

**Teacher self-efficacy among Grade 6 teachers:
Sources, classroom practices, and challenges**

Carla Mae A. Galacinao*

Northeastern College, Santiago City, Isabela, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Teacher self-efficacy plays an important role in how teachers respond to classroom demands, engage learners, and sustain effective teaching practices. However, limited evidence exists on the sources of teacher self-efficacy, classroom practices, and challenges experienced by Grade 6 teachers in the public elementary schools of Roxas East and West Districts. This study examined the sources and level of teacher self-efficacy, classroom practices that promote it, challenging learner behaviors and classroom situations, and differences in teachers' perceptions according to selected characteristics. A descriptive research design was employed with 18 Grade 6 teachers as respondents. Data were gathered through a questionnaire, informal interviews, and documentary analysis and were analyzed using frequency, percentage, ranking, weighted mean, and chi-square. The findings showed high familiarity with the sources of self-efficacy, with verbal persuasion receiving the highest rating. Teachers also strongly subscribed to practices that promote self-efficacy, particularly setting achievable goals. Role overload emerged as the most difficult challenge. The proposed enhancement blueprint was rated very effective, highlighting targeted professional development, recognition, and collaborative planning.

Keywords: Teacher self-efficacy, Grade 6 teachers, classroom practices, role overload, professional development.

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INTRODUCTION

Teaching requires more than subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical skills. It also requires teachers to believe that they can organize and carry out the actions needed to achieve desired instructional outcomes. This belief is commonly referred to as self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as a person's judgment of his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to attain particular goals. In the teaching profession, teacher self-efficacy concerns teachers' judgments of their capability to engage learners, use appropriate instructional strategies, and manage classroom behavior.

Teacher self-efficacy is therefore not synonymous with general confidence. It is a task- and context-specific judgment. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) explained that teacher

*Corresponding author / Email: carlamae.galacinao@deped.gov.ph

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efficacy involves teachers' perceptions of their capability to influence student learning under particular classroom conditions. Their model identifies three major domains: efficacy for student engagement, efficacy for instructional strategies, and efficacy for classroom management. These domains are particularly relevant to elementary teachers because teaching at this level requires sustained attention to learners' participation, instructional differentiation, classroom behavior, and individual learning needs.

The importance of teacher self-efficacy has been established across several decades of educational research. A synthesis of 165 studies by Zee and Koomen (2016) found positive associations between teacher self-efficacy and classroom processes, student adjustment, and teachers' psychological well-being. Similarly, Klassen and Tze (2014), in a meta-analysis of 43 studies involving 9,216 participants, reported that teacher self-efficacy was significantly associated with evaluated teaching performance. These findings suggest that what teachers believe about their professional capabilities may influence how they approach instructional responsibilities and respond to classroom challenges.

According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001), teachers with stronger efficacy beliefs tend to demonstrate greater persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, and constructive instructional behavior. Such beliefs may become particularly important when teachers encounter learners who are difficult to motivate or manage. In these circumstances, teachers must make repeated instructional decisions, adjust strategies, and sustain their efforts despite setbacks. Self-efficacy can influence whether teachers interpret these challenges as manageable professional demands or as situations beyond their capabilities.

Recent evidence further strengthens this position. Ma et al. (2025), in a systematic review and meta-analysis involving 71 studies and more than 254,000 teachers, found statistically significant, although generally small, associations between teacher self-efficacy and students' academic performance. The analysis also indicated that efficacy related to instructional strategies and classroom management had stronger associations with academic performance than efficacy related to student engagement. These findings are important because they indicate that teacher self-efficacy should not be treated as a single, undifferentiated construct.

The relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher well-being is also noteworthy. Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that teacher self-efficacy was related to job satisfaction, teaching experience, gender, and job stress. Zee and Koomen (2016) likewise reported positive relationships between self-efficacy and indicators of teacher well-being, including job satisfaction, personal accomplishment, and professional commitment. As explained by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010), teachers' efficacy beliefs are also connected with occupational experiences such as burnout and job satisfaction. Thus, strengthening teacher self-efficacy may have implications not only for instructional quality but also for teachers' professional well-being.

The development of teacher self-efficacy can be understood through four major sources identified in social cognitive theory: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal or social persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997). Mastery experiences arise from actual accomplishments. Successful experiences can strengthen teachers' beliefs that they are capable of handling similar tasks in the future. Vicarious experiences occur when teachers observe colleagues or other relevant models successfully performing a task. Verbal persuasion refers to encouragement, feedback, and other forms of credible social support. Physiological and affective states include the emotional and physical conditions that teachers interpret when evaluating their capability to perform a task.

Of the four sources, mastery experience is generally regarded as the most influential. Usher and Pajares (2008) noted, however, that the relative influence of the sources may vary according to context and individual characteristics. This observation is relevant to practicing

teachers because efficacy beliefs are not formed in isolation. School climate, leadership, collegial relationships, professional development, and classroom experiences can all provide information that teachers use in judging their professional capabilities.

Professional development may therefore serve as an important avenue for strengthening teacher self-efficacy. Schipper et al. (2018), for example, found that participation in Lesson Study was associated with improvements in teacher self-efficacy and adaptive teaching behavior. Similarly, Mintzes et al. (2013) found that sustained professional learning communities could enhance elementary teachers' self-efficacy in science teaching. More recent evidence is even more compelling. Täschner et al. (2025) synthesized 115 intervention studies involving 11,284 pre-service and in-service teachers and found a significant positive overall effect of interventions on teacher self-efficacy. Their findings support the value of systematic professional learning rather than relying solely on individual teachers' efforts to improve their confidence.

The Philippine context provides additional justification for examining teacher self-efficacy at the local level. Polido and Chavez (2016), in developing and evaluating a Filipino Teacher Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale, involved 700 public elementary school teachers from Region XI. Their analysis demonstrated the multidimensional nature of teacher self-efficacy in the Philippine setting. The study identified dimensions involving instructional strategies and teaching and support, suggesting that instruments and interventions should be sensitive to the local educational context.

More recent Philippine studies provide similar evidence. Padohinog et al. (2024) examined teacher self-efficacy in relation to achievement goals, instructional strategies, and student engagement and reported significant positive relationships among these variables. In another study involving public elementary teachers in Antique, Saragena et al. (2024) found a significant positive relationship between teachers' instructional practices and self-efficacy. Their findings suggest that teachers who perceive themselves as more efficacious may also demonstrate stronger instructional practices.

Local evidence also points to the importance of school conditions. Guhao and Sioting (2023) reported significant relationships among organizational trust, teacher self-efficacy, school culture, and professional learning communities among public elementary school teachers in Region XI. Likewise, Eusebio et al. (2025) found that a supportive school culture significantly influenced teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction among public elementary school teachers in the Philippines. Temporaza and Dioso (2025) also reported a strong positive relationship between organizational culture and teacher self-efficacy in public elementary schools in Davao de Oro.

Other Philippine studies have connected teacher self-efficacy with professional performance. Sangcad and Abarquez (2024) found high self-efficacy and very satisfactory work performance among public school teachers in Lanao del Norte. Paguntalan (2023), meanwhile, reported high self-efficacy among science teachers in Negros Occidental, although the relationship between self-efficacy and overall teaching performance was not uniformly significant across the dimensions examined. These findings illustrate an important point: teacher self-efficacy is influential, but its relationship with professional outcomes may depend on the specific teaching domain, school context, and indicators used.

The literature therefore supports the importance of teacher self-efficacy while also revealing the need for context-specific investigation. International studies have established its relationship with teaching behavior, classroom processes, professional well-being, and student outcomes. Philippine studies have likewise demonstrated its relevance among public school teachers. However, the available evidence does not sufficiently explain the self-efficacy of

Grade 6 teachers in the public elementary schools of Roxas East and West Districts. This local context warrants focused investigation because Grade 6 teachers work with learners approaching the transition from elementary to secondary education, a period that requires sustained academic support, classroom management, learner engagement, and preparation for more demanding educational environments.

The present study was therefore undertaken to determine the level and sources of teacher self-efficacy among Grade 6 teachers in the public elementary schools of Roxas East and West Districts. It also examines the domains in which teachers perceive themselves to be efficacious, the classroom practices they use to promote self-efficacy, the challenging learner behaviors and classroom situations they encounter, and the possible differences in these experiences when teachers are grouped according to selected personal and professional characteristics. Ultimately, the study seeks to provide an empirical basis for a context-responsive plan for strengthening teacher self-efficacy.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to determine the teacher self-efficacy of Grade 6 teachers in the public elementary schools of Roxas East and West Districts. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, latest performance rating for School Year 2024–2025, present position, length of teaching experience, and level of participation in in-service training?
2. What are the sources of teacher self-efficacy among the respondents, and to what extent are these sources experienced?
3. What is the level of teacher self-efficacy of the respondents in terms of student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management?
4. What classroom practices do teachers employ to promote self-efficacy, and to what extent are these practices experienced?
5. What challenging learner behaviors and classroom situations do the respondents encounter in relation to teacher self-efficacy, and to what extent do these constitute challenges?
6. Is there a significant difference in the respondents' perceptions of challenging learner behaviors and classroom situations when they are grouped according to gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, present position, and length of teaching experience?
7. Based on the findings of the study, what teacher self-efficacy enhancement plan may be proposed for Grade 6 teachers in the public elementary schools of Roxas East and West Districts?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design to determine and describe the prevailing conditions related to teacher self-efficacy among Grade 6 teachers. Descriptive research is appropriate when the purpose is to describe existing conditions and examine relationships among variables (Costales & Zulueta, 2003; Van Dalen & Meyer, 1999). Whitney (1999) likewise explained that descriptive-normative research is concerned with determining the actual conditions that exist at the time of investigation.

The study was conducted in the public elementary schools of Roxas East and West Districts in the Schools Division of Isabela. Nineteen schools were identified as study sites, comprising 10 schools in Roxas East District and nine schools in Roxas West District. The

target participants were Grade 6 teachers from these schools. The researcher, who was a teacher at Roxas Central School, excluded herself from the study. Consequently, 18 Grade 6 teachers participated in the study. All participating schools were accessible by land transportation.

A questionnaire served as the primary data-gathering instrument, while an unstructured interview was used as a supplementary source of information. The questionnaire covered the respondents' personal circumstances, sources of self-efficacy, types or domains of self-efficacy, strategies for promoting self-efficacy in the classroom, challenging learner behaviors encountered by teachers, and a proposed blueprint for enhancing teacher self-efficacy. Before its administration, the questionnaire was tried out with teachers from nearby districts who were not included in the study. Their comments and suggestions were considered in revising the instrument. The revised questionnaire was subsequently presented to the Dean of Graduate Studies and the research adviser, whose recommendations, together with those obtained during the pre-testing, were incorporated into the final instrument.

The questionnaire responses were quantified using a five-point Likert scale. The scale was used to determine respondents' familiarity with the sources of self-efficacy, awareness of the types or domains of self-efficacy, the effectiveness of classroom strategies for promoting self-efficacy, the difficulty associated with challenging learner behaviors and classroom situations, and the perceived effectiveness of the proposed blueprint for enhancing teacher self-efficacy. The original numerical scales and qualitative categories are omitted here in accordance with the journal-style presentation requested.

An informal interview was also conducted to obtain supplementary information relevant to the study and to check and counter-check the questionnaire responses. The interviews were conducted during the retrieval of the questionnaires, and randomly selected respondents were also invited to participate in an informal Google Meet conference. In addition, documentary analysis was undertaken. With permission from the school heads, the researcher obtained the respondents' latest performance ratings for School Year 2024–2025.

Before data collection, the researcher secured permission from the Schools Division Superintendent of Isabela. The researcher then sent the questionnaire link to the school heads, who informed the teachers about the study. The respondents accessed the online questionnaire through the link provided and completed it according to the accompanying instructions. Informal interviews were subsequently conducted with selected respondents through Google Meet. The collected data were organized, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted.

For statistical treatment, frequency, percentage, and ranking were used to summarize the respondents' profiles in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, latest performance rating, present position, teaching experience, and participation in seminars or in-service training. Weighted mean was used to analyze the responses concerning the sources of self-efficacy, domains of self-efficacy, classroom strategies for promoting self-efficacy, challenging learner behaviors and classroom situations, and the proposed blueprint for enhancing teacher self-efficacy. Chi-square test was employed to test the study's hypothesis and determine whether significant differences existed among the relevant categorical variables. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

The statistical procedures were selected to correspond with the descriptive and comparative objectives of the study. Frequency and percentage summarized the characteristics of the participants, weighted mean described the extent of responses across the major study dimensions, and the chi-square test was used to examine the statistical significance of differences in the specified categorical data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study involved 18 Grade 6 teachers from the public elementary schools in Roxas East and West Districts. The respondents had a mean age of 38.83 years. Most were female (77.78%), married (94.44%), and holders of a master's degree (61.11%). A large majority were Teacher III (83.33%), while all respondents received an Outstanding performance rating for School Year 2024–2025. In terms of teaching experience, the largest group had 6–10 years in service (44.44%). These characteristics indicate that the respondents were generally experienced and academically qualified teachers. However, the uniform Outstanding performance rating is also important when interpreting the findings because it limits variation in performance and may partly explain the generally favorable perceptions reported throughout the study. The respondents reported a high level of familiarity with the sources of self-efficacy, obtaining a grand weighted mean of 4.38, interpreted as “Very Familiar.” Among the sources examined, verbal persuasion ranked first ($M = 4.55$), followed by vicarious experiences ($M = 4.50$), mastery experiences ($M = 4.49$), and emotional and physiological states ($M = 4.38$). Imaginal experiences received the lowest mean ($M = 4.00$) and were interpreted as “Familiar.”

The prominence of verbal persuasion is noteworthy. Teachers appear to place considerable value on encouragement, advice, feedback, and affirmation from significant others. This finding is consistent with Bandura's (1997) view that social persuasion can strengthen efficacy beliefs when the feedback is credible and accompanied by opportunities for successful performance. At the same time, mastery experiences remain important. The highest-rated mastery indicator was the role of practice in improving performance ($M = 4.72$). This suggests that respondents recognize actual accomplishment and repeated practice as important foundations of professional confidence.

Vicarious experience was also strongly recognized. Viewing real-life situations received the highest rating within this domain ($M = 4.72$). This indicates that teachers see observation of others' successful practices as a useful source of professional learning. Such a finding is consistent with Bandura's (1997) position that observing capable models can influence efficacy judgments, particularly when the observer perceives the model as comparable to oneself.

The respondents likewise demonstrated substantial awareness of different forms of efficacy. Self-efficacy obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.33$), followed by collective efficacy ($M = 4.23$) and means efficacy ($M = 4.12$). The overall mean was 4.23, interpreted in the study as “Fully Aware.” The result suggests that teachers generally understand efficacy as involving both personal capability and the wider social and material conditions surrounding professional performance.

The high awareness of self-efficacy is particularly relevant to the study because self-efficacy concerns teachers' judgments of what they can accomplish in specific professional situations. However, awareness of the concept should not be equated with a high level of actual self-efficacy. A teacher may understand the meaning and sources of self-efficacy without necessarily demonstrating strong efficacy beliefs in every classroom situation. This distinction is important in interpreting the findings.

In classroom practice, the respondents reported a high level of commitment to strategies intended to promote self-efficacy. The overall weighted mean was 4.50, interpreted as “Fully Subscribed to.” Setting achievable goals obtained the highest mean ($M = 4.78$). Creating a supportive environment, accepting and learning from failures, and encouraging self-reflection also received relatively high ratings, each at approximately 4.67. Even the lowest-rated strategy remained favorably assessed, although one indicator concerning daily problem-solving opportunities received a comparatively lower mean of 4.06.

These findings indicate that the teachers tend to use practices that emphasize attainable goals, support, reflection, communication, peer modeling, and constructive responses to

failure. Such practices are consistent with the sources of efficacy identified by Bandura (1997). Goal setting and successful task completion can provide mastery experiences, while peer modeling can provide vicarious experiences. Feedback and encouragement can reinforce efficacy through social persuasion. The results therefore suggest that the respondents' classroom practices are broadly aligned with established mechanisms through which efficacy beliefs may be strengthened.

Despite these favorable practices, the teachers identified several substantial challenges. The overall weighted mean for the difficulties encountered in promoting teacher self-efficacy was 3.86, interpreted as "Difficult." The most serious concern was working in too many roles simultaneously ($M = 4.39$). Paperwork and lack of proper funding both obtained $M = 4.33$, while applying a prescribed curriculum to different types of learners obtained $M = 4.28$. Stress and anxiety also ranked relatively high at $M = 4.17$.

The pattern is significant because the major difficulties are not limited to teachers' pedagogical competence. They are also organizational and structural. Heavy workloads, administrative requirements, limited resources, curriculum demands, and psychological pressure can reduce the time and energy available for instruction. Thus, strengthening teacher self-efficacy should not be understood solely as a matter of training teachers to become more confident. The school environment also matters. A teacher may possess strong instructional knowledge yet feel less capable when confronted with excessive non-teaching responsibilities or inadequate resources.

Professional isolation was rated as moderately difficult ($M = 3.33$), while some technology-related concerns were also among the lower-ranked difficulties. Although these concerns were less severe than workload and administrative burden, they remain relevant. Opportunities to observe colleagues, exchange experiences, and receive constructive feedback can provide vicarious experiences and social persuasion. The relatively lower rating for professional isolation may indicate that teachers have some access to collegial support, although the study does not establish how frequently or how effectively such support occurs.

The tests of differences produced a generally consistent result. When respondents were grouped according to civil status, the computed chi-square was 0.212, below the critical value of 3.841 at the 0.05 level with 1 degree of freedom. The difference was therefore not statistically significant. Similarly, the analysis according to years in service yielded a computed chi-square of 2.400, compared with a critical value of 11.070 at the 0.05 level with 5 degrees of freedom. This result was also not significant. These results suggest that perceptions of the difficulties encountered in promoting teacher self-efficacy were relatively similar across the categories examined. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted with caution. The study included only 18 respondents, and some categories contained very few participants. Consequently, a non-significant result may reflect genuine similarity, but it may also reflect limited statistical power. The absence of a significant difference should therefore not be interpreted as proof that demographic or professional characteristics can never influence teachers' perceptions.

The proposed teacher self-efficacy enhancement measures received the most favorable overall assessment in the study. The blueprint obtained an average weighted mean of 4.58, interpreted as "Very Effective." Targeted professional development, positive reinforcement, and collaborative planning and decision-making each received a high mean of 4.72. Classroom walkthroughs and collaborative reflection also received high ratings of 4.67.

The pattern of responses provides a useful basis for intervention planning. Teachers appear to favor professional development that is specific to their actual instructional needs rather than training that is purely general or theoretical. They also value recognition,

participation in decision-making, peer interaction, and opportunities for reflection. These preferences correspond closely with the challenges identified earlier. Targeted training can address perceived competence; positive reinforcement can strengthen social persuasion; collaborative planning can increase teachers' sense of agency; and peer observation can provide vicarious experiences.

The findings are broadly consistent with Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory and with empirical research showing that teacher self-efficacy is related to classroom processes, professional well-being, and teaching effectiveness (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016). They also accord with evidence that structured professional development can strengthen teacher self-efficacy (Schipper et al., 2018; Täschner et al., 2025). In the Philippine context, Polido and Chavez (2016) likewise demonstrated the multidimensional character of teacher self-efficacy among public elementary school teachers.

Taken together, the findings present a clear but qualified picture. The 18 Grade 6 teachers demonstrate strong familiarity with the sources and forms of efficacy and report frequent use of classroom practices intended to strengthen efficacy. At the same time, they experience meaningful organizational and classroom challenges, particularly multiple roles, paperwork, inadequate funding, curriculum demands, and stress. The central implication is that efforts to strengthen teacher self-efficacy should combine individual professional development with supportive school-level conditions. Training alone is unlikely to address problems that originate from workload, resources, and organizational demands.

Because the study is based on a small, localized group of respondents, its findings should be treated primarily as evidence about the participating teachers rather than as representative estimates for all Grade 6 teachers. Future studies involving larger samples and multiple school divisions could provide stronger evidence and permit more reliable comparisons across teacher characteristics and school contexts.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the Grade 6 teachers demonstrated strong awareness of self-efficacy and generally favorable perceptions of practices that promote it. Their uniformly Outstanding performance ratings also indicate a high level of professional performance within the group studied. However, strong performance does not mean that teachers are free from workplace difficulties. The findings show that their professional capacity is exercised within conditions that can place considerable demands on them.

Among the difficulties identified, role overload emerged as the most prominent concern. Heavy paperwork, inadequate funding, curricular demands, and stress were also reported as significant challenges. These findings suggest that teachers' difficulties are not solely matters of individual competence or motivation. Organizational conditions influence how effectively teachers can perform their roles. When teachers are required to assume numerous responsibilities at the same time, the time and energy available for their primary function—teaching—may be reduced.

The findings also showed significant differences in the respondents' perceptions when grouped according to educational attainment and present position, as reported in the study. Teachers with higher educational attainment and those occupying higher positions appeared to perceive and manage challenging conditions more favorably. This finding suggests that advanced academic preparation and professional experience may provide teachers with additional knowledge, skills, confidence, or access to professional resources. However, because the study involved only 18 respondents, these differences should be interpreted cautiously. They should not be taken as evidence that educational attainment or position directly causes higher resilience or self-efficacy.

The findings further indicate that teacher self-efficacy can be strengthened through appropriate professional and organizational support. The proposed intervention blueprint received a “Very Effective” assessment. In particular, respondents gave high importance to targeted professional development, recognition, and collaborative planning. These preferences provide a practical direction for school administrators. Professional development should focus on specific skills and classroom needs rather than rely mainly on general lectures. Such activities can provide teachers with opportunities to develop mastery experiences and strengthen their professional confidence.

Mentoring should also be institutionalized, particularly for teachers who are still developing their professional competence. Experienced teachers can serve as models and sources of constructive feedback. This arrangement can provide younger teachers with vicarious experiences and verbal persuasion while helping them respond more effectively to difficult classroom situations. At the same time, teachers pursuing graduate studies should be supported through available opportunities such as flexible scheduling, scholarship endorsements, and other appropriate forms of institutional assistance.

School administrators should likewise rationalize ancillary assignments. Clerical work and multiple coordinatorship responsibilities should be reviewed and distributed as fairly as possible so that teachers can devote sufficient time to instruction. Teacher participation in school planning and decision-making should also be strengthened. Functional committees and genuine opportunities for consultation can promote collective efficacy and increase teachers’ sense of ownership of school goals.

Recognition should form part of the school’s support system. Timely and meaningful acknowledgment of teachers’ efforts can strengthen morale and reinforce positive professional practices. In addition, adequate instructional resources should be provided. Functional technology and updated teaching materials can help teachers perform their tasks more effectively and reduce unnecessary frustration.

Finally, teacher well-being should not be overlooked. Stress-management activities, peer support, and appropriate wellness initiatives may help teachers cope with the demands of their work. These measures should complement, rather than replace, efforts to address the organizational sources of stress. The central lesson of the study is that sustaining teacher self-efficacy requires more than asking teachers to become more confident or resilient. It requires a school environment that provides opportunities for professional growth, meaningful recognition, collegial support, adequate resources, and reasonable workloads. Through such a balanced approach, schools can create conditions in which teachers are better able to sustain effective teaching and respond constructively to the changing needs of their learners.

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