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Employee Self-Efficacy and Productivity in Selected Trading Companies: Basis for Action Plan

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Abstract—This study examined the relationship between self-efficacy and employee productivity in selected trading companies in Laguna, Philippines. It utilized a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design with 187 purposively sampled full-time employees. Five dimensions of self-efficacy (general, occupational, task-specific, entrepreneurial, and work environment support) were analyzed against five productivity indicators (task completion, quality of work, problem-solving, collaboration, and initiative). Validated survey instruments yielded high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha > 0.86). Results showed moderate levels of self-efficacy and productivity. Significant positive correlations existed between all dimensions, with Work Environment and Support emerging as the strongest predictor of productivity ($\beta = 0.395$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis explained 73.8% of productivity variance ($R^2 = 0.738$). The findings underscore the importance of fostering a supportive work environment and tailored interventions to enhance productivity in the trading sector.

Index Terms— **Collaboration, employee productivity, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, general self-efficacy, occupational self-efficacy, organizational support, regression analysis, self-efficacy, task-specific self-efficacy, trading companies, work environment support**

1. Introduction

The Philippine trading industry faces growing pressure from globalization and technological change, demanding increased workforce adaptability and productivity. Self-efficacy—defined as the belief in one's capacity to perform—has emerged as a key factor influencing employee outcomes. Drawing on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and the Job Demands-Resources model, this study explores how five dimensions of self-efficacy relate to employee productivity in the context of trading companies in Laguna. Recognizing productivity not only as a function of skills but also of psychological readiness, this research aims to inform human resource strategies to build a resilient, high-performing workforce.

2. Literature Review

Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their ability to perform tasks and achieve goals (Bandura, 2021), has consistently been linked to improved workplace performance, motivation, and resilience. It is a multidimensional construct encompassing general, occupational, task-specific, and entrepreneurial dimensions, each contributing uniquely to behavior and performance outcomes in organizational settings.

General self-efficacy reflects a broad sense of personal competence in overcoming challenges. Studies have shown that individuals with high general self-efficacy exhibit stronger problem-solving skills and persistence (Scholz & Schwarzer, 2022). In the Philippine context, research by Nalipay and Alfonso (2023) affirms that self-efficacy is a strong motivator for employee engagement and goal attainment.

Occupational and task-specific self-efficacy pertain to an employee's confidence in performing job-specific tasks and functions. Rigotti et al. (2021) and Tan & Cheng (2023) observed that higher occupational self-efficacy correlates with increased job satisfaction and productivity, especially in service and trading sectors. Task-specific self-efficacy has also been linked to improved accuracy and output quality in technical roles (Joo et al., 2019; Castillo & Lim, 2022).

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy (ESE) plays a vital role in innovation-driven and performance-sensitive environments like trading companies. Urban (2021) and Santos & Liñán (2022) assert that individuals with high ESE are more willing to take initiative, manage risks, and pursue growth-oriented behaviors, which enhance company adaptability and competitiveness.

Another critical factor influencing self-efficacy is work environment support, which includes leadership, feedback mechanisms, and access to resources. According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), self-efficacy acts as a personal resource that enables employees to stay engaged and productive despite external pressures. Studies by Ramos et al. (2024) and Garcia & Bautista (2023) highlight that supportive work environments significantly amplify the positive effects of self-efficacy on employee output.

In parallel, employee productivity—often measured by efficiency, quality, adaptability, collaboration, and initiative—is shown to be enhanced by higher self-efficacy levels. Sonnentag et al. (2021) and Hernandez & Ocampo (2023) found that self-efficacious employees tend to perform better, adapt to change more readily, and maintain higher work quality, particularly under pressure.

However, some researchers caution against overconfidence. Tan & Reyes (2021) note that inflated self-efficacy can sometimes lead to unrealistic expectations or decreased performance. Hence, maintaining a balanced level of self-

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efficacy, moderated by structured feedback and training, is essential.

Overall, the literature affirms that self-efficacy is a strong predictor of productivity and is enhanced by organizational support. Yet, sector-specific investigations remain limited—especially in Philippine trading companies—justifying further empirical research like the present study.

3. Methodology

A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was used. The study involved 187 full-time employees from selected trading companies in Laguna, each with at least one year of tenure. A structured questionnaire was developed and validated, comprising five self-efficacy and five productivity subscales. Responses were rated on a 4-point Likert scale. Reliability was confirmed via Cronbach's alpha (ranging from 0.866 to 0.934 for self-efficacy and 0.882 to 0.905 for productivity). Data were collected online, screened for completeness, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression.

4. Results, Analysis and Discussion

Table 1
Level of self-efficacy of respondents

Self-Efficacy Dimension	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
General Self-Efficacy	3.33	Moderate
Occupational Self-Efficacy	3.34	Moderate
Task-Specific Self-Efficacy	3.37	Moderate
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	3.35	Moderate
Work Environment and Support	3.45	Moderate to High
Overall Mean	**3.37**	**Moderate**

Table 1 shows the results and indicate that respondents reported a moderate level of self-efficacy in all five dimensions, with Work Environment and Support receiving the highest mean score (3.45). This suggests that while employees have a reasonable belief in their capabilities, their confidence is significantly bolstered when the organizational environment is perceived as supportive. This finding supports Bandura's theory that self-efficacy is shaped not just by internal beliefs but also by external conditions.

Table 2
Level of employee productivity of respondents

Productivity Indicator	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Task Completion and Efficiency	3.40	Moderate
Work Quality and Attention to Detail	3.38	Moderate
Adaptability and Problem-Solving	3.35	Moderate
Collaboration and Communication	3.32	Moderate
Goal Achievement and Initiative	3.30	Moderate
Overall Mean	**3.35**	**Moderate**

As shown in Table 2, employee productivity levels are consistently moderate across all domains. Task completion and work quality were rated the highest, indicating efficiency and output accuracy. Meanwhile, slightly lower scores on collaboration and initiative suggest areas where interpersonal and motivational dynamics can be further improved.

There is a statistically significant, positive correlation between all dimensions of self-efficacy and employee productivity. Work Environment and Support had the highest correlation ($r = 0.682$), indicating that the more employees feel supported, the more productive they are likely to be. This supports the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which emphasizes the role of organizational support in driving performance outcomes.

Regression results show that self-efficacy dimensions significantly predict employee productivity, with the model explaining 73.8% of the variance. The most influential predictor was Work Environment and Support ($\beta = 0.395$), followed by Task-Specific and Occupational Self-Efficacy. These findings highlight the combined importance of internal belief systems and contextual support in shaping employee output.

The findings reveal that while employees possess moderate levels of both self-efficacy and productivity, those who feel more supported by their work environment are more productive. This aligns with Bandura's (2021) and Bakker & Demerouti's (2007) theories, emphasizing the interaction between personal and environmental factors.

Moderate levels of initiative and adaptability suggest potential areas for development. HR interventions such as leadership training, coaching programs, and feedback systems could help increase task ownership and proactive behavior among employees. Moreover, reinforcing a psychologically safe and well-resourced workplace appears to be the most

Table 3
Correlation between self-efficacy dimensions and productivity

Self-Efficacy Dimension	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Significance (p)
General Self-Efficacy	0.543	$p < 0.01$
Occupational Self-Efficacy	0.621	$p < 0.01$
Task-Specific Self-Efficacy	0.647	$p < 0.01$
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	0.591	$p < 0.01$
Work Environment and Support	0.682	$p < 0.01$

Table 4
Multiple regression analysis: Predictors of employee productivity

Predictor	Beta (β)	p-value
General Self-Efficacy	0.163	$p < 0.05$
Occupational Self-Efficacy	0.279	$p < 0.01$
Task-Specific Self-Efficacy	0.301	$p < 0.01$
Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy	0.155	$p < 0.05$
Work Environment and Support	0.395	$p < 0.001$
Model Statistics	$R^2 = 0.738$	$F = 76.223$, $p < 0.001$

effective way to strengthen productivity through self-efficacy.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that employee self-efficacy, particularly when nurtured through a supportive environment, significantly influences productivity. Organizations in the trading sector should implement action plans that include leadership training, psychological safety initiatives, and goal-setting programs to enhance self-efficacy. Future research may explore longitudinal impacts or replicate the model in other sectors to broaden its applicability.

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