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Research Article

Assessing Teaching Interns' Anxiety and Self-Efficacy Following the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic imposed unprecedented disruptions in educational systems, significantly affecting the practicum experiences of teaching interns. This study examined the post-pandemic levels of teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy among pre-service teachers at Cavite State University Naic. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were collected from 92 Bachelor of Elementary and Secondary Education interns through the Teaching Anxiety Scale (TAS) and Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES). Results indicated that respondents exhibited generally high levels of teaching self-efficacy, particularly in classroom management and instructional strategies, despite reporting moderate and varied levels of teaching anxiety. A weak yet statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.292$, $p < 0.01$) was found between self-efficacy and teaching anxiety. Regression analysis further revealed that teaching anxiety significantly predicted teaching self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.254$, $p = 0.014$). These findings highlight the need for structured interventions—including mentorship, stress management, and technology training—to support the psychological and pedagogical preparedness of future educators.

Keywords: *Teaching self-efficacy, Teaching anxiety, Teaching interns, COVID-19, Pre-service teachers*

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically reshaped educational systems worldwide, accelerating the shift to remote and hybrid learning models. While much attention has been given to experienced educators adapting to these changes, less is known about the impact on teaching interns — pre-service teachers undertaking practicum experiences during or shortly after the pandemic. These interns face a unique set of challenges as they develop their professional identities amidst lingering uncertainties and institutional disruptions.

Supportive professional development programs have been identified as vital in enhancing teaching self-efficacy and reducing teaching anxiety among teachers (Franziska et al., 2020;

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Yin et al., 2022). Identifying effective professional development strategies specifically tailored for teaching interns is essential to help them cope with the post-pandemic teaching landscape successfully.

Given the unprecedented disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, understanding the impact on teaching interns' teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy is crucial. This study seeks to contribute to the existing literature by exploring the unique challenges faced by teaching interns in the post-pandemic era. By investigating teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy, the findings of this study can inform the development of targeted interventions and support systems for teaching interns, ultimately enhancing their professional development and well-being in the evolving educational landscape.

In the Philippines, teaching internship is a culminating requirement in teacher education. The shift to online platforms during the pandemic has raised critical concerns about teaching readiness, confidence, and anxiety among education students. This study aims to explore the post-pandemic levels of teaching anxiety and self-efficacy among teaching interns and examine the relationship between these variables within a socioeconomically diverse student body.

Objectives:

The study aimed to determine the relationship between the teaching interns' teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy.

Specifically, this study aims to:

1) determine the profile of the respondents as to:
   a) program
   b) sex
   c) family income
2) investigate the levels of teaching self-efficacy among teaching interns amidst the COVID-19 post-pandemic period;
3) assess the levels of teaching anxiety among teaching interns amidst the COVID-19 post-pandemic period;
4) examine the relationship of the Teaching Anxiety and Teaching Self-Efficacy among teaching interns; and
5) examine whether teaching anxiety significantly predicts teaching self-efficacy.

Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive statistics was computed to summarize the characteristics of the participants, including their demographic information. Measures such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions was used to describe the teaching interns' teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy scores.

Respondents

The respondents were the students at Cavite State University Naic undergoing a Teaching Internship. They were composed of five sections: three (3) from Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd), and two (2) from Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd).

Sampling

The researcher used the purposive sampling and selected participants based on specific criteria or characteristics relevant to the research question. This is useful when a particular group or type of participant was needed for the study. The sample population size was 92 based on Slovin's formula.

Instruments

To investigate the pre-service teachers' level of teaching anxiety, the Student-Teacher Anxiety Scale (STAS) developed by Hart (1987) was used. To measure pre-service teachers' level of teaching self-efficacy, the Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) by Gibson and Dembo (1984) was utilized. The participants were asked to rate their responses on a Likert scale.

Statistical Treatment

Descriptive analysis such as mean, standard deviation was used for the demographic profile. To determine the relationship between teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy, a correlation analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation coefficient. This analysis helped identify the direction and strength of the relationship between the two variables. Additionally, a multiple regression analysis was

performed to examine whether teaching anxiety significantly predicts teaching self-efficacy after controlling for relevant covariates.

Results and Discussions

By comparing the study's results with prior research, this section aimed to establish connections and divergences, offering insights into the broader context of the topic. Each subsection focused on specific themes, supported by relevant data, to ensure clarity and coherence in presenting the findings.

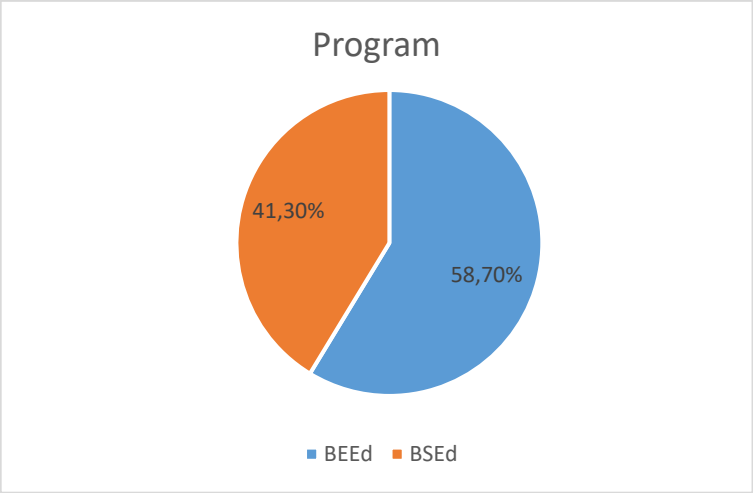
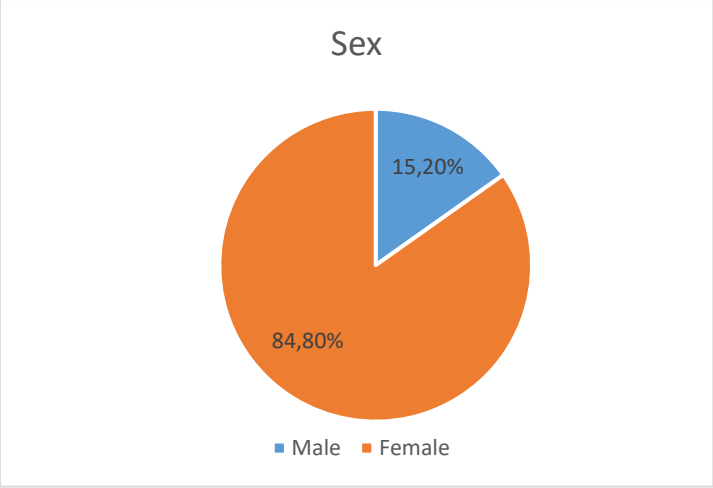


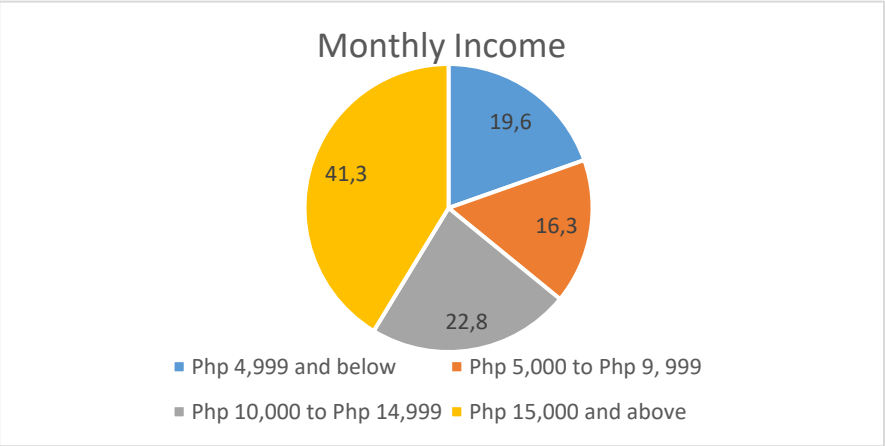
Figure 1. Demographic profile by Program

The figure shows the distribution of participants based on their academic programs. A total of 38 respondents (41.3%) were enrolled in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd). Meanwhile, 54 participants (58.7%) were pursuing the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd).



The study surveyed a total of 92 participants, consisting of 14 males (15.2%) and 78 females (84.8%). The data reveals a significant gender disparity, with females representing the overwhelming majority of respondents.

Table 3. Demographic profile by Monthly Income



The figure indicates the income distribution of participants, revealing notable variations across different salary brackets. A total of 38 respondents (41.3%) reported earning 15,000 and above, representing the highest income group and the largest proportion of the sample. The second-largest group consisted of 21 participants (22.8%) with incomes between 10,000 and 14,999, while 15 respondents (16.3%) fell into the 5,000 - 9,999 range. The lowest income category, 4,999 and below, included 18 individuals (19.6%).

These findings indicate that a significant portion of the sample (41.3%) belongs to the highest income tier, suggesting either a relatively affluent participant pool or potential sampling bias toward higher earners. Meanwhile, the distribution of middle- and lower-income groups shows a gradual decline, with nearly equal representation in the 5,000 - 9,999 and 4,999 and below brackets.

Table 1. Level of self-efficacy of teaching interns

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Instructional Delivery and Curriculum Alignment	4.06	0.110998	High
Classroom Management and Adaptability	4.15	0.113616	High
Social and Emotional Competence	4.10	0.05316	High
Professionalism and Collaboration	4.30	0.097819	High

Note. Scale: 1.00–1.49: Very Low; 1.50–2.49: Low; 2.50–3.49: Moderate; 3.50–4.49: High; 4.50–5.00: Very High.

The data reveals high levels of competency across various dimensions of teaching effectiveness among the participants. Instructional Delivery and Curriculum Alignment attained a mean score of 4.06 with a standard deviation of 0.110998, indicating a consistent and proficient alignment of instruction with curricular goals. Classroom Management and Adaptability scored slightly higher, with a mean of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.113616, reflecting participants' adeptness at managing classroom dynamics and adapting to varying situations.

Social and Emotional Competence, with a mean score of 4.10 and a lower standard deviation of 0.05316, highlights the participants' ability to maintain interpersonal relationships and emotional regulation, showing remarkable consistency. Finally, Professionalism and Collaboration recorded the highest mean score of 4.30 with a standard deviation of 0.097819, emphasizing the participants' strong commitment to professional ethics and effective teamwork. These high scores across all dimensions suggest a well-rounded and highly competent group of individuals in teaching-related skills.

Table 2. Level of teaching anxiety of teaching interns

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Teaching Skills and Strategies	3.47	0.087066	High
Observation and Evaluation	3.63	0.074165	High
Classroom Management	3.61	0.070059	High
Workload and Responsibilities	3.66	0.006499	High

Note. Scale: 1.00–1.49: Very Low; 1.50–2.49: Low; 2.50–3.49: Moderate; 3.50–4.49: High; 4.50–5.00: Very High.

The data indicates moderate proficiency across various teaching-related competencies among the participants. Teaching Skills and Strategies received a mean score of 3.47 with a standard deviation of 0.087066, suggesting an average level of proficiency in employing effective teaching methodologies, with some variability among participants. Observation and Evaluation had a slightly higher mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.074165, reflecting a relatively consistent ability to observe and assess teaching and learning processes.

Classroom Management, with a mean score of 3.61 and a standard deviation of 0.070059, demonstrates a similar level of competency in maintaining classroom order and addressing management challenges effectively. Workload and Responsibilities recorded the highest mean score of 3.66, but with a notably low standard deviation of 0.006499, indicating very minimal variability and a uniform perception of managing workload and professional responsibilities. Overall, the results suggest moderate levels of competency in these areas, with potential areas for improvement in teaching skills and strategies.

Table 3. Relationship between teaching anxiety and teaching self-efficacy

		Teaching Anxiety
Teaching Self-Efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.292**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005
	N	92

The correlation analysis reveals a statistically significant positive relationship between teaching self-efficacy (TSES-TI) and teaching anxiety (TIAS) among the participants. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.292$, $p = 0.005$) indicates a weak but significant positive correlation between these two variables. This suggests that as teaching self-efficacy increases, teaching anxiety also tends to increase slightly like the Simon et.al (2024) examined academic anxiety, psychological well being, self efficacy, and student engagement during COVID lockdowns. They found that even under high anxiety, students with high self-efficacy maintained strong academic engagement

With a sample size of 92 participants, the significance level ($p < 0.01$) confirms the robustness of this finding. This relationship, though weak, may indicate that higher confidence in teaching abilities could coincide with increased awareness of teaching challenges, potentially leading to slightly elevated anxiety levels. These results provided a foundation for further research to explore the dynamics between self-efficacy and anxiety in teaching contexts and develop interventions that address both constructs effectively. The study explored how teaching stress, including anxiety, influences teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction, highlighting the interplay of psychological factors in the teaching profession as discussed by Klassen, R. M., & Chiu, M. M. (2010).

Table 4. Regression analysis of the teaching anxiety predicts teaching self-efficacy

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.426	.283		12.111	.000	2.864	3.988
	ave_TIAS	.193	.077	.254	2.493	.014	.039	.346
a. Dependent Variable: ave_TSES								

The regression analysis shows that the average score on the Teaching Interns Anxiety Scale (ave_TIAS) significantly predicts the average score on the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (ave_TSES), with a standardized beta coefficient (β=0.254\beta = 0.254β=0.254, p=0.014p = 0.014p=0.014). This indicates a positive relationship between teaching anxiety and self-efficacy. Specifically, for every one-unit increase in the average teaching anxiety score, the average self-efficacy score increases by 0.193 units (B=0.193B = 0.193B=0.193). The model's constant (B=3.426B = 3.426B=3.426, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001) represents the predicted value of self-efficacy when teaching anxiety is zero. The 95% confidence interval for the unstandardized coefficient BBB ranges from 0.039 to 0.346, confirming the reliability of the result.

The findings align with studies suggesting a complex relationship between teaching anxiety and self-efficacy. For example, Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that self-efficacy is influenced by various emotional and psychological factors, including anxiety, which can either challenge teachers to develop resilience or hinder their performance. Similarly, Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy posits that challenging experiences, such as managing teaching-related anxieties, can enhance self-efficacy if the individual successfully overcomes them. The positive relationship observed may reflect teaching interns' ability to reinterpret anxiety as a motivator for improving teaching skills, consistent with findings by Friedman and Kass (2002) on the interplay between teacher stress and efficacy.

Geraci et al. (2023) conducted a study during COVID 19 lockdowns and found that teachers with higher emotional intelligence experienced lower burnout and higher work engagement and self efficacy This suggests that even under high stress (anxiety), an educator's emotional regulation skills can convert pressure into greater confidence.

Karaçöp and İnaltekin (2022) reported that while teaching anxiety didn't directly predict job satisfaction, self efficacy and teaching self efficacy were strong positive predictors . This underscores that anxiety may coexist with—and even stimulate—the development of self efficacy in educators striving to meet job demands.

Frontiers in Psychology (2024) highlighted that teacher stress often lowers self-efficacy, but managing stress through resilience-building dampens this negative effect . In other words, anxiety doesn't invariably reduce efficacy—how it is handled matters, and managed anxiety may bolster self efficacy.

Conclusion

This study highlights critical insights into the interplay between self-efficacy and anxiety among teaching interns. The results demonstrate high levels of self-efficacy across the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale for Teaching Interns (TSES-TI), with mean scores consistently above 3.98. However, moderate levels of anxiety were observed through the Teaching Interns Anxiety Scale (TIAS), with variability suggesting unique challenges faced by individual interns. The statistically significant correlation between self-efficacy and anxiety underscores the complexity of their relationship, where heightened self-efficacy may coincide with increased anxiety due to elevated responsibilities and awareness.

Additionally, demographic factors such as program, age, sex, and monthly income were found to have meaningful correlations with self-efficacy, indicating the influence of contextual and personal variables. The findings further revealed potential multicollinearity

between predictors, suggesting a need for careful model refinement to ensure the validity of regression analyses.

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