

Lecturers' Self-Efficacy Dimensions as Predictors of Colleges of Education Effectiveness in Preparing Teachers for Inclusive Education in North-Central Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Inclusive education has become a global priority, placing increasing demands on teacher education institutions to produce graduates capable of addressing learner diversity. In Nigeria, Colleges of Education play a pivotal role in preparing teachers for inclusive basic education; however, concerns persist regarding their effectiveness in fulfilling this mandate. This study examined lecturers' self-efficacy dimensions as predictors of the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive education in North-Central Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population comprised 2,347 lecturers from public Colleges of Education across six states and the Federal Capital Territory. Using stratified and simple random sampling techniques, a sample of 467 lecturers was selected. Data were collected using the Lecturers' Self-Efficacy Indicators Questionnaire ($\alpha = .818$) and the Colleges of Education Effectiveness Questionnaire ($\alpha = .890$). Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were employed at the .05 level of significance. Findings revealed that lecturers' self-efficacy and institutional effectiveness were both at moderate levels. Regression results indicated that instructional self-efficacy and decision-making efficacy jointly explained 83.2% of the variance in college effectiveness ($R^2 = .832$). Instructional self-efficacy emerged as a strong positive predictor, while decision-making efficacy showed a weak but statistically significant negative influence. The study concludes that enhancing lecturers' instructional confidence through continuous professional development and supportive institutional structures is critical for improving the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive education. Policy implications for participatory governance and quality assurance are discussed.

Keywords: lecturers' self-efficacy, instructional self-efficacy, decision-making,

efficacy, inclusive education



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INTRODUCTION

High-quality education remains a cornerstone of sustainable national development, equipping individuals with critical thinking abilities, practical competencies, and informed decision-making skills necessary for economic growth and social cohesion (Smith, 2023). Beyond its economic benefits, education promotes shared values, social inclusion, and intercultural understanding, thereby strengthening democratic societies (Team Leverage Edu, 2023). Recognizing its universal importance, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms education as a fundamental human right (Abulencia, 2023).

In the twenty-first century, the pursuit of quality education is inseparable from the implementation of inclusive education. Inclusive education emphasizes equitable access to learning opportunities for all learners, irrespective of disability, gender, socio-economic status, or cultural background. Achieving this goal depends largely on the competence and preparedness of teachers to respond effectively to diverse learning needs within mainstream classrooms. Consequently, teacher education institutions are under increasing pressure to equip prospective teachers with inclusive pedagogical skills, adaptive instructional strategies, and learner-centered approaches. Within this context, self-efficacy, rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory (1977, 1997), has emerged as a critical determinant of teaching effectiveness. Self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs in their capacity to organize and execute actions required to achieve desired outcomes. Bandura identified mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states as key sources of efficacy beliefs. Empirical evidence consistently links high teacher self-efficacy to instructional innovation, persistence, classroom management competence, and responsiveness to learners with special educational needs attributes essential for inclusive education.

In Nigeria, Colleges of Education were established primarily to train teachers for pre-primary, primary, and junior secondary education. Their origins can be traced to the recommendations of the 1959 Ashby Commission, which sought to address the acute shortage of trained teachers in the country (Olafero et al., 2017). Despite their strategic importance, concerns have been raised regarding the effectiveness of these institutions in preparing teachers for contemporary educational demands, particularly inclusive education. Studies have reported challenges such as inadequate professional development, low lecturer motivation, limited exposure to inclusive pedagogy, and weak institutional support systems (Adeniyi & Olowoyeye, 2014; Ademola et al., 2018). Against this backdrop, this study investigates lecturers' self-efficacy dimensions specifically instructional and decision-making efficacy as predictors of the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing

teachers for inclusive education in North-Central Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite increased emphasis on inclusive education in national and international policy frameworks, Nigerian Colleges of Education continue to struggle with producing teachers adequately prepared for diverse classroom contexts. Reports indicate that many graduates of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) lack adaptive instructional skills, inclusive teaching strategies, and professional confidence, thereby limiting their employability and effectiveness in contemporary schools (Oviawe, 2021; Eze et al., 2022).

Paradoxically, this decline in effectiveness has occurred alongside improvements in lecturers' academic qualifications, suggesting that factors beyond formal credentials such as self-efficacy and institutional support may be influencing outcomes. While previous studies have examined quality assurance and institutional effectiveness, few have empirically explored lecturers' self-efficacy as a predictor of colleges' capacity to prepare teachers for inclusive education, particularly within the North-Central geopolitical zone. This gap necessitates systematic investigation.

Objectives of the Study

The study objectives are as follows to:

1. Examine the levels of lecturers' self-efficacy in influencing decision-making processes and instructional self-efficacy among lecturers as predictors of effective preparation for inclusive education in Colleges of education North-Central, Nigeria?
2. Determine the level the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms in colleges of education North-Central, Nigeria
3. Analyze the lecturers' self-efficacy dimensions (decision-making, instructional self-efficacy) collectively predict the effectiveness of colleges of education in preparing teacher for inclusive educators in North-Central, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

HO: Lecturers' Self-efficacy dimensions (efficacy to influence decision making and instructional self-Efficacy) do not significantly predict the Effectiveness in preparing teachers for inclusive education in Colleges of Education in North-central, Nigeria

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design

and was conducted in public Colleges of Education across the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The population comprised 2,347 lecturers drawn from seven public Colleges of Education located in Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau States, and the Federal Capital Territory. Using stratified random sampling, one college was selected from each state, after which proportionate stratified sampling was employed to allocate the sample based on institutional staff strength, while simple random sampling was used to select individual respondents. A sample size of 467 lecturers was determined, including an additional 40% to account for non-response. Data were collected using two validated instruments: the Lecturers' Self-Efficacy Indicators Questionnaire (LSEQ) and the Colleges of Education Effectiveness Questionnaire (COEQ). Content validity was established through expert review, while reliability coefficients of 0.818 and 0.890 were obtained respectively using Cronbach's alpha. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean scores) to answer research questions and multiple regression analysis to test the hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results of the data analysis and the discussion of findings focused on the dimensions of lecturers' self-efficacy as predictors of effectiveness in preparing teachers for inclusive education in Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria. The research questions were addressed using descriptive statistics, while the hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics, specifically multiple regression analysis, at the 0.05 level of significance. The variables of Lecturers' Self-efficacy (LSE) and Effectiveness in Colleges of Education (ECE) were each measured across four distinct scales.

1. What are the levels of lecturers' self-efficacy in influencing decision-making processes and instructional self-efficacy among lecturers as predictors of effective preparation for inclusive education in Colleges of Education North-Central, Nigeria?

Table 1: Level of Lecturers' Self-efficacy

Item	Mean	S. D	Decision
Efficacy of decision making	2.6800	.73718	Moderate
Instructional Self-efficacy	2.4644	.56592	Moderate

Table 1 presents the mean ratings of lecturers' self-efficacy in Colleges of Education in the North-Central zone of Nigeria. The findings reveal that the mean score for efficacy in influencing decision-making is 2.68, while instructional self-efficacy has a mean score of 2.46. The overall (aggregate) mean is 2.57. This aggregate mean falls within the benchmark range of 2.34–3.66, indicating a moderate level of lecturers' self-efficacy. This suggests

that lecturers in Colleges of Education in the North-Central zone possess a fair but not optimal level of confidence in their ability to influence institutional decisions and instructional processes. The implication of this finding is that there is a need for college management to strengthen lecturers' self-efficacy. This can be achieved by increasing lecturers' involvement in decision-making processes and granting them greater autonomy and influence over instructional activities. Enhancing these dimensions is likely to improve overall institutional effectiveness, particularly in the preparation of teachers for inclusive education.

2. What is the level the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms in Colleges of Education in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 2: Level of Effectiveness of Colleges of Education

Item	Mean	S.D	Decision
College of effectiveness	2.4956	.557769	Moderate

Table 2 presents the mean ratings on the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in the North-Central zone of Nigeria. The findings indicate an overall mean score of 2.50. This mean falls within the benchmark range of 2.34–3.66, which signifies a moderate level of effectiveness. This result suggests that Colleges of Education in the North-Central zone are performing at an average level in terms of effectiveness, particularly in preparing teachers for inclusive education. However, the moderate rating indicates that there is still considerable room for improvement. The implication of this finding is that college management needs to intensify efforts toward enhancing institutional effectiveness. This can be achieved by strengthening key academic and administrative activities, improving instructional delivery, and promoting supportive policies and practices that foster high-quality teacher preparation. Such improvements are essential for raising the effectiveness of Colleges of Education from a moderate to a high level.

HO: Lecturers' Self-efficacy dimensions (efficacy to influence decision making and instructional self-Efficacy) do not significantly predict the Effectiveness in preparing teachers for inclusive education in Colleges of Education in North-central, Nigeria

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.912 ^a	.832	.831	.23744

a. Predictors: (Constant), Instructional self-efficacy, Efficacy decision making

Table 3 reveals 0.912 and 0.832 as the Coefficient of Multiple Regression and Coefficient of Determination (R-square) respectively. The R square value of (0.832)

Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	96.906	2	48.453	859.444	.000 ^b
	Residual	19.563	347	.056		
	Total	116.468	349			

Table 5: Relative contribution of each dimension of the independent variable (Lecturers' Self-efficacy)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	
1	(Constant)	.275	.063		4.345	.000
	Efficacy to influence decision making	-.046	.019	-.059	-2.504	.013
	Instructional Self-efficacy	.952	.024	.932	39.428	.000

implying that the independent variables Lecturers' Self-efficacy Dimensions (Efficacy to influence decision-making and instructional self-efficacy), jointly explained the total variability of the dependent variable which is the effectiveness of colleges of education in the north-central, Nigeria. The high percentage of variability (83.2%) is an indication of model adequacy.

The ANOVA result shows that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 859.444$, $p < .001$) (Table 4). This implies that the combination of instructional self-efficacy and decision-making efficacy significantly predicts college effectiveness better than a model with no predictors. Thus, the null hypothesis that lecturers' self-efficacy dimensions do not significantly predict college effectiveness is rejected. The coefficients table reveals the relative contribution of each predictor variable: Instructional Self-Efficacy Unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.952$) Standardized Beta ($\beta = 0.932$) $t = 39.428$, $p < .001$ Instructional self-efficacy has a strong positive and statistically significant influence on college effectiveness. This means that an increase in lecturers' confidence in instructional delivery, classroom management, and teaching strategies leads to a substantial improvement in the effectiveness of colleges of education. Among the predictors, instructional self-efficacy is the most powerful determinant of college effectiveness. The Efficacy to influence decision-Making also revealed that Unstandardized coefficient ($B = -0.046$) Standardized Beta ($\beta = -0.059$) $t = -2.504$, $p = .013$, this shows a statistically significant but negative contribution to college effectiveness. Although the effect size is small, the negative direction suggests that challenges in shared decision-making structures, autonomy, or institutional constraints may reduce the positive impact of lecturers' decision-making confidence on overall college effectiveness (Table 5).

The results of regression analysis demonstrates that: Lecturers' self-efficacy dimensions significantly predict college effectiveness. Instructional self-efficacy is the dominant predictor of college effectiveness. Decision-making efficacy, though significant, exerts a weak negative influence, suggesting the need for improved participatory

governance and institutional support structures.

The findings imply that strengthening lecturers' instructional competence through continuous professional development, mentoring, and instructional supervision will substantially enhance the effectiveness of Colleges of Education. Additionally, institutional policies should promote inclusive and supportive decision-making processes to prevent negative outcomes associated with decision-making efficacy.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the predictive influence of instructional self-efficacy and decision-making efficacy on the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive education in North-Central Nigeria. The findings provide robust empirical support for self-efficacy as a critical psychological and organizational construct influencing institutional effectiveness. This aligns with (Bandura's 1997) social cognitive theory, which posits that efficacy beliefs significantly shape individual and collective performance outcomes. However, beyond mere confirmation of theory, this study extends its application to the relatively underexplored context of Colleges of Education, thereby addressing a notable gap in the literature on teacher preparation for inclusive education in Nigeria.

Findings from the first research question revealed that lecturers' self-efficacy was at a moderate level. While this suggests that lecturers possess a functional degree of professional confidence, it also reflects a suboptimal capacity to fully drive instructional and institutional improvement. This finding corroborates earlier studies (Rabbianty et al., 2024; Rwothumio et al., 2023), but critically diverges from studies reporting high efficacy levels in more resource-supported environments (Suleyman, 2021). The implication is that self-efficacy is not merely an individual trait but is strongly conditioned by institutional realities such as access to professional development, leadership support, and organizational climate. By situating this finding within the Nigerian context, the study bridges the gap between generalized

global evidence and context-specific realities of teacher education institutions in developing countries.

Similarly, the findings from the second research question indicated that the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms was at a moderate level. While this suggests that these institutions are partially fulfilling their mandates, it also exposes systemic inefficiencies that hinder optimal performance. Previous studies (Tijani & Obiweluzor, 2019; Umar et al., 2021) have linked institutional effectiveness to variables such as leadership, location, and staff development; however, they paid limited attention to psychological constructs such as self-efficacy. This study therefore fills an important gap by empirically linking lecturers' internal efficacy beliefs with institutional-level outcomes, offering a more integrated understanding of effectiveness in teacher education. The regression analysis revealed a very strong relationship between lecturers' self-efficacy dimensions and college effectiveness ($R = 0.912$), with instructional self-efficacy and decision-making efficacy jointly accounting for 83.2% of the variance in institutional effectiveness. This exceptionally high explanatory power underscores the strategic importance of self-efficacy as not only a personal attribute but also an institutional asset. While previous studies (Onyishi & Omenwa, 2018; Adegbite & Akinola, 2020) have established links between self-efficacy and job performance, this study advances the literature by demonstrating its predictive strength at the organizational level, particularly within Colleges of Education—an area that has received limited empirical attention. Instructional self-efficacy emerged as the strongest predictor of college effectiveness, reinforcing its central role in teaching and learning processes. This finding is consistent with earlier research (Oloruntegbe & Ikpefan, 2019; Okebukola & Jegede, 2020), but it also extends existing knowledge by situating instructional efficacy within the framework of inclusive education. Specifically, lecturers with high instructional self-efficacy are better positioned to model inclusive pedagogical practices, such as differentiated instruction and adaptive teaching strategies, which are essential for preparing teachers to address diverse learner needs. In doing so, the study bridges the gap between general instructional effectiveness and the specific demands of inclusive education in teacher preparation programmes.

In contrast, decision-making efficacy exhibited a statistically significant but negative influence on college effectiveness. Although the effect size was relatively small, its inverse relationship is theoretically and practically significant. While prior studies (Wadesango, 2012) have reported positive outcomes of participatory decision-making, such findings are largely drawn from contexts characterized by decentralized governance. The negative effect observed in this study highlights a contextual inconsistency: in highly centralized systems such as Nigerian Colleges of Education, lecturers' perceived decision-making efficacy may not translate into actual

influence. This misalignment can generate frustration, role ambiguity, and reduced organizational commitment, ultimately undermining effectiveness. By revealing this contradiction, the study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that the benefits of decision-making efficacy are contingent upon supportive institutional structures, thereby addressing a gap in context-sensitive interpretations of self-efficacy. Overall, the findings suggest that while instructional self-efficacy is a critical driver of institutional effectiveness, the impact of decision-making efficacy is highly dependent on the organizational environment. This underscores the need for a supportive governance framework that aligns lecturers' perceived capabilities with actual participation in institutional processes. Importantly, this study contributes to knowledge by integrating psychological constructs with organizational effectiveness in the context of inclusive teacher education, an area that has been largely overlooked in Nigerian and broader African educational research.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study demonstrates that lecturers' self-efficacy is a significant predictor of the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in preparing teachers for inclusive education in North-Central Nigeria. Although both lecturers' self-efficacy and institutional effectiveness were found to be at moderate levels, instructional self-efficacy emerged as the most influential determinant of institutional effectiveness, underscoring its central role in shaping inclusive teacher preparation. This finding highlights the importance of lecturers' pedagogical competence, confidence in delivering differentiated instruction, and ability to manage diverse classrooms as critical drivers of successful inclusive education outcomes. However, the study also reveals a paradoxical dimension in which decision-making efficacy, despite being statistically significant, exerts a negative influence on institutional effectiveness. This suggests the presence of structural, administrative, and governance-related constraints that limit lecturers' ability to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes. It further indicates a disconnect between individual perceptions of efficacy and the institutional realities within Colleges of Education, where centralized governance structures and limited autonomy may hinder the translation of personal competencies into organizational performance.

Overall, the findings emphasize that improving the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in delivering inclusive education requires a dual approach that integrates the strengthening of lecturers' instructional self-efficacy with comprehensive institutional reforms. In particular, enhancing pedagogical capacity must be complemented by governance systems that promote participation, transparency, and shared responsibility. In light of these findings, it is recommended that college

management and regulatory bodies prioritize continuous, practice-oriented professional development programmes focused on inclusive pedagogy, differentiated instruction, classroom management, and adaptive teaching strategies to enhance lecturers' instructional self-efficacy. In addition, structured mentoring, peer coaching, and instructional supervision mechanisms should be institutionalized to support lecturers in translating instructional competence into effective classroom practices and in modeling inclusive teaching for pre-service teachers. Furthermore, Colleges of Education should review and decentralize their academic decision-making processes to ensure that lecturers' decision-making efficacy is aligned with actual institutional authority, thereby reducing role conflict and enhancing organizational effectiveness. Institutional leadership should also foster supportive and inclusive organizational climates characterized by transparent communication, clearly defined roles, and collaborative engagement to maximize the positive impact of lecturers' self-efficacy. Finally, lecturers' self-efficacy, particularly instructional self-efficacy, should be incorporated into internal quality assurance and staff appraisal systems as a key indicator of institutional effectiveness in inclusive teacher preparation.

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