**Psychological Capital as Predictor to Career Readiness of BTLEd Pre-Service Teachers**

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**ABSTRACT**

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| This quantitative correlational study investigated the relationship between psychological capital and career readiness among Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education (BTLEd) pre-service teachers at Davao del Norte State College, conducted between January and June 2024. The objective was to determine whether psychological capital comprising self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience, significantly predicts career readiness. The study involved 93 pre-service teachers selected through complete enumeration sampling. Standardized instruments were utilized to assess the levels of psychological capital and career readiness. Descriptive statistics showed that the participants exhibited a very high level of psychological capital, with an overall mean of 4.30 (SD = 0.53), and a similarly very high level of career readiness, with an overall mean of 4.34 (SD = 0.43). Pearson’s correlation analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between psychological capital and career readiness (r = 0.844, p < 0.001), indicating that pre-service teachers with higher psychological capital tend to demonstrate greater readiness for their future careers. Multiple linear regression analysis further confirmed this relationship, with an F-value of 74.475 and a p-value less than 0.001. The R² value of 0.715 indicated that 71.5% of the variance in career readiness could be explained by psychological capital. Among its components, self-efficacy, optimism, and resilience were identified as significant predictors. The findings suggest that psychological capital plays a crucial role in enhancing the career readiness of BTLEd pre-service teachers. Therefore, incorporating initiatives that strengthen these psychological traits within teacher education programs may help better prepare future educators for professional success.  patients. These predictors, however, need further work to validate reliability. |

*Keywords: [Psycap, Career Readiness, Pre-Service Teachers,Quantitative Research }*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Pre-service teachers must arm themselves with the knowledge and skills they need in this competitive career path in order to get employment. However, during their practicum or internship, they encounter various challenges such as excessive paperwork, challenges in managing student behavior, potential lack of support from a mentor teacher, and other experiences that can cause anxiety and confusion, leading them to question their readiness to become a licensed professional teacher. Poor communication between pre-service teachers and cooperating teachers can create barriers to lesson planning, feedback, and overall teaching experiences (Lawley et al. 2018) The transition from pre-service teacher to novice professional brings with it a myriad of challenges, with career readiness often teetering on a precarious balance of skill, knowledge, and personal well-being. (Çakiroğlu, 2019). However, teaching has been proven to be a stressful job.

Stress among teachers can be identified at a very early stage in the form of academic stress during their academic years as a pre-service group of teachers. Previous research indicates that pre-service teachers frequently encounter elevated levels of stress and anxiety related to factors like workload, classroom management, and expectations for student performance (Harmsen, R., et al., 2018). These psychological struggles can have adverse effects on their readiness for a teaching career, defined as possessing the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions for success in the teaching profession (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2020).

In addition , psychological Capital is considered an important and positive resource for personal development, but very little research has tried to examine the potential factors that might promote psychological Capital. A growing number of scholars have explored the positive impacts of having psychological Capital in the Chinese context. For instance, in a previous study, they explored the potential predictors of psychological Capital among primary school teachers in China, where teachers' burnout, stress, and dissatisfaction are becoming growing concerns (Chen et al., 2019) due to the large classes, limited educational resources, heavy workload, and low level of reward (Tang et al., 2021).

Furthermore, obviously, one of the factors contributing to the low quality of education in the Philippines is the fact that some (if not most) of the educators have not undergone appropriate training during pre-service teaching.It stated that during their pre-practicum program, they did not have enough time for practice teaching exposure as they were also in rush to finish other course requirements Çapan, S. (2014). All higher education institutions, through their Teacher Education Program, recognize the significance of pre-service teaching. Moreover, in one of the state colleges in the Philippines, it was observed that pre-service teachers had difficulties in lesson planning, classroom management, and the use of technology in their demonstration teaching. On the other hand, teacher training programs are important for molding pre-service teachers.

This should strongly inculcate mentoring and support programs in the pre-service teacher training. This mentoring program assists pre-service teachers in planning and preparing lessons, guiding what to observe, encouraging and showing respect to pre-service teachers Takaoğlu (2017).In their study on pre-service teachers’ anxiety, they found out that the student-teachers experienced anxiety due to the stress of being evaluated, as well as problem behavior in the classroom. Ekşi and Yakışık (2016).

Besides, it is crucial to evaluate pre-service teachers' readiness for the workforce. Previous research has delved into various factors influencing career readiness, such as pedagogical knowledge and classroom management skills (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, 2020), but a gap exists in understanding the role of psychological capital in preparing pre-service teachers for the demands of the profession. Previous studies indicate that psychological capital significantly influences various aspects of professional success, including heightened job satisfaction, reduced stress, and improved performance (Alshebami, A. S. 2021). Investigating its impact on career readiness holds great potential. By comprehending how hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience contribute to the preparedness of pre-service teachers, we can develop effective interventions and support systems to nurture these essential psychological strengths.

Work readiness for a career is closely linked to feeling happy and satisfied in life Angela Russo (2023). Pre-service teachers need to prepare various things to improve their quality to compete, be accepted into work, and be successful in their careers. Therefore, other competencies and values are needed that help graduates and pre-service teachers be more ready to work, one of which is psychological capital. Psychological Capital (PsyCap) has been well known as one of the most powerful psychological resources for employees (Ahmad et al., 2019 ). In addition, psychological capital and organizational support affect the work readiness of college students (Wijayanti, 2019). Researchers are more focused on teachers, graduates, and others; however, our study focuses on pre-service teachers. Psychological capital plays a crucial role in shaping the career readiness of pre-service teachers.

Furthermore, the researchers have not come across any study regarding psychological capital as a predictor to career readiness among pre-service teachers. Some researchers focus on the effect of psychological capital on career readiness among college graduates and some researchers conduct studies about this on an international level (Baluku et al., 2021). This study may result in specific contribution and generate new knowledge on psychological capital as predictor to career readiness concerning pre-service teachers. Career readiness plays a vital role when it comes to career performance and in achieving their goals, so it’s important to thoroughly understand factors like psychological capital which may affect a pre-service teacher’s career readiness so that they can deal with this and come up with a way that helps them in which they can use this for their development (Seneviratne et al., 2019).

Psychological capital and career readiness is a problem that the researchers are interested in especially upon knowing how important it is for this course and how this can also positively or negatively affect them which needs to be addressed for their professional performance in teaching.

**2. material and methods /**

The study used a quantitative research methodology in order to determine the influence of psychological capital to the career readiness among the BTLEd pre-service teacher in the institute of teacher education. Additionally, this study utilized correlational research to examine the strength and direction of a relationship between psychological capital and career readiness, paving the way for further exploration of potential cause-and-effect. The complete enumeration sampling technique was used to select the 93 pre-service teachers under the program of Bachelor of Technology and Livelihood Education (BTLEd) in the institute of teacher education at Davao del Norte State College.

Moreover, two questionnaires were being used; The first questionnaire determined the extent of positive personality traits of the respondents with 3 indicators: Work Self-Efficacy, Optimism, Resilience The alpha reliability coefficients for the factors is 0.787 and indicate good internal consistency within items of the scale which means the questionnaire appears to be a reliable and valid instrument. The second questionnaire deals with the career readiness of the respondents: Content Knowledge and Pedagogy, Learning Environment, Diversity of Learners, Curriculum and Planning, Assessment and Reporting, Community Linkages and Professional Engagement, Personal Growth and Professional Development. Reliability evidence was achieved with Cronbach Alpha coefficients being around or above 0.94 for all dimensions which found that there is a higher value of reliability and validity with the instrument. The researchers undertook all necessary measures to ensure that participants were fully informed about the study's goals and purposes before data collection commenced.Furthermore, confidentiality is central to the ethical standards observed in this study. The researchers have committed to safeguarding all collected data with the highest degree of security, ensuring that sensitive information remains protected.

**3. results and discussion**

*Table 1.* ***Level of Psychological Capital****, n=93*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | SD | Descriptive Equivalent |
| Optimism | 4.42 | 0.56 | Very High |
| Work Self-Efficacy | 4.26 | 0.58 | Very High |
| Resilience | 4.21 | 0.65 | Very High |
| Overall | 4.30 | 0.53 | Very High |

**Level of Psychological Capital**

The Level of Psychological Capital has an overall mean of 4.30 with a standard deviation of 0.53 described as Very High.

The highest mean among the indicators in the Level of Psychological Capital among BTLED Pre-Service Teachers is Optimism; it has a mean score of 4.42 with a standard deviation of 0.56, which means that the level of Psychological Capital in terms of Optimism is very much observed.This result was aligned in a recent study stating that individuals with a high degree of optimism are more likely to experience better job satisfaction, lower levels of work stress, and enhanced job performance. Sen, K., Mishra, U.S., Patnaik, S. *et al.*(2023).This is because optimistic individuals tend to have a positive outlook on their ability to succeed and are more resilient when facing challenges. Moreover, a study by Luthans et al. (2019) found that optimism, as a core component of Psychological Capital, significantly contributes to both academic and professional success. Pre-service teachers with higher levels of optimism are more likely to engage positively in their roles and maintain motivation during periods of adversity, which supports their effectiveness in the classroom environment and their personal development.

The mean of the Level of Psychological Capital in terms of Work Self-Efficacy is 4.26 with a standard deviation of 0.58, which means that the level of Psychological Capital in terms of Work Self-Efficacy is very much observed.Aybek and Aslan (2019) emphasized that pre-service teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs show a strong feeling of readiness for the demands and obstacles of the teaching profession, which is consistent with the strongly accepted level of work self-efficacy. This supports the idea that pre-service teachers who are confident in themselves are more likely to think of themselves as competent instructors, which makes their transition into the workplace easier is particularly notable. Additionally, the strong agreement on work self-efficacy indicates that BTLED pre-service teachers are confident in their ability to perform their tasks effectively. This aligns with Bandura's (1997) stated that high self-efficacy enhances motivation and performance.According to Benevene P.et. al (2019).High self efficacy teachers experience less stress and higher job satisfaction because they can manage classroom challenges leading to a more positive work environment and elevated work gratification.

The mean of the Level of Psychological Capital in terms of Resilience is 4.21 with a standard deviation of 0.65, which means that the level of psychological capital in terms of Resilience is very much observed. Resilience in teachers is essential for coping with the challenges and stresses of the teaching profession. According to Howard, S. K., & Johnson, B. (2019), resilient teachers are better equipped to adapt to changes and recover from setbacks. The strong resilience observed among BTLED pre-service teachers based on the gathered results suggests they are well-prepared to handle the demands of their future careers, which is vital for long-term success and well-being. In addition,It is also supported by the findings of Krisdianata and Mbato's (2022) their study emphasizes how developing resilience is aided by the difficult nature of practicum assignments. Strong teacher identities may be developed by resilient pre-service teachers who can overcome obstacles, reflect on their experiences, and modify their tactics. Maintaining a strong self-image is critical for commitment, longevity, and fulfillment at work. Resilience, in short, helps pre-service teachers develop the self-assurance and flexibility necessary for fulfilling careers.

*Table 2. Level of Career Readiness, n=93*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Indicators | Mean | SD | DescriptiveEquivalent |
| Learning Environment | 4.42 | 0.52 | Very High |
| Assessment and Reporting | 4.36 | 0.51 | Very High |
| Community Linkages and Professional Engagement | 4.35 | 0.55 | Very High |
| Curriculum and Planning | 4.34 | 0.57 | Very High |
| Personal Growth and Professional Development | 4.34 | 0.54 | Very High |
| Content Knowledge and Pedagogy | 4.28 | 0.52 | Very High |
| Diversity of Learners | 4.26 | 0.52 | Very High |
| Overall | 4.34 | 0.43 | Very High |

**Level of Career Readiness**

Table 2 shows the mean scores of each indicator for the level of career readiness among BTLED Pre-Service Teachers. Mean was used to calculate the average level of career readiness of BTLED Pre-Service teachers. The level of career readiness among BTLED Pre-Service Teachers has an overall mean of 4.34 with a standard deviation of 0.43 described as very high. This means that the level of career readiness is very much observed.

The highest mean among indicators in the Level of career readiness among BTLED Pre-service teachers is the Learning environment; it has a mean score of 4.42 with a standard deviation of 0.52, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of learning environment is very much observed.This means that the pre-service teachers are well-prepared to create learning environments that are safe, secure, fair, and supportive in order to promote learner responsibility and achievement. This finding aligns with Bonimar A. et al. (2019), who reported that the teaching effectiveness of pre-service teachers was rated outstanding (overall mean = 1.18). According to their study, these pre-service teachers bring a well-rounded personality to the teaching-learning environment, motivating learners to stay focused on the subject matter. They organize their teaching well by selecting learning experiences that appropriately match the subject matter and connect it with learners' experiences to make learning more meaningful and interesting.

The mean of the Level of career readiness in terms of assessment and reporting is 4.36 with a standard deviation of 0.51, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of assessment and reporting is very much observed.This aligns with the recent study stating that pre-service teachers must design, select, organize, and use diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment strategies consistent with curriculum requirements Robert, Ed.et, al(2020). Moreover, Bennett, R. E. (2021).Supports the integration of assessment as a central part of the learning process. Efficient evaluation techniques assist educators in determining the requirements of their students, offering prompt feedback, and modifying their pedagogical approaches to enhance results. It is crucial to possess proficiency in utilizing diverse assessment techniques to guide teaching and enhance student education. Recent research by Smith and Lynch (2020) further supports these findings, emphasizing that effective assessment practices are essential for pre-service teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students,Their study found that pre-service teachers who were well-trained in various assessment strategies were more confident and capable in their teaching practices, leading to improved student outcomes. This highlights the ongoing importance of equipping pre-service teachers with comprehensive assessment skills to foster a supportive and responsive learning environment.

The mean of the Level of career readiness in terms of Community Linkages and Professional Engagement is 4.35 with a standard deviation of 0.55, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of Community Linkages and Professional Engagement is very much observed. In the Philippines, teachers’ community participation spans “social, political, cultural, religious and economic” dimensions and generates knowledge that can be useful for teaching and linking with different sectors (Redillas, 2020) This aligns with the literature, which emphasizes the importance of establishing learning environments that respond to community aspirations and ensure teacher accountability. As Epstein (2021) explores, partnerships between schools, families, and communities play a pivotal role in enhancing student achievement. For pre-service teachers, understanding how to build and sustain these relationships is vital for creating supportive learning environments that reflect community values and goals. This affirms the observation that schools and their teachers are actively working to build the community (Redillas, 2020) Therefore, the strong career readiness of these pre-service teachers signifies their capability to engage effectively in these essential partnerships, thereby fostering educational environments that promote student success and uphold professional standards.

The mean of the Level of career readiness in terms of Curriculum and Planning is 4.34 with a standard deviation of 0.37, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of Curriculum and Planning is very much observed. Teachers need training and workshops, which are geared toward professional development to be able to contribute to curriculum development. On the other hand, there is an important point to make efficient involvement of teachers in curriculum development, that is teachers have to be empowered in the process of curriculum development (Carl, 2009).The teacher may need to create lesson plans and syllabi within the framework of the given curriculum since the teacher's responsibilities are to implement the curriculum to meet student needs (Carl, 2009) However, in any curriculum implementation process not all teachers will have the chance to be involved in these processes. Professional development of teachers is as an important factor contributing to the success of curriculum development and implementation (Handler, 2010)

The mean of the Level of career readiness in terms of Personal Growth and Professional Development is 4.34 with a standard deviation of 0.54, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of Personal Growth and Professional Development is very much observed. Professional development as planned, unplanned, informal, and informal efforts positively contributing personal and professional development (Stone 2014). Moreover, If education needs creativity and innovation, it must start with the teachers through professional development which is a primary vehicle in the effort to carry out the education reforms successfully (Tran et al., 2020) Personal Growth and Professional Development must be designed to meet the needs of the teachers in terms of knowledge and skills. It is important teachers are asked about their needs for professional growth Professional development is an important strategy for ensuring that educators are equipped to support deep and complex student learning in their classrooms (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

The mean of the Level of career readiness in terms of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy is 4.28 with a standard deviation of 0.52, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of Content Knowledge and Pedagogy is very much observed. Content Knowledge and Pedagogy is also information that can only be digested by educators and that aids in communicating what educators know, what educators should know, and how educators may grow their knowledge base (E. J. Park, 2015) A skilful and very knowledgeable teacher has the potential to make the learning more meaningful to the students (Public Agenda, 2000 ) Similarly, posited that pedagogical approach is fundamental in the transfer of learning, while deciding the appropriate pedagogy for a particular lesson or topic, an educator needs to consider the context of the learners, their diverse interest and characteristics, the available learning resources and even the prevailing condition of their learning environment (UNESCO 2018).

The mean of the Level of career readiness in terms of Diversity of learners is 4.26 with a standard deviation of 0.52, which means that the level of career readiness in terms of Diversity of Learners is very much observed. The statistical implication of this result is the level of career readiness is very much observed.This finding aligns with existing literature which highlights the critical role of teacher awareness and appreciation of student diversity in educational outcomes. Research indicates that when teachers possess a deep understanding of and respect for their students' varied cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds, they are better equipped to design and implement effective instructional strategies (Gay, 2019). This strong foundation can be attributed to their experiential learning exposure in their field study courses, during which they were able to witness actual classroom settings of in-service teachers applying teaching strategies in response to learners of diverse backgrounds. Hence, through their courses, the pre-service teachers gained an excellent theoretical understanding of inclusive education, but they still need time to create their professional identities as inclusive instructors (Tangen and Beutel, 2019). Teacher education institutes serve an important role in preparing pre-service teachers to teach a varied range of students competently and confidently by integrating both theoretical knowledge and practical, experiential learning opportunities. Furthermore, the central role of teachers in establishing learning environments that are responsive to learner diversity is underscored by DepED Order No. 42, s. (2017).

*Table 3.* *Significant Relationship between Psychological Capital and Career Readiness*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variables Correlated | R | P-value | Decision on | Decision on Relationship |
| Psychological Capital and Career Readiness |  | 0.000 | Reject | Significant |

**Correlations between Psychological Capital and Career Readiness**

The table shows a significant positive correlation between Psychological Capital and Career Readiness, with a correlation coefficient of 0.844. This indicates a strong positive relationship between these two variables. The p-value of 0.000 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level.Therefore, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that Psychological Capital is strongly associated with Career Readiness.

The statistical significance of the findings provides sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis, which states that no significant relationship exists between Psychological Capital and Career Readiness among BTLED Pre-Service Teachers. The results confirm the presence of a significant positive relationship between the two variables. This indicates that higher levels of psychological capital among BTLED Pre-Service Teachers are associated with greater career readiness, emphasizing the importance of fostering psychological capital in preparing future educators for their professional roles.

*Table 4.* *Regression analysis on the of the Influence of Psychological Capital on Career Readiness*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Career Readiness | | | | | | |
| Psychological Capital (Indicators) | Beta  Unstandardized | SE | B | T | Sig. | Decision |
| Constant | 1.383 | .205 |  | 6.750 | .000 |  |
| Work  Self-Efficacy | 0.188 | .064 | 0.251 | 2.908 | .005 | Reject |
| Optimism | 0.253 | .063 | 0.331 | 3.992 | .000 | Reject |
| Resilience | 0.246 | .056 | 0.371 | 4.419 | .000 | Reject |
| R= = 0.715 Adjusted =0.706 F=74.475 P<.001 | | | | | | |

**Domain that Significantly Influence Career Readiness**

In Table 4, the domains of psychological capital that influence the career readiness are Work Self-efficacy, Optimism and Resilience. Multiple Linear Regression was used to analyze the relationship between various indicators of psychological capital and career readiness among BTLEd pre-service teachers.The data shows that the influence of psychological capital towards career readiness among BTLED Pre-service teachers has the F-Value of 74.475 and corresponding p-value of <.001.

This means that psychological capital significantly influences career readiness since the probability value is less than .001. The value of 0.715 implies that 71.5% of career readiness among BTLED Pre-service teachers are influenced by psychological capital of BTLED Pre-service teachers, while the remaining 28.5% were influenced by other factors.

The results revealed that the three indicators of psychological capital such as work self-efficacy, optimism and resilience are predictors of career readiness.Based on the data in table 4, the correlation coefficient value r = 0.724, it can be interpreted that the level of relationship between psychological capital and work readiness has a strong relationship because it is in the correlation interval 0.60 - 0.799 (Anwar, 2009:104).

The indicator Work Self-Efficacy has a beta of 0.188 and a corresponding p-value of 0.005 which means that Work Self-Efficacy has a significant influence on the career readiness of BTLED Pre-service teachers since the probability level of is 0.005 which is less than the level of significance at 0.05. Also, Optimism has a beta of 0.253 and a p-value of 0.000 which means that optimism has a significant influence on the career readiness of BTLED Pre-service teachers since the probability level is 0.000 which is less than the level of significance at 0.05. Lastly, Resilience has a beta of 0.246 and a p-value of 0.000 which means that resilience has a significant influence on the career readiness of BTLED Pre-service teachers since the probability level is 0.000 which is less than the level of significance at 0.05. The overall result of the psychological capital significantly influences career readiness of BTLED Pre-Service Teachers.

The final regression for this study is Career Readiness = 1.83 + 0.188 (Work self-efficacy) + 0.253 (Optimism) + 0.246 (Resilience). The model suggests that for every unit increase in work self-efficacy, career readiness increases by 0.188, for every increase of optimism, career readiness increases by 0.253, and for every increase of resilience career readiness increases by 0.246. The intercept of 1.383 represents the estimated academic interest when all predictors are at zero.

**4. Conclusion**

The level of psychological capital is at a very high level. Its indicator obtained the following levels: Very high for optimism , very high for self-efficacy and very high for resilience. This means that all measures described in psychological behaviors were positive among BTLED pre-service teachers. The level of career readiness is at a very high level. Its indicators obtained the following level: very high for Learning Environment, very high for Assessment and Reporting, very high for Community Linkages and Professional Engagement, very high for Curriculum and Planning, very high for Professional Growth and Professional Development, very high for Content Knowledge and Pedagogy and very high for Diversity of Learners . This means that all measures described in career readiness among BTLED pre-service teachers were positive. All indicators of psychological capital have a significant relationship to the career readiness of BTLED pre-service teachers. Also , it is concluded that all indicators of psychological capital significantly influenced the career readiness of BTLED pre-service teachers. Lastly, This study confirms that psychological capital significantly impacts career readiness among BTLED-preservice teachers. This implies that when the pre-service teacher has higher psychological capitals such as optimism,self-efficacy and resilience, they are more ready for their career.

**Definitions, Acronyms, Abbreviations**

**Psycap: Psychological Capital**

**COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:**

Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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