ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 5| May 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

SELF-EFFICACY AND OUTCOME EXPECTANCY AS PREDICTORS OF TEACHER COMPETENCE HANDLING LEARNERS WITH DIFFICULTY IN REMEMBERING, PAYING ATTENTION, AND UNDERSTANDING

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ABSTRACT

The low competence of teachers in handling learners with difficulty presents a significant problem. This study investigates the relationship between self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and teacher competence, addressing the global concern of low teacher competence. Employing a descriptive correlational design, the researcher gathered data from 150 respondents selected via convenience sampling. The analysis revealed that self-efficacy and outcome expectancy significantly predicted teacher competence, supporting the tenets of Social Cognitive Theory. Specifically, the study demonstrated that higher levels of self-efficacy and positive outcome expectancy were associated with greater teacher competence. These findings suggest that interventions to boost teachers' self-belief in their abilities and foster positive expectations regarding their impact can effectively enhance instructional effectiveness, particularly in supporting learners with memory, attention, and comprehension challenges. However, the study also acknowledged that self-efficacy and outcome expectancy accounted for 67.1% of the variance in teacher competence, leaving 32.9% unexplained. Consequently, the researcher recommended further investigations to explore additional variables that may contribute to teacher competence.

KEYWORDS: *Outcome Expectancy; Self-Efficacy; Special Needs Education Teachers; Teacher Competence*

INTRODUCTION

One of the most critical challenges in inclusive education practices in mainstream schools is the low competence of teachers in handling learners with disabilities (Horzum & Izci, 2018). Most teachers acknowledged their incompetence in upholding inclusive education in the classroom (Yilmaz, 2021).

In Africa, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, and Turkey, researchers investigated inclusive education and the obstacles hindering its adoption, which showed a series of challenges obstructing the implementation of the inclusive system. these challenges include teacher incompetence (Zwane & Malale, 2018; Adebayo & Ngwenya, 2015; Hettiaarachi & Das, 2018). In the Philippines, public school teachers are uncertain about their capacity to teach in an inclusive classroom and feel unprepared to manage learners with disabilities (Ecoben, 2019). It was observed in the study by Ignacio and John (2023) that teacher-respondents acknowledged that they feel incompetent to teach and meet the demands of learners with special needs. Therefore, they work with other professionals and colleagues.

The adverse outcomes resulting from teachers' incompetence or inability to address diverse learning needs can present in various forms. These outcomes include a higher probability of children dropping out of school, a lack of engagement in the classroom, and lower academic achievement compared to their peers (Singal, 2019). Numerous studies have broadly examined special education. However, there is still a gap in understanding how teachers' self-efficacy influences their capability to support their students with difficulties remembering and concentrating. It is essential to address this gap, as teachers' confidence in their skills directly impacts their capacity to implement effective strategies for these learners. The increasing emphasis on inclusive education makes exploring the factors contributing to teacher competence in this area crucial. Investigating teachers' perceived incompetence and challenges was necessary to enhance professional development efforts, improve instructional practices, and foster a more supportive learning environment for all learners.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the significance of self-efficacy and outcome expectancy as predictors of teacher competence in handling learners with difficulty remembering, paying attention, and understanding. More precisely, the research sought to examine the following key questions:

- To determine the levels of self-efficacy of teachers in terms of learner engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management; outcome expectancy of teachers in terms of curriculum and instruction, handling learners in the classroom, learner assessment, and cultural enrichment; and teacher competence in terms of teaching and instruction, communication and cooperation, attitude and belief, reflection and development;
- To determine the significance of the correlation between self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and teacher competence;

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- To determine the significance of the individual and combined degree of influence of self-efficacy and outcome expectancy on teacher competence;
- To determine the significance of the strengths of self-efficacy and outcome expectancy to predict teacher competence.

Hypotheses

This study was tested at a 0.05 significance level.

H_{o1}: Self-efficacy and outcome expectancy are not significantly correlated with teachers' competence.

H_{o2}: Teachers' competence does not significantly influence Self-efficacy and outcome expectancy.

H_{o3}: Self-efficacy and outcome expectancy do not significantly predict teachers' competence.

Theoretical Framework

The Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977), which suggests that a person's confidence in performing necessary actions to achieve their goals effectively allows them to regulate their cognition, motivation, and behavior (Lee, 2023), was applied in this study. This research delimits the conceptual framework of self-efficacy and outcome expectancy as subjective conviction and teacher competence as the desired goal. The study does not include the action variable explained in the theory that mediates between subjective conviction and desired goals. The independent variable, subjective conviction, is split into two, namely, self-efficacy and outcome expectancy, while the dependent variable is focused on teacher competence.

Figure 1 illustrates self-efficacy's three key variables: instructional strategies, learner engagement, and classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Four indicators of outcome expectancy include curriculum and instruction, handling learners in the classroom, learner assessment, and cultural enrichment (Siwatu, 2011). Deng et al. (2016) identified four key indicators of teacher competence: teaching and instruction, communication and cooperation, attitude and belief, and reflection and development. The arrow indicates the connection between the three variables.

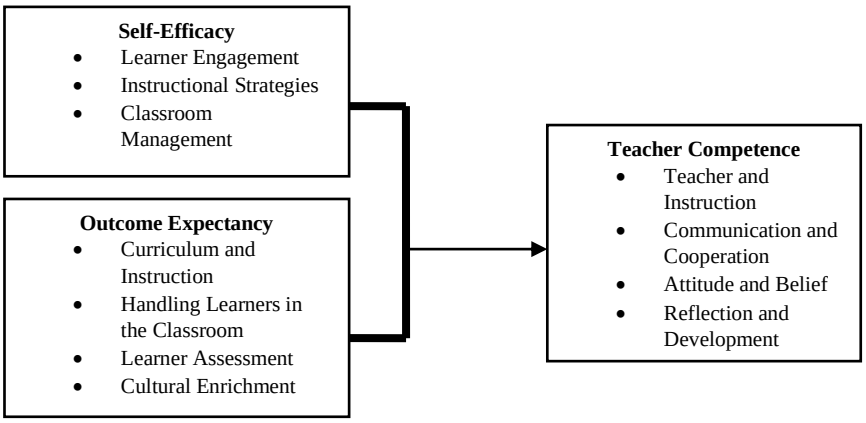


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the study

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The quantitative design, with a descriptive correlational approach, was employed. This design outlines the relationship between two or more variables without determining cause and effect. The setting for conducting this study was public elementary schools located in Sultan Kudarat Province, Region XII, Philippines. These schools offered Special Needs Education (SNED) programs dedicated to providing tailored educational programs for learners with diverse learning needs and abilities. The researcher utilized a modified survey questionnaire. The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was utilized to measure the first independent variable, teacher self-efficacy. Data on the second independent variable, teachers' outcome expectancy, was gathered using an adapted version of the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy Scale (Siwatu, 2007). Further, to gather data on the dependent variable, which was the teacher's competence, the researcher adopted the Inclusive Teachers Competency Questionnaire (ITCQ) by Deng et al. (2016).

The test proved to be highly reliable, with an excellent reliability coefficient. The pilot test assessed the reliability of participants' responses to the questionnaire items. The self-efficacy measure showed a reliability rating of 0.958, as assessed by Cronbach's Alpha, demonstrating excellent internal consistency. The rating for outcome expectancy of 0.933 and teacher competence of 0.949 also indicates excellent internal consistency. Therefore, the overall reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha was 0.979, with an equivalent internal consistency rating of outstanding.

Ethical Considerations

This section of the study aimed to safeguard and honor the rights of the participants from all forms of harm by ensuring confidentiality and professionalism for all data gathered and by following specific ethical guidelines while conducting this study. The Department of Science and Technology (DOST) Administrative Order 2007-001 mandates that all health research institutions establish research ethics committees responsible for evaluating and monitoring research involving human participants. Additionally, DOST Special Order 091 s.2006 calls for the creation of the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) to address and unify health research efforts in the country (Concha & Ladrero, 2021). Informed consent was administered prior to the conduct of the study.

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RESULTS

Table 1 shows a detailed result presentation based on the descriptive analysis. *The teachers' self-efficacy*, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.437 and a mean of 4.59, was rated as "Very High," indicating that teachers' self-efficacy is always manifested. The relatively low SD suggests consistency in responses among teachers. The high self-efficacy score implies that teachers feel confident handling classroom challenges, adapting their teaching methods, and effectively engaging students in learning. This confidence level is crucial in fostering a productive and dynamic learning environment.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis.

Variables	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Self-Efficacy of Teachers	***0.437***	***4.59***	***Very High***
Learner Engagement	0.441	4.63	Very High
Instructional Strategies	0.499	4.56	Very High
Classroom Management	0.479	4.59	Very High
Outcome Expectancies of Teachers	***0.423***	***4.61***	***Very High***
Curriculum and Instruction	0.430	4.63	Very High
Handling Learners in the Classroom	0.456	4.59	Very High
Learner Assessment	0.477	4.58	Very High
Cultural Enrichment	0.455	4.62	Very High
Teacher Competence	***0.402***	***4.56***	***Very High***
Teaching and Instruction	0.448	4.56	Very High
Communication and Cooperation	0.433	4.60	Very High
Attitude and Belief	0.456	4.64	Very High
Reflection and Development	0.506	4.46	Very High

Learner engagement received a mean of 4.63 and an SD of 0.441, indicating a "Very High" descriptive level. The slightly higher mean than self-efficacy suggests that students actively participate in the learning process, showing enthusiasm and participation in classroom activities. The relatively low SD shows minimal response variation, indicating a shared perception of high engagement. This result highlights the effectiveness of teaching strategies that encourage students to be interactive and motivated in their studies.

Instructional strategies were also rated "Very High," with a mean of 4.56 and an SD of 0.499. This result suggests that teachers employ effective teaching approaches catering to different learning styles. The higher SD compared to previous variables indicates slightly more varied responses, possibly due to differences in teaching methods used across various subjects. Nonetheless, the consistently high mean underscores the effectiveness of the instructional strategies in enhancing student learning.

Classroom management obtained a mean of 4.59 and an SD of 0.479, indicating that teachers are highly competent in maintaining a well-ordered learning environment. The relatively high standard deviation suggests differences in classroom management practices, possibly influenced by class size, student behaviour, or teaching experience. However, the overall high rating signifies that teachers effectively establish rules, manage student behaviour, and create an environment conducive to learning.

Teachers ' outcome expectancies, with a mean of 4.61 and an SD of 0.423, also received a "Very High" rating, demonstrating that teachers' outcome expectancies are always manifested. The lower SD suggests uniformity in responses, indicating a shared optimism among teachers regarding the impact of their instructional efforts. This confidence in expected student success is crucial in sustaining motivation and commitment to high-quality teaching.

Curriculum and instruction were rated "Very High," with a mean of 4.63 and an SD of 0.430. This result indicates that teachers perceive their curriculum implementation and instructional delivery as highly effective. The low SD reflects consistency among respondents, emphasizing that teachers share similar experiences in ensuring that the curriculum is well-executed and aligned with learning objectives.

Handling learners in the classroom received a "Very High" rating with a mean of 4.59 and an SD of 0.456, signifying that teachers feel well-equipped to manage diverse learners. The moderate SD suggests some response variability, possibly due to differing classroom dynamics. Nevertheless, the high mean score underscores teachers' capability to address students' needs.

Learner assessment was rated "Very High," with a mean of 4.58 and an SD of 0.477. This result suggests that teachers are confident in effectively evaluating student performance. The slightly higher SD may reflect differences in assessment methods or challenges in implementing consistent evaluation practices. Nonetheless, the high mean score strongly emphasizes assessing and improving student learning outcomes.

Cultural enrichment received a "Very High" rating, with a mean of 4.62 and an SD of 0.455, highlighting that teachers effectively incorporate cultural elements into their teaching. The moderate SD suggests some differences in approaches, possibly due to variations in subject areas or student backgrounds. However, the high mean underscores teachers' commitment to fostering inclusivity and cultural awareness.

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Teacher competence, with a mean of 4.56 and an SD of 0.402, was also rated "Very High." This result suggests that teachers' competence is always manifested. The low SD indicates consistency in their perceived competence across various teaching domains, reinforcing the effectiveness of their teaching practices.

Teaching and instruction received a mean of 4.56 and an SD of 0.448, indicating that teachers are highly competent in delivering lessons and facilitating student learning. The moderate SD suggests some variation in instructional approaches, but the overall high rating reflects strong teaching proficiency.

Communication and cooperation were rated "Very High," with a mean of 4.60 and an SD of 0.433, demonstrating that teachers excel in building relationships and fostering collaboration. The relatively low SD indicates consistency in responses, emphasizing the importance of efficient communication to maintain a supportive environment for learning.

Attitude and belief received the highest mean of 4.64, with an SD of 0.456, signifying that teachers have a strong positive attitude and belief system regarding their profession. The high rating suggests that teachers are highly motivated and dedicated to their work, contributing to their classroom effectiveness.

Reflection and development received a mean of 4.46 and an SD of 0.506, still rated "Very High" but slightly lower than other variables. The higher SD suggests more variation in responses, indicating differences in how teachers engage in self-reflection and professional development. Despite this variability, the high mean score underscores the importance of continuous learning and self-improvement among teachers.

This analysis highlights that all measured variables are perceived at a "Very High" level, with slight variations in standard deviations reflecting some differences in teachers' experiences and perceptions. The consistently high ratings reinforce teachers' effectiveness in their instructional roles, student engagement efforts, and professional competencies.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 illustrates the strong link between Self-Efficacy, Outcome Expectancy, and Teacher Competence, highlighting their correlation as the results show. Given a 0.000 p-value for both Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy, the relationship was statistically significant at 0.05, leading to the null hypothesis being rejected, implying a substantial correlation among the variables.

Table 2. Correlation Table

	Teacher Competence			
	r	**p-value**	**Decision on Ho @ 0.05 level of significance**	**Interpretation**
Self-Efficacy	**0.748**	**0.000**	**Reject Ho**	**Significant**
Outcome Expectancy	**0.798**	**0.000**	**Reject Ho**	**Significant**

The value of *r* for the correlation between Self-Efficacy and Teacher Competence, which is 0.748, indicated a substantial relationship between the two variables. This value suggests that changes in Self-Efficacy (independent variable) were associated with shifts in Teacher Competence (dependent variable). The findings revealed a strong positive correlation, with an R-value of 0.748. For both Self-efficacy and Outcome Expectancy, the p-value is 0.000, therefore leading to the null hypothesis being rejected

Similarly, the correlation between Outcome Expectancy and Teacher Competence was also strong and significant. The correlation coefficient of $r = 0.798$, significant at the 0.05 level, indicated a strong positive association between these two variables. This result suggested that changes in Outcome Expectancy were linked to changes in Teacher Competence.

In summary, based on the findings, the null hypothesis was not supported and was therefore rejected. As the results show, changes in both Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy were associated with improvements in Teacher Competence.

Regression Analysis

Table 3 presents the regression analysis examining the significant impact of Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy as predictor variables on Teacher Competence. The 0.00 p-value, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, resulted in rejecting the null hypothesis. The analysis highlighted the influence of the predictor variables on Teacher Competence. A standardized coefficient beta of 0.309 and a 0.000 p-value means that Teacher Competence is significantly affected by Self-Efficacy. Additionally, Outcome Expectancy had a beta of 0.552 and a 0.000 p-value, therefore likewise identified as a significant predictor influencing the dependent variable. Thus, both Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy are significant aspects that affect Teacher Competence.

Outcome Expectancy, which is the predictor variable, had the highest t-value of 7.071, while Self-Efficacy had the lowest t-value of 3.958. This implies stronger evidence against the null hypothesis, as higher t-values are linked to smaller p-values, thereby providing greater justification for rejecting the null hypothesis.

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Table 3. Regression Table

	Teacher Competence						
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				
Independent Variables	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**	**Decision on Ho**	**interpretation**
Constant	0.841	0.216		3.895	0.000		
Self-Efficacy	0.284	0.072	0.309	3.958	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Outcome Expectancy	0.525	0.074	0.552	7.071	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

$R = 0.819$; $R^2 = 0.671$; F-value = 150.085; p-value = 0.000

To conclude, the predictor variables, Self-Efficacy, and Outcome Expectancy, significantly influence the dependent variable, Teacher Competence. The R^2 value of 0.671 indicates that these predictors accounted for 67.1% of the variance in Teacher Competence, underscoring their strong impact. Moreover, the regression analysis was statistically significant, based on the 150.085 F-value and the 0.000 p-value.

DISCUSSIONS

High self-efficacy in learner engagement suggests that teachers are confident in fostering students' motivation and participation. According to research by Zee and Koomen (2016), educators with strong self-efficacy are likely to adopt novel techniques in teaching and cultivate inclusive learning spaces that contribute to student achievement. Furthermore, effective instructional strategies contribute to higher student achievement, as research highlights that teachers with greater self-efficacy adapt their teaching to accommodate diverse learning needs (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019).

Strong classroom management skills indicate that teachers can maintain an organized and productive learning environment. According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2021), teachers with high self-efficacy will likely be more persistent when managing disruptive behaviors and fostering positive student-teacher relationships. This finding is further supported by the study of Klassen and Durksen (2021), which showed that high levels of self-efficacy in these domains correlate with improved student learning outcomes, as educators who believe in their capabilities are more likely to persist through challenges and maintain high expectations for students. These findings emphasize that self-efficacy is vital in teacher competence, influencing aspects like instructional quality, student engagement, and classroom management. Moreover, the study enhances the expanding body of research highlighting the importance of professional development programs.

High outcome expectancy in curriculum and instruction suggests that teachers strongly believe their teaching methods contribute significantly to student success. Research highlights that teachers with intense curriculum-based outcome expectancy are likelier to adopt innovative pedagogical approaches and align their teaching with educational goals (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). Thus, teachers with high outcome expectancy anticipate favorable results from their efforts to attain specific objectives (Ward et al., 2020).

The results also indicate that teachers hold strong beliefs about the impact of learner assessment, recognizing its role in guiding instruction and measuring student progress. Studies emphasize that teachers with high assessment outcome expectancy use diverse assessment techniques to personalize instruction and enhance learning outcomes (Krämer & Zimmermann, 2021). Furthermore, high ratings in cultural enrichment suggest that teachers acknowledge the importance of culturally responsive teaching in fostering inclusivity and student empowerment (Hajovsky et al., 2020). The research underscores educators integrating cultural knowledge and diversity into their education to create more equitable learning environments, improving student motivation and performance (Hammond, 2021).

These findings reinforce that outcome expectancy is crucial to teaching effectiveness, instructional decision-making, and student success. This study aligns with the Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that teachers' belief in their capacity to affect student outcomes is crucial in shaping their teaching practices (Bandura, 1997). Enhancing teachers' outcome expectancy through continuous professional development and reflective teaching practices can improve instructional quality and student learning experiences (Scherer et al., 2019).

High competence in teaching and instruction suggests that educators possess the necessary skills to deliver practical lessons, adapt teaching strategies, and engage students in meaningful learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2023). Research indicates that teachers with strong instructional competence positively influence student achievement, critical thinking, and long-term academic success (Bardach & Klassen, 2020). The high rating in communication and cooperation highlights the importance of collaborative teaching, strong classroom interactions, and positive teacher-student relationships in fostering academic and social development (Kim et al., 2019).

The highest rating in attitude and belief underscores that teachers' self-perception and professional mindset significantly impact their teaching effectiveness. Studies show that educators with strong self-efficacy and an optimistic

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outlook on student potential are more resilient, motivated, and effective in creating supportive learning environments (Klassen & Tze, 2021). Additionally, competence in reflection and development suggests that teachers are committed to self-assessment, lifelong learning, and professional improvement, which is critical for maintaining high teaching standards and adapting to educational changes (Burić & Moè, 2020).

These findings affirm that teacher competence is crucial to instructional quality and student success. This conclusion aligns with Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the interplay between teachers' beliefs, professional actions, and learning outcomes (Bandura, 1997). Continuous professional development programs that enhance instructional strategies, foster collaboration, and promote reflective practice can further strengthen teacher competence and effectiveness (Scherer et al., 2019).

Teacher self-efficacy enhances instructional quality, student engagement, and effective classroom management (Klassen & Tze, 2021). Educators with high self-efficacy demonstrate remarkable persistence, adaptability, and creativity in addressing student needs, leading to improved learning outcomes (Scherer et al., 2019). Furthermore, high self-efficacy enables teachers to overcome challenges, maintain motivation, and develop stronger relationships with students, all enhancing teaching competence (Kim et al., 2019).

Similarly, outcome expectancy significantly influences teacher effectiveness by shaping their instructional decisions and motivation to implement innovative strategies (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2021). When teachers expect positive outcomes from their teaching efforts, they are more likely to invest time and effort in lesson planning, differentiated instruction, and student support (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019). High outcome expectancy also fosters collaborative learning environments and promotes inclusive practices that cater to diverse student needs (Bardach & Klassen, 2020).

The findings underscore the relationship between self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and professional performance, as outlined by Bandura in his Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997). Strong self-efficacy and positive outcome expectations in teachers allow them to become more resilient, proactive, and reflective in their teaching practices, leading to higher competence levels and better student outcomes (Burić & Kim, 2020). Therefore, programs that target professional development, enhance teacher self-efficacy, and reinforce positive outcome expectancies can significantly improve teaching competence and overall educational quality (Darling-Hammond et al., 2023).

Table 3 presents the regression analysis, which assesses how Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy Impact Teacher Competence. A significant positive effect of Self-efficacy on Teacher Competence was highlighted. This finding aligns with existing literature emphasizing the crucial role of self-efficacy in teaching effectiveness. As teachers' self-efficacy increases, they are more confident in their instructional abilities, and they may choose to pursue professional development opportunities to enhance how their instructional strategies are implemented in the classroom (Smith et al., 2020).

Outcome Expectancy also shows a significant, favorable influence on Teacher Competence. This result suggests that teachers who believe their efforts will achieve desired educational outcomes are more competent in their roles. According to expectancy theory, individuals are motivated to perform tasks when they anticipate their efforts will result in valued outcomes (Studer & Knecht, 2016). According to a study by Lent et al. (2017), outcome expectancies refer to the anticipated, favorable, and unfavorable results that an individual expects to occur as a consequence of undertaking a task. Teachers with elevated outcome expectancies believe that taking a specific action will yield the intended outcome, thereby increasing their likelihood of engaging in that action.

The significant F-value further strengthens the validity of the regression model, reinforcing the combined effect of Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy on Teacher Competence. These results align with earlier research that emphasizes the influence of teachers' confidence in their capability and their expectations of student success on teaching effectiveness (Luo et al., 2024).

To conclude, the analysis highlights the importance of fostering self-efficacy and a positive outcome expectancy in teachers for their competence improvement. Professional development programs that bolster these psychological constructs can result in more efficient teaching practices and improved student learning experiences (Huang et al., 2024).

Conclusion

The study's results suggest that self-efficacy and outcome expectancy are crucial in predicting teachers' competence in managing learners with difficulty remembering, paying attention, and understanding. This finding aligns with the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), suggesting that believing in one's ability to effectively perform the actions required to reach specific goals empowers individuals to control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour.

Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, Department of Education officials may prioritize teacher competence by creating policies and professional development initiatives that support and enhance teachers' self-efficacy and outcome expectancy. Improving teachers' competence in this area helps advance Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) by supporting universal access to quality education and fostering equality in learning opportunities. The researcher recommends several avenues for future research. One recommendation is replicating this study by utilizing other variables not covered to determine the 32.9% variance in teacher competence that may be attributed to variables that provide a broader understanding of the factors influencing teacher effectiveness. Incorporating focus groups and one-on-one in-depth interviews as additional data collection methods may allow respondents to share richer, real-world experiences, further validating the study's conclusions. Another valuable direction may be to conduct the study with public high school teachers handling learners *other than* those with difficulties in remembering, paying attention, and understanding, while still

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examining the same variables. This initiative has the potential to widen the study's scope and provide a deeper understanding of the phenomenon by validating the findings across various populations and contexts.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my deepest gratitude to **Dr. Reynaldo Cuizon** for his continuous motivation, unwavering guidance, and tireless support throughout the process of writing this paper.

I also sincerely thank my mentor, **Dr. Alona S. Galache**, whose expertise and constant assistance have been invaluable in helping me navigate the complexities of my work. Additionally, I am genuinely grateful to the respondents for generously sharing their time, insights, and experiences, which have been instrumental in advancing our understanding of Special Needs Education (SNED).

Finally, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my family, friends, and colleagues for their unwavering support, encouragement, and belief in me, which have been a constant source of comfort and joy throughout this journey.

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ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 5| May 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

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