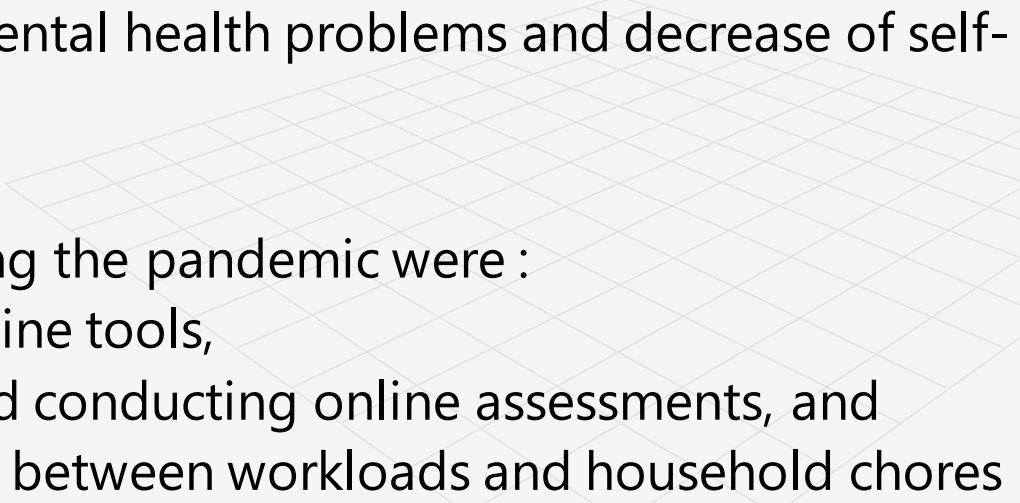# The Aftermath of COVID-19: Examining Teachers' Mental Health and Self-Efficacy

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The Aftermath of COVID-19: Examining Teachers' Mental Health and Self-Efficacy

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

- Height of the pandemic - increase in mental health problems and decrease of self-efficacy among various individuals

- Challenges faced by the educators during the pandemic were :
  - limited knowledge and skills on online tools,
  - limited time in planning lessons and conducting online assessments, and
  - having difficulties in managing time between workloads and household chores

The Aftermath of COVID-19: Examining Teachers' Mental Health and Self-Efficacy

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

- Throughout the pandemic, teachers experienced a **rise in burnout levels** (e.g., Pressley, 2021; Sokal et al., 2021), a **decrease in morale** (Marshall et al., 2022c; Pressley et al., 2022), and a **rise in taking steps to leave teaching** (Marshall et al., 2022d; Pressley et al., 2022; Zamarro et al., 2022).

- At a positive perspective, the pandemic has encouraged teachers **to learn new instructional strategies – the implementation of virtual instructions, the use of Learning Management Systems**.

- The aftermath of pandemic challenges the teachers anew. They are challenged in closing the learning loss gap, maintaining the same standards as a typical school year and implementing COVID-19 safety protocols

- As COVID-19 crisis subsides, it is important to examine the condition of teachers specifically those from the higher education at this endemic or decelerating stage of the pandemic to address possible changing level of self-efficacy and mental health

OBJECTIVES

- Enhance knowledge on the impact of the pandemic through examining the self-efficacy and mental health status of the faculty or teachers from the higher education during the aftermath of the pandemic or the post COVID-19;

- Examine the differences on the various areas of self-efficacy and mental health along age, rank and years of teaching experiences; and

- Examine the relationship of self-efficacy with mental health

METHODOLOGY

- Quantitative study which was conducted 2nd semester of SY 2022-2023 and participated by 105 faculty teachers from the 7 campuses of a certain State university in the province of Camarines Sur, Philippines

Research Instrument

- The study utilized questionnaire consisting of three parts: (1) teacher demographics, (2) Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) by Tschannen-Moran and (3) Mental Health Inventory.

- The TSES measure the self-efficacy in 3 areas: **efficacy in student engagement**, **efficacy in instructional strategies** and **efficacy in online class management**.

- The Mental Health Inventory (MHI 38) consist of 24 items under **psychological distress** and 14 under **psychological well-being**.

METHODOLOGY

Research Instrument

Under Mental Health:

- Subscales under psychological distress: anxiety, depression and loss of emotional control
- Subscales under psychological well-being: general positive effect, emotional ties and life satisfaction

Statistical Treatment

- Numerical descriptive measures
- Mann –whitney and Kruskal Wallis Tests to determine differences in self-efficacy and mental health between and among different variables. The Dwass-Steel-Critchlow-Fligner (DSCF) pairwise comparison was used to determine which pair has significant difference
- Spearman correlation to determine relationship between constructs of self-efficacy with subscales of mental health.

Self-efficacy and Mental Health

Based on social cognitive perspective, *Self-efficacy* indicates human being's perception of their capabilities to accomplish foreseeable daily tasks, which shape their decision-making process. According to Zimmerman and Cleary (2021), self-efficacy leads someone to apply something when they feel they have the ability and probability to achieve the goal

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Self-efficacy and Mental Health

The Society for Health educational and Promotion Specialists (SHEPS,1997) suggest that

Mental health involves feeling positive about oneself and others, , feeling glad, joyful and loving. Mental health gives an individual the feeling of worth and control.
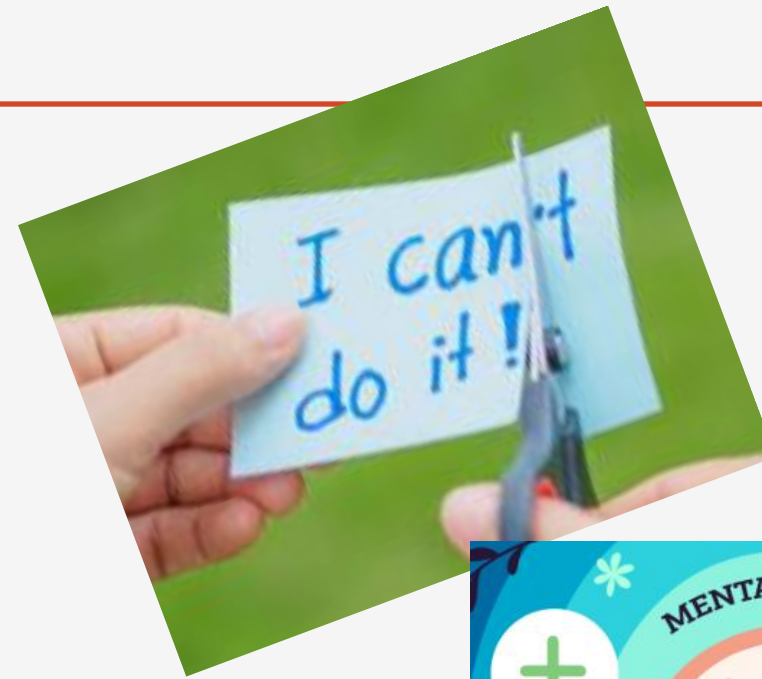
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Highlights of the Results

- Results of interviews from teachers show that they survive the various obstacles during the onset of online classes through perseverance. As a result, they were able to have stronger faith in their abilities, and has pushed them to do better thru various ways.

- It has been observed that the experiences of failure has motivated them to become better, motivating then to take the initiative to attend to relevant training and webinars to master a variety of techniques and methods in conducting online lessons.

- This findings support the study of Pfleging and Cunningham (2021) who coined the term 'crisis efficacy'. They concluded that the belief that one's perceived ability to succeed is not just for everyday life but also in times of crisis, when individuals experience high levels of sustained stress and burnout.

Table. Self-Efficacy and Mental Health

	Mode	Interpretation	Range
Areas of Self Efficacy			
Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE)	7	High	[7-9] High Ability [4-6] Moderate Ability [1-3] Low Ability
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies (IS)	8	High	
Efficacy in Online Class Management (OCM)	8	High	
Mental Health			
Psychological Distress		Low	[24, 142]
Anxiety	26	Low	[9, 54]
Depression	10	Low	[4, 23]
Loss of Emotional Control	22	Low	[9, 53]
Psychological Well-being	56	High	[14, 84]
Gen. Positive effect	40	High	[10, 60]
Emotional Ties	9	High	[2, 12]
Life satisfaction	4	High	[1, 6]

Highlights of the Results

For **Mental Health, under Psychological distress** it shall be noted that the areas on anxiety, depression and loss of emotional control obtained modal responses interpreted as Low. The low scores imply low ability of anxiety, depression and loss of emotional control.

For **Mental Health, under Psychological well-being** it shall be noted that the areas on General Positive effect, Emotional Ties and Life Satisfaction obtained modal responses interpreted as **High.** The high scores imply high ability of general positive effect, emotional ties and life satisfaction

Table. Self-Efficacy and Mental Health

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Life satisfaction	4	High	[1, 6]

Highlights of the Results

● The results can be attributed to the **support provided by the department and colleagues in the transition to online teaching**. It has been noted that various trainings on online teaching and learning, as well as counselling have been provided by the institution to provide assistance to the faculty.

● Based on empirical study, **the effectiveness of interventional programs** aimed to improve psychological well-being, optimism, self-efficacy and self-esteem among teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic showed promising results. These resulted to significant improvement in the teacher's well-being and reduce psychosocial risks (Gracia-Alvarez et al, 2022).

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Highlights of the Results

DIFFERENCES ON SELF-EFFICACY AND MENTAL HEALTH ALONG <u>GENDER</u>

● Results of the statistical test revealed **NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES** between male and female teachers along the areas of self-efficacy and Mental Health.

💡 This findings confirm the results obtained in the study of Pressley & Ha (2021) suggesting no significant difference on self-efficacy along gender and instructional level.

		Statistic	p
SELF-EFFICACY Students Engagement	Mann-Whitney U	1267	0.456
Instructional Strategies	Mann-Whitney U	1157	0.136
Online Class Management	Mann-Whitney U	1180	0.185
MENTAL HEALTH Depression	Mann-Whitney U	1315	0.687
Anxiety	Mann-Whitney U	1230	0.342
Loss of Emotional Control	Mann-Whitney U	1376	0.990
Distress	Mann-Whitney U	1326	0.739
Emotional Ties	Mann-Whitney U	1310	0.661
General Positive Effect	Mann-Whitney U	1319	0.705
Life Satisfaction	Mann-Whitney U	1261	0.428
Well-Being	Mann-Whitney U	1352	0.868

Highlights of the Results

DIFFERENCES ON SELF-EFFICACY ALONG <u>AGE</u>

Results of the Kruskal Wallis test revealed **SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES along the 3 areas of Self-efficacy: Students engagement (p=0.011), Instructional strategies (p=0.020) and Online class management (p=0.010), depression (p=0.004), and anxiety (p=0.023).**

Students Engagement: It shall be noted that those aged between 31-40 have higher self-efficacy on students engagement compared with those aged between 51-60

Instructional Strategies: Under this area, those aged between 20-30 have higher self-efficacy on instructional strategies compared with those aged between 51-60

Online Class Management: Those aged between 51-60 have high level of self-efficacy on Online Classroom Management, The younger age ranges have higher level of self-efficacy.

Age

51 and above
21%

20-30
36%

41-50
15%

31-40
28%
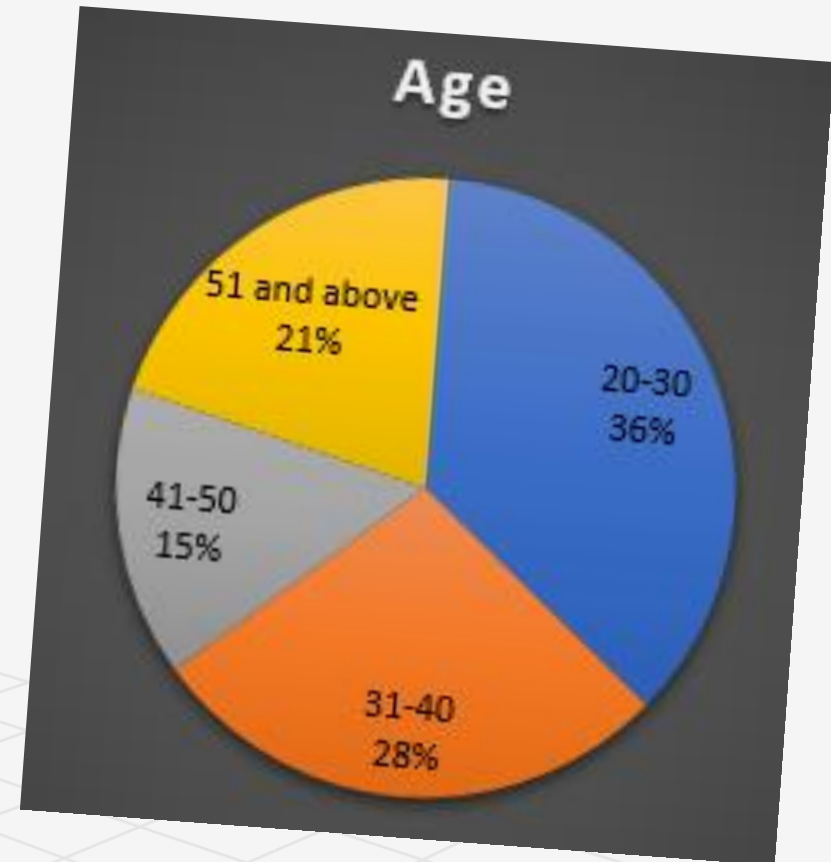
Highlights of the Results

DIFFERENCES ON MENTAL HEALTH ALONG <u>AGE</u>

● Results of the Kruskal Wallis test revealed **SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES** along depression (p=0.004) and anxiety (p=0.023)

● **Depression and Anxiety –** Those who are aged between 20-30 (the youngest among the 4 groups) are found to have low level of depression and anxiety. The rest of the age groups have lower level.

	χ^2	df	p
SELF-EFFICACY			
Students Engagement	11.209	3	* 0.011
Instructional Strategies	9.785	3	*0.020
Online Class Management	11.417	3	*0.010
MENTAL HEALTH			
Depression	13.468	3	*0.004
Anxiety	9.503	3	*0.023
Loss of Emotional Control	3.744	3	0.290
Distress	8.543	3	*0.036
Emotional Ties	0.908	3	0.823
General Positive Effect	4.228	3	0.238
Life Satisfaction	1.256	3	0.740
Well-Being	3.534	3	0.316

Highlights of the Results

DIFFERENCES ON MENTAL HEALTH ALONG <u>RANK</u>

Under rank, results of the statistical test revealed no significant differences along self-efficacy but a SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES on Mental Health

	χ^2			p
SELF-EFFICACY on Students Engagement	3.931			0.140
Instructional Strategies	3.868			0.145
Online Class Management	4.765			0.092
MENTAL HEALTH Depression	12.439			*0.002
Anxiety	7.800			*0.020
Loss of Emotional Control	5.578			0.061
Distress	9.042			0.011
Emotional Ties	1.276			0.528
General Positive Effect	3.642			0.162
Life Satisfaction	0.191			0.909
Well-Being	3.193			0.203

Highlights of the Results

DIFFERENCES ON MENTAL HEALTH ALONG RANK

● **Depression and Anxiety - It** shall be noted that teachers with rank of **Instructors** have low level of depression and anxiety compared to the assistant professors and associate professors who have a much lower level.


Rank

Associate Profs 20%

Assistant Profs 18%

Instructors 62%

Highlights of the Results

DIFFERENCES ON SELF-EFFICACY ALONG <u>YEARS OF TEACHING</u>

Results of the statistical test revealed **SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES** **on self-efficacy on Students engagement (p=0.040)** along years of teaching experience.

	χ^2	p
SELF-EFFICACY on		
Students Engagement	8.23	*0.040
Instructional Strategies	3.77	0.145
Online Class Management	5.11	0.164
MENTAL HEALTH		
Depression	5.64	0.130
Anxiety	3.39	0.336
Loss of Emotional Control	4.01	0.260
Distress	5.02	0.170
Emotional Ties	3.91	0.271
General Positive Effect	2.31	0.511
Life Satisfaction	1.08	0.782
Well-Being	2.59	0.459

Student Engagement- The results show that among the four groups, those who have teaching experience between 11-20 years have higher level of self-efficacy on students engagement.

Years of Teaching

- 0-10: 61%
- 11-20: 13%
- 21-30: 15%
- 31-40: 11%
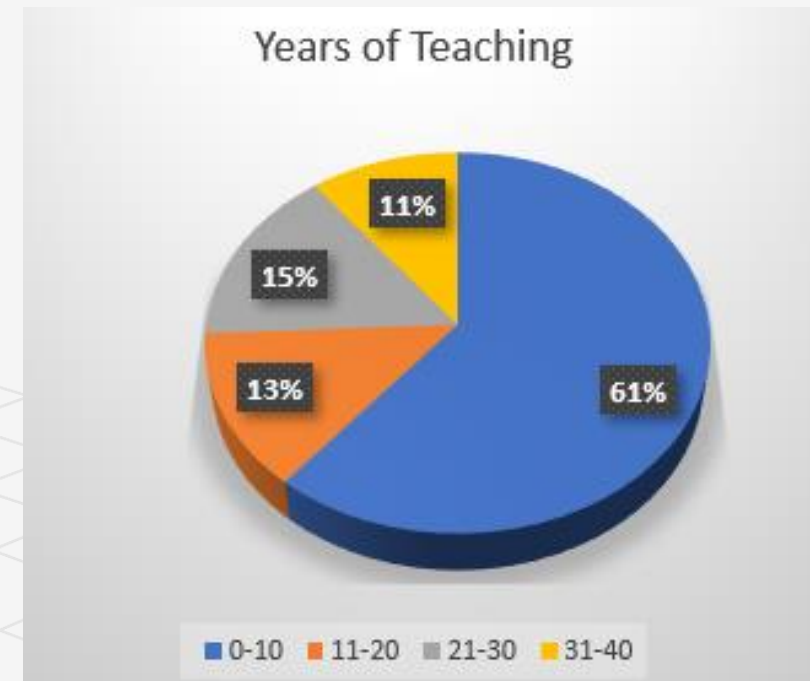
Highlights of the Results

SUMMARY

	MENTAL HEALTH	
	Depression	Anxiety
Low	Aged 20-30 Instructors	Aged 20-30 Instructors

	SELF-EFFICACY		
	Students Engagement	Instructional Strategies	Online Class Management
Very High	Aged 31-40 11-20 years of teaching	Aged 20-30	
High	Aged 51-60		

Highlights of the Results

	MENTAL HEALTH	
	Depression	Anxiety
Low	Aged 20-30 Instructors	Aged 20-30 Instructors

	SELF-EFFICACY		
	Students Engagement	Instructional Strategies	Online Class Management
Very High	Aged 31-40 11-20 years of teaching	Aged 20-30	
High	Aged 51-60		

● The differences on self-efficacy along *age* contradicts the study of Bandura (1995) and Hoy &Tschannen-Moran (2007) which concluded that there were no significant difference in potential sources of self-efficacy beliefs of teachers in regard to their age. It shall be noted that their studies were conducted long before the pandemic

● These findings of significant differences on self-efficacy based on age can also be compared with the results of the study of Lizana and Vera (2021) which showed that teachers aged below 35 have higher risk of depression and anxiety.

Highlights of the Results

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSTRUCTS OF SELF-EFFICACY
AND MENTAL HEALTH**

- Along the areas of Mental Health under Distress, only loss of emotional control is found to be significantly and negatively correlated with Self-efficacy on students engagement and online classroom management. This implies that teachers who can manage their emotions and adopt to a certain behavior tend to have higher sense of self-efficacy on instructional strategy and online class management. **This is consistent with findings of Casale et al. (2021) on the negative relationship between measures of psychological distress and general self-efficacy.**

- All areas of Well-being – Emotional Ties, General Positive Effect and Life Satisfaction, are significantly correlated with the areas of self-efficacy. **This implies that educators' mental health during the aftermath of the pandemic is characterized as generally optimistic, extrovert and happy which tends to result to higher sense of self-efficacy.** This supports the findings of the study of Herman et al. (2021) concludes that the teacher's confidence in their ability to manage students behavior is a consistent predictor of the teacher well-being outcomes.

Conclusion

The findings from the current study add to the literature on teacher's sense of self-efficacy and mental health during the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic on the following aspects:

- The changes in the educational system as it moves to the endemic phase of COVID-19 has shown a remarkable state of Teachers' **Self-efficacy.** This study revealed a high ability to cope with the difficulties and challenges encountered under student engagement, instructional strategies and online class management. This may be attributed to the resiliency, perseverance and persistency that were gained by teachers during the peak of the pandemic.

- For **Mental Health,** the results of the study show more frequent occurrence of favorable mental health symptoms and less frequent occurrence of negative mental health symptoms.

- The **differences in mental health along age and number of teaching years** can be attributed to increased physical activity during the post covid stage among young educators. During the pandemic, reports show that most teachers lack time to perform physical activity due to the work they had to do at home, impeding any activity to promote teacher wellbeing. The aftermath of pandemic has gradually opened opportunities anew through involvement and participation to onsite activities and programs.

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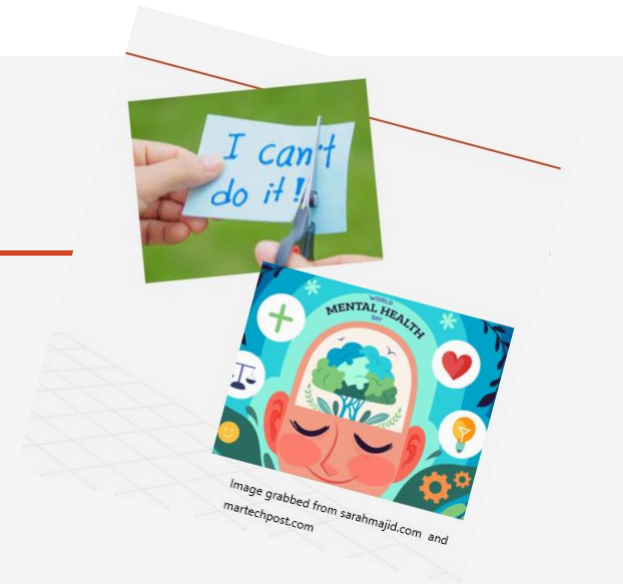
Recommendations

1 A Comparative study on pooled data may then be conducted by including pandemic data as "control group" to determine differences on sense of self-efficacy and mental health of teachers in the higher education during the aftermath of pandemic to validate the claim of the present study.

2 Researchers can consider other potential variables that may affect teacher's self-efficacy and mental health under the post-pandemic contexts or post-COVID environment.

3 Future studies may include more extensive data collection by conducting more in-depth Interviews or Focus Group Discussion

4 Researchers might also consider exploring further the subscale under psychological distress and psychological well-being.

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Thank you!

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