the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy in terms of their performance accomplishment. The composite mean of 3.35 shows that they are unsure about their convictions on the items listed on the performance accomplishment which means that they have mid-level self-efficacy during this time of pandemic.

Table 3. Respondent's Assessment on Their Level of Self Efficacy in Terms of Performance Accomplishment

Items	Weighted Mean	VI
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problem if I try hard enough.	3.44	M
2. When I am confronted with problem, I can usually find several solutions.	3.22	M
3. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a better solution.	3.26	M
4. I am able to learn successfully all relevant subjects when I strive hard.	3.44	M
5. I know that I can carry out all innovative projects that my professors will give.	3.37	M
Composite Mean	3.35	M

This result was validated in items 1 and 4 wherein the they are unsure about their confirmation that they can always manage to solve difficult problem if they will try hard enough and that they can also successfully learn all relevant subjects when they strive harder as revealed by the same weighted mean value of 3.44, verbally interpreted as mid-level self-efficacy. Results tends to show that their level of self-efficacy is unstable during this time. This feeling was confirmed by Bandura (1997), he stressed that if an individual experiences failure, they will most likely experience a reduction in self-efficacy while high self-efficacy individuals generate more effective task strategies to facilitate goal attainment and respond more optimistically to negative feedback than low self-efficacy individuals (Locke & Latham, 1990; as cited in Redmond, 2010).

Table 4 displays the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy in terms of their vicarious experience. The composite mean of 3.40 shows that they are unsure on the items listed on the vicarious experience which means that they possess mid-level self-efficacy during this trying times.

Table 4. Respondent's Assessment on Their Level of Self-Efficacy in Terms of Vicarious Experience

Items	Weighted Mean	VI
1. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.	3.29	M
2. When I try really hard, I am able to reach the academic goal that I have set.	3.34	M
3. I am convinced that as a time goes by, I can continue to improve my-self and my knowledge in the course that I'm taking.	3.47	M
4. If I try hard enough, I know that I can exert a positive outlook both on my personal and academic development.	3.44	M
5. I know that I can motivate my-self to participate in innovative projects.	3.44	M
Composite Mean	3.40	M

Legend: M - Mid-Level

This was confirmed in item 3 when the respondents reiterated that they are undecided that as time goes by, they can continue to improve not only in personal but also in their professional journey as shown by the weighted mean value of 3.47, verbally interpreted as mid-level self-efficacy. This result contradicts the contentions of Hendricks (2015); Artino (2012); Bandura (1997); Schunk, Hanson, and Cox (1987)) that one can attain success through persistence and effort. More so, they can be more successful if they will be given the chance to witness others performs successfully for this will provide them sense of confidence in their ability to perform similar tasks.

Table 5. Respondent's Assessment on Their Level of Self-Efficacy in Terms of Social Persuasion

Items	Weighted Mean	VI
1. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals when my classmates approve it.	3.44	M
2. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events when I am encouraged by my classmates and teachers.	3.32	M
3. I can solve most problem if I have somebody behind me.	3.37	M
4. I can usually handle whatever comes my way when I am supported by my parents.	3.34	M
5. I am convinced that I can develop creative ways to cope with the class and be active all the time.	3.42	M

Composite Mean	3.37	M
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Table 5 conveys the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy in terms of their social persuasion. The composite mean of 3.37 shows that they are unsure on the items listed on the social persuasion which revealed that they have mid-level of self-efficacy during this time of disarray. This was confirmed in item 1 when the respondents admitted that it is not easier for them to stick to their aims and accomplish their goals when they've got the approval of their classmates as revealed by the weighted mean value of 3.44, verbally interpreted as mid-level self-efficacy. This means that during this new normal they are unsure if they are still willing to listen, hear feedback, judgments, and appraisal from significant others in their engagement about relative tasks. This exhibited contradictions in the findings of C. W. Loo, JLF, and Choy (2013) that it is easier to sustain a sense of efficacy, especially when struggling with difficulties, if significant others express faith in ones capabilities.

Table 6 demonstrates the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy in terms of emotional state.

Table 6. Respondent's Assessment on Their Level of Self-Efficacy in Terms of Emotional State

Items	Weighted Mean	VI
1. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.	3.40	M
2. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.	3.34	M
3. I know that I can maintain a positive relationship with my teacher, even when there is unusual situation.	3.42	M
4. Even I am disrupted during recitation; I am confident that I can maintain my composure and continue to answer to my teacher questions well.	3.33	M
5. I am confident in my ability to be responsive to my needs, even if I am having a bad day.	3.41	M
		H
Composite Mean	3.38	M

The composite mean of 3.38 shows that they are unsure about the items listed on the emotional state means that they possess mid-level of self-efficacy during this trying times. This was confirmed in item 3 when the respondents felt irresolute if they can still maintain a positive relationship with their teachers, even when there is unusual situation as revealed by the mean value of 3.42, verbally interpreted as mid-level self-efficacy. This pessimistic outlook of students tends to confirms the

uncertainty of their emotional state during this unpredictable time. As confirmed by Loo & Choy, (2013), stressful and taxing situation debilitates performance.

3.3 Respondent's Level of Academic Performance

Table 7. Respondent's Level of Academic Performance in Terms of Their Ratings in the Midterm Examination

Level of Academic Performance	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	2	1.1
Superior	4	2.2
Very Good	16	8.8
Good	18	9.8
Meritorious	21	11.5
Very Satisfactory	43	23.5
Satisfactory	48	26.2
Fairly Satisfactory	26	14.2
Passing	5	2.7
Failed	0	0
Total	183	100

Table 7 reveals the level of academic performance in terms of their ratings in the midterm examination. It is very evident that most of the students have satisfactory performance as reflected from 48 or 26.2 percent and 43 or 23.5 percent with very satisfactory performance. Note that almost half of the respondents satisfactorily perform in the midterm examination but it is very crucial to note that though nobody failed the over-all result is not impressive at all. There are only two or 1.1 percent whose performance is excellent, four or 2.2 percent who are superior and only 16 or 8.8 percent exhibit good performance. This relatively not so impressive performance can be attributed to their unpreparedness to adapt to the new normal. According to Tuscano (2020), as a society in the new normal, we need to ensure that the basic physical, social-emotional, and psychological needs of students are meant before they can even start learning and give students the time to adjust to the new ways of learning. In this light, teachers must exercise forbearance and compassion to their students.

3.4 Difference on the Respondents' Assessment on Their Level of Self-Efficacy when Grouped according to Online Connectivity

Table 8 displays significant difference on the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy when they are grouped according to online capability in terms of connectivity. As can be gleaned from the table significant difference is evident in terms of their performance accomplishment in the new normal when they are grouped in terms of type of connectivity as validated by a t-value of 2.522 and

p-value of .013 which is less than .05 level of significance. This result tends to show that their performance accomplishment is being affected by the kind of their connectivity which is either WIFI or Mobile Data connections. As based on experience and feedbacks from students, tasks can be done better if connected to WIFI compared to mere Mobile Data connections.

Table 8. Difference on the Respondents' Assessment on Their Level of Self Efficacy When They are Grouped according to Online Capability in Terms of Types of Connectivity during the New Normal

Items	t-value	p-value	Decision on H_0	V.I
performance accomplishment	2.522	.013	Reject H_0	Significant
vicarious experience	.331	.741	Failed to Reject H_0	Not Significant
social persuasion	.938	.350	Failed to Reject H_0	Not Significant
emotional states	1.968	.051	Failed to Reject H_0	Not Significant

Criteria for rejection: $*p < .05$, 2-tailed.

Further, students are confident that they can successfully finished the tasks assigned to them if they are connected to WIFI. On the other hand, there is no significant difference on the respondents' assessment in terms of their vicarious experience, social persuasion, and emotional state as validated by a t-value of .331, .938, 1.968 and p-value of .741, .350, and .051 respectively which are all greater than .05 level of significance. This means that whether they are connected to WIFI or Mobile Data their level of self-efficacy is held constant.

Table 9. Difference on the Respondents' Assessment on Their Level of Self Efficacy When they are Grouped according to Online Capability in Terms of Quality of Connectivity during the New Normal

Items	F-value	p-value	Decision on H_0	V.I
performance accomplishment	3.705	.001	Reject H_0	Significant
vicarious experience	3.897	.001	Reject H_0	Significant
social persuasion	3.787	.001	Reject H_0	Significant
emotional states	3.528	.001	Reject H_0	Significant

Criteria for rejection: $*p < .05$, 2-tailed

Table 9 displays significant difference on the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy when they are grouped according to online capability in terms of quality of connectivity. As can be gleaned from the table that there is significant difference on the respondent's assessment on their level of self-efficacy when they are grouped in terms of quality of connectivity during the new normal. This

was validated from the F-value of 3.707, 3.897, 3787, 3.528 respectively among performance accomplishment, vicarious experience, social persuasion, and emotional state with the same p-value of .001 which is less than .05 level of significance. This result tends to show that their self-efficacy is being affected by the quality of their internet connectivity. As based on experience and feedbacks from students, in doing their tasks there should be a stable excellent internet connection. Students further claimed that they can only be motivated to do innovative projects and they can develop creative ways to cope with the class and be active all the time if they do have stable internet connections. Furthermore, they confided that they can remain calm when facing difficulties since they can rely on their coping abilities but they admitted that poor internet connectivity certainly pissed them off. Results tends to imply that these students have unstable level of self- efficacy. More simply, self-efficacy is what an individual believes he or she can accomplish using his or her skills under certain circumstances (Snyder & Lopez, 2007). Further, self-efficacy has been thought to be a task-specific version of self-esteem (Lunenburg, 2011). Furthermore, self-efficacy has influence over people's ability to learn, their motivation and their performance, as people will often attempt to learn and perform only those tasks for which they believe they will be successful (Lunenburg, 2011).

3.5 Relationship between Level of Self-Efficacy and Level of Academic Performance of the Respondents' During the New Normal

Table 10. Relationship between Level of Self-efficacy and Level of Academic Performance of the Respondents' During the New Normal

Items	r-value	p-value	Decision on H_0	V.I
performance accomplishment	-.066	.377	Failed to Reject H_0	Not Significant
vicarious experience	.500	.000	Reject H_0	Significant
social persuasion	.518	.000	Reject H_0	Significant
emotional states	.382	.000	Reject H_0	Significant

Criteria for rejection: $*p < .05$, 2-tailed

Table 10 shows the relationship between level of self-efficacy and level of academic performance of the respondents' during the new normal. It is very apparent that there is a positive relationship between the students' level of self-efficacy in terms of vicarious experience, social persuasion, emotional state as manifested in the r-value of .500, .518, .382 respectively and same p-value of .000 which is less than .05 level of significance which lead to the rejection of null hypothesis. This means that significant relation is manifested between self-efficacy and academic performance. Further, the positive value of r indicates that as the level of self-efficacy increases, the level of academic performance also increases. Likewise, low level of self-efficacy may result to low level of academic performance. As based on

Social Cognitive Theory, students with higher self-efficacy have higher motivation to study and consequently achieve higher academic results (Bandura, 1994; Pajares, 1996). This results find connections from (Dullas, 2010; Loo & Choy, 2013; Shkullaku, 2013; Akram & Ghazanfar, 2014; Hassan, Hossain, & Islam, 2014; Avalos, 2017). Moreover, self-efficacy has been found to lead to higher performance (McIntire & Levine, 1991; Mathieu, Martineau, & Tannenbaum, 1993; Eden & Zuk, 1995; Locke & Latham, 1990; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; as cited in Redmond, 2010).

On the other hand, it was found out that there is no significant relationship between level of self-efficacy in terms of performance accomplishment and academic performance as presented in the negative r-value of $-.066$ and a p-value of $.377$ which is greater than the $.05$ level of significance which lead to the acceptance of null hypothesis. This can be attributed to the fact that even during this time of new normal the students felt that they have to comply with the demands of the academic requirements not necessary to have a higher grade but for the sake of compliance.

3.6 Proposed Strategies to Increase the Student's Level of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is that a person can develop the skills to perform new or difficult tasks to cope with the changes in health and functioning. It can facilitate goal setting, effort, investment, persistence, overcoming obstacles and recovery from disappointments and failures. Since performance and motivation are in part determined by how effective people believe they can be coupled with the belief that strengthening self-efficacy augments goal attainment (Bandura, 1982; as cited in Redmond, 2010). Thus, the following strategies were suggested to help increase the student's level of self-efficacy thereby increasing their level of academic performance during this new normal.

- They may keep a journal to keep track of their daily performance accomplishments
- They may practice having a good role model to learn and gain more experience from others
- They may try listening to inspirational messages or encouraging words from successful person to help them be more motivated
- They may do activity that brings pleasure that is associated with positive emotions. They can try to revive old hobbies and reconnect with friends to reduce stress and anxiety which will help them feel more in control and self-efficacious.

4. Conclusions

- 1) Majority of the respondents connects to Wireless Fidelity (WIFI) and most of them have good quality of connectivity during the new normal.
- 2) The respondents exhibit mid-level self-efficacy.
- 3) Most of them have satisfactory to very satisfactory academic performance.
- 4) There is no significant difference on the respondents' assessment on their level of self-efficacy when they are grouped according to types of connectivity except for performance accomplishment where significant difference has been established.

- 5) There is significant difference on the respondents' self-efficacy when they are grouped according to availability of connections in terms of quality of connections. Further, there is significant relationship between level of self-efficacy and level of academic performance during the new normal except for performance accomplishment where significant relationship was not established.
- 6) The suggested strategies are believed to help increase the respondent's level of self-efficacy thereby increasing their level of academic performance.

Recommendations

- 1) That the suggested strategies be reviewed and considered.
- 2) The Higher Education Institutions must take into considerations the online connectivity and online capacity of the students which is one of the major contributors to their success in the new normal.

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