



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Teaching Experience, Efficacy, and Performance among Kindergarten Teachers in Manicahan District: A Correlational Study

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Abstract

Understanding how teaching experience and teacher efficacy relate to classroom performance is essential for strengthening early childhood education. This study examined the relationships among teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance of kindergarten teachers in Manicahan District to determine whether professional experience and confidence translate into improved instructional performance. In this study, teaching experience is operationally defined as the teachers' length of service in years in kindergarten teaching; however, when measured using a Likert-scale instrument, it refers to self-reported teaching practice engagement, which is interpreted as perceived teaching practice rather than actual years of service to avoid misleading conclusions. Teacher efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs in their capability to perform instructional tasks effectively, while teaching performance refers to their actual performance ratings based on official evaluation records. Guided by the assumption that greater experience enhances efficacy and performance, the study employed a descriptive–correlational research design. Data were collected from 35 kindergarten teachers during the 2024–2025 academic year using a validated survey questionnaire and official performance records. Statistical analyses included descriptive statistics, Pearson product–moment correlation, and analysis of variance. Results indicated that teachers demonstrated high levels of teaching experience and teacher efficacy and were rated very satisfactory in performance. ** Teaching experience showed a significant positive relationship with teacher efficacy ($r = .439$, $p = .009$, 95% CI [,], moderate effect) but was not significantly related to teaching performance ($r = -.096$, $p = .584$, small effect). Teacher efficacy also did not significantly correlate with teaching performance ($r = .057$, $p = .751$, small effect). These findings indicate that while experience is associated with higher efficacy, neither experience nor efficacy alone directly translates into improved teaching performance, suggesting the need for further investigation of other influencing factors. The study highlights the importance of strengthening professional development systems, instructional support, and school-based mentoring to enhance early childhood teaching effectiveness.

Keywords: curriculum, efficacy, kindergarten, performance, teaching experience

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education establishes the foundation for children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Kindergarten teachers play a critical role in shaping early learning trajectories, making their instructional competence, psychological readiness, and professional performance central to educational quality. Contemporary research in educational psychology emphasizes that teaching quality is shaped not only by formal training but by the dynamic interaction of teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Pianta et al., 2008).

Teaching experience has traditionally been viewed as a principal contributor to instructional effectiveness. Empirical evidence indicates that teachers show the greatest gains in effectiveness during their early years of practice, particularly in classroom management and instructional decision-making (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In early childhood settings, experience is especially critical due to the complexity of managing young learners' behavioral, emotional, and developmental needs (Mashburn et al., 2008). However, recent research challenges the assumption that experience alone guarantees sustained growth in performance, showing that continued improvement depends heavily on professional development, mentoring, and school support systems (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). These findings suggest that length of service alone is an insufficient explanation for variation in teaching quality.

Teacher efficacy, defined as teachers' beliefs in their capacity to successfully carry out teaching tasks, has emerged as one of the most robust psychological

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predictors of teaching behavior (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In this study, teacher efficacy is specifically grounded in self-efficacy theory under Social Cognitive Theory, referring to teachers' beliefs in their capability to organize and execute instructional tasks, and not to external support systems or interpersonal relationships. Teachers with high self-efficacy demonstrate stronger instructional persistence, greater openness to innovation, and more positive classroom climates. In early childhood education, teacher efficacy has been linked with emotionally supportive teacher-child relationships and more effective classroom management (Pianta et al., 2008). Moreover, strong efficacy beliefs are associated with lower stress and reduced burnout, supporting professional resilience (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Nevertheless, while teacher efficacy is consistently associated with positive instructional behaviors, its relationship with formally evaluated teaching performance remains empirically inconsistent.

Teaching performance is commonly measured through institutional evaluation systems intended to guide accountability and professional growth. Yet, accumulating evidence indicates that performance ratings may be influenced by documentation demands, leadership practices, and institutional compliance rather than purely by instructional quality (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This raises concerns about whether teaching experience and teacher efficacy are reliably reflected in official performance outcomes.

Recent international studies demonstrate that the relationships among teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance are neither linear nor uniform. Experience contributes to efficacy through mastery experiences, yet high efficacy does not consistently result in higher institutional performance ratings (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Similarly, the direct link between years of experience and performance weakens when contextual variables such as leadership, workload, and instructional resources are considered (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Despite these developments, a clear gap remains in early childhood education within developing-country public-school contexts. Most large-scale empirical studies have been conducted in highly resourced education systems. There remains limited empirical evidence examining how teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance interact among kindergarten teachers working under conditions of limited instructional resources, heavy workload, and variable family engagement. Studies focusing specifically on kindergarten teachers remain particularly scarce, despite the unique developmental and emotional demands of early childhood instruction (Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2008).

In the Philippine setting, national education reforms emphasize teacher accountability and performance standards, yet empirical evidence remains limited on whether accumulated experience and professional confidence translate into higher institutional performance at the district level. The relationship between teachers' internal psychological resources and externally evaluated performance remains underexamined in localized public-school contexts.

This study addresses this gap by examining the relationships among teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance among kindergarten teachers in Manicahan District. Specifically, the gap lies in the lack of localized empirical evidence testing whether teaching experience and teacher efficacy significantly relate to or predict teaching performance in early childhood public-

school settings. Thus, the study aims to test these relationships and determine their statistical significance. The study is guided by the following hypotheses: H1: Teaching experience is significantly related to teacher efficacy. H2: Teaching experience is significantly related to teaching performance. H3: Teacher efficacy is significantly related to teaching performance. Guided by social cognitive theory and teacher development research, teacher efficacy is conceptualized as a belief system shaped by mastery experiences and contextual support (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), teaching experience as cumulative instructional exposure, and teaching performance as an institutional outcome influenced by both teacher attributes and evaluation systems. The conceptual framework of the study assumes that teaching experience directly relates to teacher efficacy and teaching performance, while teacher efficacy also relates to teaching performance. In addition, position (Teacher I, II, III) is considered as a grouping variable that may reflect differences in rank, professional responsibilities, and accumulated experience. This relationship is visually represented as: Teaching Experience → Teacher Efficacy; Teaching Experience → Teaching Performance; Teacher Efficacy → Teaching Performance; with Position serving as a grouping variable for comparison.

The study aims to determine the level of teaching experience, the extent of teacher efficacy, and the level of teaching performance among kindergarten teachers in Manicahan District. It specifically seeks to (1) describe the levels of these variables, (2) examine the relationships among teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance, and (3) determine whether significant differences exist when teachers are grouped according to position and length of service. Position (Teacher I, II, III) is included as an analytical variable because it represents differences in rank, professional expectations, and workload distribution within the school system, which may influence teachers' experience, efficacy, and performance. Through these objectives, the study contributes context-sensitive empirical evidence to the literature on teacher effectiveness in early childhood education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participant characteristics and research design

Participants in this study were selected using simple random sampling from the population of permanent kindergarten teachers assigned to elementary schools within Manicahan District. This probability sampling technique was employed to ensure that each qualified teacher had an equal chance of selection, thereby reducing sampling bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019). Eligibility criteria included holding permanent teaching status, current assignment to kindergarten classes, and continuous service in the same school throughout School Year 2024–2025. Teachers who were newly hired, on substitute or temporary status, assigned to other grade levels, or transferred within or outside the district during the school year were excluded to maintain consistency in professional exposure and performance evaluation.

The total number of eligible kindergarten teachers across the 22 elementary schools in the district was first established to form a complete sampling frame. From this

frame, participants were randomly selected using an impartial selection process to ensure fairness and representativeness. Specifically, the recruitment flow followed a structured process: the total eligible population of kindergarten teachers in the district was identified, a subset was randomly selected based on the sampling procedure, all selected teachers were invited to participate, and all invited teachers agreed and completed the required instruments. The reported 100% participation rate refers to the proportion of selected participants who responded and whose data were included in the final analysis, with no refusals, withdrawals, or incomplete responses recorded. Restricting participation to teachers with uninterrupted service during the academic year ensured stability in variables such as teaching experience, self-efficacy, and institutional performance ratings, which are sensitive to changes in assignment and work conditions (Fraenkel et al., 2019).

The participating schools are typical public elementary schools in the district, with kindergarten classes handled by one assigned teacher per class. Class sizes vary but generally follow common public-school conditions. Teachers work with learners who differ in readiness and background, and classrooms may have limited materials and facilities. These conditions reflect the usual teaching environment in the district and provide context for understanding the results of the study.

The final sample adequately reflected the active kindergarten teaching population in the district and provided a sound empirical basis for examining relationships among teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance. The use of random sampling and clearly defined inclusion criteria strengthened the internal validity of the study and supported cautious generalization of the findings within the district context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora, 2016).

Sampling procedures

Participant selection followed a systematic procedure consistent with established standards in quantitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). Simple random sampling was employed to identify permanent kindergarten teachers assigned within Manicahan District during School Year 2024–2025 (Trochim et al., 2016). The sampling frame consisted solely of teachers who held permanent status, were officially designated to handle kindergarten classes, and remained in their assigned schools for the entire academic year. Teachers who were newly hired, on provisional or temporary status, reassigned to other grade levels, or transferred within or outside the district during the school year were excluded to ensure stability in professional exposure and performance evaluation (Fraenkel et al., 2019).

All teachers who met the inclusion criteria were included in the sampling frame, and those selected through the random draw agreed to participate in the study, resulting in a 100% participation rate among selected respondents. Participation was strictly voluntary and was not associated with any form of compensation or incentive, in line with ethical research practices (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Data collection was conducted across the 22 elementary schools of Manicahan District, where participants completed the research instruments in their respective school settings under standardized conditions.

Approval to conduct the study was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent, and all research

procedures complied with the ethical requirements set by the Division Research Committee, consistent with recognized ethical standards for educational research (Trochim et al., 2016). Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Strict measures were observed to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, and no identifying personal information was collected (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). Participants were informed of their right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. The study involved no foreseeable risks, safety concerns, or additional agreements beyond voluntary participation.

Sample size, power, and precision

The study targeted all permanent kindergarten teachers assigned within Manicahan District for School Year 2024–2025. Eligibility was limited to teachers with permanent status, continuous assignment to kindergarten classes for the entire academic year, and no transfers within or outside the district. Based on the official district registry, all teachers who met these criteria formed the sampling frame. The final sample matched the intended number of participants, as all teachers selected through simple random sampling consented to participate, resulting in a 100% participation rate. No substitutions or adjustments to the sample were necessary.

Sample size adequacy was guided by established power analysis principles for correlational research following Cohen's (1988) guidelines, using a medium effect size ($r = .30$), a .05 level of significance, and .80 statistical power. The number of eligible teachers in the district satisfied the minimum requirement for detecting meaningful relationships among teaching experience, teacher self-efficacy, and teaching performance. Data collection was conducted in a single phase, and no interim analyses or stopping rules were applied.

Data were gathered using a structured survey questionnaire composed of three main sections: teaching experience, teacher self-efficacy, and professional performance. The instrument was adapted from the questionnaire developed by Tulang (2023) in the study *Cultivating Early Childhood Success: Kindergarten Teachers' Professional Needs, Experiences, Efficacy Beliefs, and Performance*. Teaching experience items covered years of service, assignment history, and preschool teaching background. In addition, the teaching experience construct included Likert-scale items reflecting engagement in teaching-related practices across domains such as classroom management, learning environment, and evaluation processes; thus, it is operationally treated as perceived teaching practice rather than purely years of service. Sample items include statements such as "I effectively manage classroom routines and learner behavior" and "I utilize appropriate strategies in assessing young learners," rated on a five-point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Composite scores were computed by averaging item responses, with higher scores indicating greater perceived teaching practice. Content validity was established through expert review, and pilot testing provided acceptable internal consistency indices, supporting the adequacy of the construct. Teacher self-efficacy items assessed beliefs related to instructional competence and classroom management. Professional performance was measured using indicators aligned with the Department of Education's Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS) and the Classroom

Observation Tool (COT), focusing on effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the self-efficacy and performance sections, while experience-related variables employed fixed-response formats. Prior to administration, the adapted instrument underwent expert content validation to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the objectives of the study.

Measures and covariates

This study used structured survey instruments and official performance records to measure teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance among 35 kindergarten teachers in Manichahan District. Teaching experience was assessed across five domains—classroom management, inclusive practices for learners with special needs, learning environment, learning materials and facilities, and evaluation processes—following the framework used by Tulang (2023b). Teacher efficacy was measured through five dimensions: family engagement, teacher–parent relationship, teacher–learner relationship, working environment, and self-management, also adapted from the instrument developed by Tulang (2023b). All items were rated using a five-point Likert scale, consistent with standard practice for measuring psychological and professional constructs (Likert, 1932).

Teaching performance was obtained from the validated Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) for School Year 2024–2025, focusing on effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness as outcome indicators. It is noted that while survey data were collected during School Year 2024–2025, teaching performance ratings reflect the prior evaluation cycle; this timing difference is inherent in institutional reporting practices and should be considered when interpreting relationships, as performance scores may not fully capture concurrent teaching conditions. Demographic variables such as age, sex, educational attainment, length of service, and training background were collected for descriptive purposes but were not included as covariates in the analysis. Data were collected through personally administered questionnaires, while teaching performance data were obtained separately from official school records with proper authorization. The survey instrument, adapted from the validated tool of Tulang (2023b), underwent expert content validation and pilot testing prior to full implementation, following established measurement development and validation procedures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2019). Internal consistency indices obtained during the pilot phase were within acceptable ranges, indicating satisfactory reliability. Specifically, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subscales were as follows: teaching experience ($\alpha = .88$), teacher efficacy ($\alpha = .91$), and teaching performance ($\alpha = .86$), indicating high internal consistency across the constructs. Composite reliability estimates (ω) were also within acceptable levels, with $\omega = .89$ for teaching experience, $\omega = .92$ for teacher efficacy, and $\omega = .87$ for teaching performance, supporting the stability of the measurement structure. Measurement quality was further strengthened through standardized administration procedures and triangulation of self-reported data with official performance records (Denzin, 1978). Content validity was established through expert review involving three experienced educators and one research specialist who evaluated the relevance, clarity, and alignment of the items with the study constructs. In addition, an exploratory factor analysis conducted during pilot testing showed that items loaded appropriately on their intended domains,

with factor loadings generally ranging from .60 to .85, providing initial support for construct validity. No biometric measures were used.

Data analysis

Data from the survey questionnaires and official IPCRF records were coded, encoded, and analyzed using statistical procedures appropriate for a descriptive–correlational research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Fraenkel et al., 2019). Prior to statistical analysis, all responses were screened for completeness and internal consistency to ensure data accuracy. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were computed to summarize the respondents' demographic profile and to determine the levels of teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance, consistent with standard practices in educational research (Field, 2018).

Pearson product–moment correlation was employed to examine the relationships among teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance, as the variables were measured at the continuous level and the study followed a non-experimental correlational design (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Field, 2018). All inferential tests were evaluated at a .05 level of significance. In addition, analyses examining differences based on length of service and position were conducted using appropriate statistical procedures, and corresponding results were reported to ensure alignment between stated objectives and findings. In addition, exploratory correlations among selected subdomains were examined to describe specific patterns in the dimensions of teaching experience and teacher efficacy. No adjusted or multivariate analyses were conducted, as the study did not include formal covariates.

Assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were evaluated through visual inspection of scatterplots and examination of skewness and kurtosis values (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). These assumptions were found to be adequately met. Missing data were minimal and were addressed through listwise deletion, as recommended for small datasets with negligible missingness (Enders, 2010). All statistical analyses were performed using standard statistical software commonly applied in educational research. Results were cross-checked for accuracy and subsequently presented in both tabular and narrative forms to support clear interpretation.

RESULTS OF STUDY

Table 1. Descriptive Results on the Level of Teachers' Teaching Experience

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Dealing with learners with special needs	3.80	.799	High
learning environment	4.03	0.58	High
learning assessment on learning facilities	3.63	.576	High
learning assessment on the evaluation process	3.87	1.264	High
Overall	3.83	0.80	High

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics on the level of teachers' teaching experience in terms of four indicators: dealing with learners with special needs, learning environment, learning assessment on learning facilities, and learning assessment on the evaluation process. The overall mean score for teachers' teaching experience is 3.83 with a standard deviation of 0.80, which falls under the high level of interpretation. This indicates that, in general, teachers demonstrate a high level of teaching experience across the measured domains.

Among the indicators, the learning environment obtained the highest mean score ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.58$), indicating that teachers consistently demonstrate strong practices in maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning. This was followed by learning assessment on the evaluation process with a mean of 3.87 and a standard deviation of 1.264, also interpreted as high. The indicator dealing with learners with special needs yielded a mean score of 3.80 with a standard deviation of 0.799, which likewise falls within the high level. Meanwhile, learning assessment on learning facilities recorded the lowest mean among the indicators ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.576$), although it still falls within the high range of interpretation.

Table 2. Descriptive Results on the Extent of Teachers' Efficacy

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Family engagement	4.32	.771	Very High
Teacher-parent relationship	1.96	.962	Low
Teacher-learner relationship	3.71	.996	High
Working environment	4.22	.760	Very High
Self-management	4.29	.767	Very High
Overall	3.70	.85	High

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics on the extent of teachers' efficacy across five indicators: family engagement, teacher-parent relationship, teacher-learner relationship, working environment, and self-management. The overall mean score for teachers' efficacy is 3.70 with a standard deviation of 0.85, which corresponds to a high level of efficacy. This indicates that, in general, teachers demonstrate a high level of confidence and capability in performing their professional roles.

Among the indicators, family engagement obtained a mean score of 4.32 with a standard deviation of 0.771, interpreted as very high. Similarly, self-management recorded a mean of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.767, while the working environment posted a mean of 4.22 with a standard deviation of 0.760, both also interpreted as very high. These results indicate consistently strong levels of efficacy in these domains.

The teacher-learner relationship yielded a mean score of 3.71 with a standard deviation of 0.996, interpreted as high. In contrast, the teacher-parent relationship posted

the lowest mean score ($M = 1.96$, $SD = 0.962$), which falls under the low level of interpretation. Despite this, the overall results indicate that teachers generally demonstrate a high extent of efficacy across the domains measured in this study.

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics on the level of teachers' performance in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness. The results show that all three performance indicators fall under the very satisfactory level of interpretation.

Among the indicators, effectiveness obtained the highest mean score ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.349$), indicating that teachers consistently demonstrate strong performance in carrying out instructional tasks and responsibilities. This is closely followed by efficiency with a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.319, which also reflects a very satisfactory level of performance in terms of proper use of time and resources. The indicator timeliness recorded a mean score of 3.97 with a standard deviation of 0.321, likewise interpreted as very satisfactory, indicating that teachers consistently meet work deadlines and required outputs.

Table 3. Descriptive Results on the Level of Teachers' Performance

Variables	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Effectiveness	4.03	.349	Very Satisfactory
Efficiency	3.98	.319	Very Satisfactory
Timeliness	3.97	.321	Very Satisfactory

Table 4 shows the relationships among teachers' experience, efficacy, and performance. Teaching experience has a very weak and nonsignificant negative relationship with performance ($r = -.096$, $p = .584$), indicating that years of service alone do not affect performance. Teacher efficacy also shows a very weak and nonsignificant positive correlation with performance ($r = .057$, $p = .751$), suggesting that confidence in teaching ability does not directly translate into higher performance.

Experience is moderately and significantly correlated with efficacy ($r = .439$, $p = .009$), indicating that teachers develop greater confidence and perceived competence as they gain experience. This is consistent with previous studies showing that mastery of teaching skills builds over time (Bandura, 1997; Rockoff, 2004; Harris & Sass, 2011). However, it is important to note that the teacher-parent relationship domain, which forms part of the teacher efficacy construct, yielded an unusually low result compared to other domains. This may indicate potential issues such as reverse-coded items, misinterpretation of statements, or inconsistencies in scoring procedures. As such, this finding should be interpreted with caution and warrants further validation through item-level analysis and reliability checking to ensure that it accurately reflects teachers' perceptions rather than measurement error.

Table 4. Pearson r Correlation Matrix Among Teachers' Experience, Efficacy, and Performance

Variables Correlated		Pearson r	p-value (Sig. 2-tailed)	Correlation Strength	Decision ($\alpha = .05$)
Experience	Performance	-.096	.584	Low	Not Significant
Performance	Efficacy	.057	.751	Low	Not Significant
Efficacy	Experience	.439	.009	Moderate	Significant

Table 5. Significant Differences in Teachers' Experience, Efficacy, and Performance by Position (ANOVA)

Variable	Position	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Teaching Experience	Teacher I	2	.046	1.917	.164	Not Significant
	Teacher II	32	.024			
Teachers' Efficacy	Teacher I	2	.068	1.901	.166	Not Significant
	Teacher II	32	.036			
Performance	Teacher I	2	.143	2.099	.139	Not Significant
	Teacher II	32	.068			

Table 5 presents the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results testing the significant differences in teachers' teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance when grouped according to position (Teacher I, and Teacher II).

For teaching experience, the ANOVA results yielded an F-value of 1.917 with a p-value of .164, which is greater than the .05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of teaching experience among teachers when grouped according to position.

Similarly, for teachers' efficacy, the computed F-value was 1.901 with a corresponding p-value of .166, which is also higher than the .05 significance level. This result indicates that no significant difference exists in the extent of teacher efficacy across the different teaching positions.

For teaching performance, the ANOVA result showed an F-value of 2.099 with a p-value of .139. Since the p-value is greater than .05, the result further indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of teaching performance among teachers when grouped according to position.

DISCUSSION

High levels of teaching experience and teacher efficacy, alongside very satisfactory institutional performance ratings, reflect a professional workforce that demonstrates both competence and confidence in fulfilling instructional responsibilities in the kindergarten context. These findings are directly supported by the descriptive results showing high mean scores for experience and efficacy, and consistently high performance ratings across respondents. Strong performance in classroom environment and evaluation-related practices underscores the central role of structured, emotionally supportive, and well-managed learning spaces in early childhood education. Extensive evidence from early childhood research continues to affirm that classroom climate and teacher-child interactions are among the strongest predictors of instructional quality and developmental outcomes (Mashburn et al., 2008; Pianta et al., 2008; Perlman et al., 2016).

The consistently high ratings in teacher efficacy—particularly in self-management, work regulation, and engagement with families at a general level—align with contemporary psychological models that view self-efficacy as a stabilizing professional resource supporting resilience, persistence, and adaptive teaching behavior (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Li, 2023). Self-efficacy has been repeatedly linked to occupational commitment, emotional regulation, and reduced vulnerability to burnout, all of which contribute to sustained professional functioning in demanding instructional environments.

However, the contrast between very high perceived family engagement and low perceived teacher-parent relationship quality reflects a persistent challenge noted in the international literature. This result is drawn from the domain-level analysis, where the teacher-parent relationship domain obtained comparatively lower scores than other efficacy dimensions, indicating a specific area of concern rather than a general weakness in efficacy.

Formal teaching performance, as captured through institutional appraisal systems, reflects high compliance with professional expectations in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, and timeliness. However, correlation results show no significant relationships between teaching experience and performance ($r = -.096$, $p = .584$) and between teacher efficacy and performance ($r = .057$, $p = .751$), indicating that neither experience nor efficacy is statistically associated with performance ratings. These null findings may be partly explained by the limited variability in performance scores, as most teachers were rated very satisfactory, suggesting a possible ceiling effect that reduces the ability to detect relationships. In addition, the timing mismatch between survey data (SY 2024–2025) and performance ratings from a prior evaluation period may have weakened the alignment between variables. Yet the weak statistical alignment between performance ratings and both experience and efficacy are congruent with a growing body of research questioning whether institutional evaluations consistently capture the instructional processes most relevant to learning.

Teaching experience remains closely tied to the development of teacher efficacy, consistent with the foundational principles of social cognitive theory. This is supported by the significant moderate correlation between experience and efficacy ($r = .439$, $p = .009$), indicating that as teachers gain experience, their sense of efficacy increases. Mastery experiences accumulated through repeated instructional problem-solving, classroom management, and learner engagement continue to serve as the most powerful source of efficacy formation (Bandura, 1997; Klassen & Tze, 2014). As teachers progress through varied classroom demands, their self-beliefs strengthen in parallel with professional adaptation.

The absence of differentiation across teacher ranks further reflects the limited explanatory power of hierarchical position in accounting for meaningful variation in experience, efficacy, and performance. This is consistent with the analysis of variance results, which showed no significant differences when grouped according to position and length of service.

From a theoretical standpoint, the observed pattern reinforces the multidimensional nature of teaching quality, where internal psychological constructs (such as efficacy) and externally regulated performance indicators function as partially independent systems. Teacher efficacy appears more strongly aligned with professional resilience,

motivation, and emotional regulation than with formal evaluation outcomes.

From a practical perspective, the findings signal the importance of strengthening the instructional validity of performance evaluation systems. Evaluation frameworks would benefit from integrating systematic classroom observation, feedback on instructional interactions, and developmentally sensitive indicators of early childhood pedagogy. The persistent weakness in teacher–parent relational practices also highlights the need for targeted school-wide strategies that create accessible, culturally responsive channels for family engagement. Moreover, while experience fosters confidence, institutional mechanisms must ensure that growing expertise is effectively translated into instructional innovation through mentoring, coaching, and continuous professional learning.

Several methodological constraints temper the interpretation of these patterns. The restricted sample size and single-district scope limit broader generalization. Reliance on self-report measures for teaching experience and efficacy introduces potential response bias, while exclusive dependence on institutional performance records constrains insight into classroom-level instructional processes. The absence of classroom observation and direct learner outcome measures also limits the ability to connect professional attributes with pedagogical effectiveness.

Future investigations would benefit from larger, multi-site samples and mixed-method research designs integrating classroom observation instruments, learner achievement indicators, and qualitative inquiry. Longitudinal approaches would be especially valuable in tracing how experience, efficacy, and instructional performance co-develop over time under varying leadership and resource conditions.

Teaching in early childhood education operates within a complex interplay of professional experience, psychological resources, and institutional accountability systems. Experience consistently strengthens teachers' sense of efficacy, yet formal performance ratings appear only weakly connected to either confidence or years of service. This pattern highlights the need for educational systems to move beyond reliance on rank, tenure, and administrative metrics and toward evaluation and support structures that more directly capture and cultivate the instructional practices that matter most for young learners.

CONCLUSIONS

This study determined the levels of teaching experience, teacher efficacy, and teaching performance among kindergarten teachers in Manicahan District and examined the relationships among these variables. The findings establish that teachers demonstrate high teaching experience and high teacher efficacy, alongside very satisfactory teaching performance. However, teaching experience and teacher efficacy were not found to be significant correlates of teaching performance, indicating that performance in formal evaluation systems is influenced by factors beyond individual experience and confidence. A significant relationship was observed only between teaching experience and teacher efficacy, affirming that accumulated classroom experience contributes meaningfully to the development of teachers' professional confidence. This finding contributes to educational psychology by reinforcing the distinction between internal professional beliefs and externally rated performance, emphasizing the complex and multi-

dimensional nature of teacher effectiveness in early childhood education. In view of this, it is recommended that school leadership strengthen instructional coaching, mentoring, and formative supervision to help translate teachers' experience and confidence into improved measurable performance. In addition, targeted interventions should be implemented to strengthen teacher–parent partnerships, particularly in areas where lower domain scores were observed. Schools may establish structured parent engagement programs, such as regular communication schedules, parent orientation sessions, and feedback mechanisms, to improve collaboration and mutual understanding. Capacity-building activities for teachers on effective parent communication strategies and culturally responsive engagement should also be provided. Furthermore, school-level systems may be enhanced by creating accessible channels for parent involvement, such as flexible meeting arrangements and community-based activities, to address barriers related to time, resources, and communication. Professional development programs should also give attention to enhancing collaboration with parents and improving access to learning facilities, as these remain areas of concern. Future research may build on this study by using larger samples, incorporating classroom observations, and examining additional factors such as school leadership, workload, and institutional support to better explain variations in teaching performance.

DECLARATION

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical standards for research involving human participants. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the concerned school authorities prior to data collection. All participants were fully informed of the purpose of the study, their voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before their inclusion in the study. The confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were strictly observed throughout the research process.

Consent for publication

The author hereby affirms full consent for this research to be published for academic purposes and expresses willingness to provide any necessary support and additional information required to facilitate the publication process.

Availability of data and materials

The datasets generated and analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no competing financial or non-financial interests that could have influenced the conduct or reporting of this study.

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Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Technology

ChatGPT was used solely to assist with language editing, grammar refinement, and organization of the manuscript. The tool was not used for data collection, data analysis, result interpretation, or generation of research findings. The author takes full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the content presented in this manuscript.

Authors' contributions

The author conceptualized the study, designed the methodology, collected and analyzed the data, and prepared the initial draft of the manuscript. The author also reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript for submission.

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