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## **Exploring the Influence of Leisure Activity Participation on the Self-Efficacy of Selected Public Tertiary School Students**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study focus on the relation between leisure participation and self-efficacy among public tertiary students in the Philippines. It is anchored on Social Cognitive Theory and Leisure Constraints Theory explores how such leisure activities could have an effect on the confidence of students in their capabilities and general well-being. In this study, a stratified random sample of 269 was considered and reported a high level of engagement in relaxing and developmental leisure activities, with significant differences noted across academic tracks. A moderate positive correlation between leisure participation and self-efficacy identifies that increased leisure activity enhances students' academic performance and mental well-being. The research provides recommendations for balancing academic demands with leisure time as a targeted intervention in support of student development: it requests efficient time management, opportunities to engage in a variety of leisure activities, and overcoming constraints to participation. The findings add to the big picture of how holistic pedagogies facilitate learners' resilience, motivation, and achievement.*

*Keywords: self-efficacy, recreational activities, students at public tertiary institutions, academic achievement, comprehensive development.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Self-efficacy is the degree of belief by an individual in their capability to perform tasks successfully, achieve goals, and overcome difficulties; it is one of the critical factors influencing life aspects, including school performance, motivation, and general well-being. In an educational context, self-efficacy is central to the academic achievements realized by students. This, in turn, affects the students' approaches towards studying, overcoming obstacles, and persisting in pursuit of their education. According to previous studies, a learner who is high in self-efficacy will confidently, persistently and resiliently face challenges thrown at them in academics (Bartimote-Aufflick et al. 2016; Klassen and Klassen, 2018). Creating a favorable attitude will result to improved academic performance, a sense of control, and self-regulation in learning. On the other hand, students with low self-efficacy are likely to develop avoidance behaviors, exhibit heightened anxiety, and fail to cope with demands encountered in their academic life, as noted by Setiawan in 2014. It points to the need to have provisions in the educational settings that enhance the students' self-efficacy towards a more effective academic and personal development.

Leisure is generally described as time that a person enjoys and spent on activities where a person feels relaxed. It also plays a very important role in the holistic development and well-being of students. Leisure time activities help in reducing stress and refreshing the mind to some extent, allowing students to achieve a state of balance between academic demands and the pursuit of personal fulfillment. Students participating in leisure activities are better able to explore interests, express themselves, and deepen an emerging sense of identity. According to Weng and Chiang (2014), recreational activities are those that support physical health, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and enhance one's psychological immunity toward a well-balanced and harmonious life. Apart from the above benefits, leisure activities arm students with key life skills such as time management, decision-making, and team work, very crucial for all-round development in any student (Aksoy & Arslan, 2019).

While participation in leisure activities is well documented as one of the ways to enhance self-efficacy, and the benefits of self-efficacy are also widely documented, it has not been very well explored at their very intersection—for how leisure activities contribute to enhancing self-efficacy among college students. Most of the existing research has focused on self-efficacy as it affects and is affected within the academic environment, which discusses such topics as its role in online learning environments, academic burnout, motivations, and performance in specific fields like science (Alqurashi, 2016; Rahmati, 2015; Shin, 2018; Jansen et al, 2015). However, little attention is given to the role of leisure activities in shaping students' self-efficacy. Since leisure activities are a core aspect of the learners' whole life and development, their influence on self-efficacy cannot be overlooked.

Recent trends show a declining interest of learners in leisure activities, especially in the United States and the Philippines. This decline is attributed to increased academic demands, other extracurricular obligations, and the pervasive influence of digital devices that reduce student time to pursue relevant and meaningful recreational activities. Grøtan et al. (2019) and Khan (2023), have argued that such reduction in time for leisure activities has a corresponding effect on the lower self-efficacy among students in relation to academic and personal development. For students in the Philippines, highly competitive academic settings produce monumental pressures to succeed in standardized tests and admissions into prestigious universities. Added to this is the societal expectation of equating academic success with social status, which further heightens stress, burnout, and a loss of self-efficacy among students. Additionally, the lack of mental health support and socio-economic disparities increase these challenges, particularly for students in the margins who do not have the same level of resources or systems in place that could help them effectively cope with the pressures of academics (Fulgencio et al., 2021; Datu & Mateo, 2020). A lot of learners are, therefore, overwhelmed by academic requirements, which goes on to negatively affect their mental health, motivation, and self-efficacy (Gull, 2016).

The current study seeks to help fill this gap in the literature by investigating the relationship of participation in leisure activities and self-efficacy for college students. By conducting an investigation on this under-researched area, the present research hopes to add to the literature an investigation of the way leisure activities may have a positive effect on the students' self-efficacy and eventually enhance their academic performance, mental well-being, and quality of life. The findings of this research may have a great impact on the development of curriculum, pedagogy, and extracurricular activities in physical education, all of which can be purposefully designed to provide support for comprehensive student growth. Knowing that leisure activities are a way to facilitate self-efficacy, educators will have the ability to ensure balance in the learning environment and cater to students' academic success and personal well-being. Hence, the present study tries to make a small contribution to the building body of educational practices that will help nurture holistic students who have built up resilience, motivation, and life skills toward successful academic and personal lives by addressing the overlooked association between leisure and self-efficacy.

## Theoretical Framework

This paper utilize the Social Cognitive Theory and Leisure Constraints Theory as a basis for the study. Social Cognitive Theory as describe by Bandura (2014), considers the triadic reciprocal interaction between personal factors, environmental influences, and behavior. One important tenet of this theory is observational learning and self-efficacy. This theory proposes that people learn by observing others; moreover, their beliefs in self-efficacy—confidence in being able to perform tasks—determine their choice of activities, time spent on activities, and persistence. The theory will aid in examining the ways in which leisure activities affect the self-efficacy of students and how this relationship is affected by various factors.

Leisure Constraints Theory on the other hand takes into consideration constraints to leisure existing at the intrapersonal level, inclusive of personal preferences and attitude; at the interpersonal level, probing social influences; and at the structural level, which covers all external factors like time and resources (Hung and Petrick, 2012),. This theory will thus guide the research on issues that students of public tertiary schools face in participating in leisure activities, and how such constraints affect their self-efficacy. The two theories will hence provide a framework for understanding the relationship between participation in leisure activities and self-efficacy among students at public tertiary schools.

## Research Paradigm



Figure 1 illustrates the research paradigm, which depicts the relationships among students' demographic profiles, participation in leisure activities, and self-efficacy. The demographic profile will be used to test for significant differences in both leisure activity participation and self-efficacy amongst the students. The research study will also endeavor to establish the relationship existing between participation in leisure activities and self-efficacy to determine how strongly they are related.

It explores these relationships and differences, hoping to come out with factors that influence students' engagement in leisure activities and the level of self-efficacy among students. These insights will contribute to the development of a comprehensive plan to promote student well-being and holistic development in tertiary education.

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## Methodology

In this study, test of difference and correlation approach shall be used in testing these relationships and differences among variables. The research is therefore focused on numerical data that surveys demographic variables, leisure activities participation, and levels of self-efficacy among students in public tertiary schools. Tests of differences compares self-efficacy levels based on the profile and leisure activity participation by students. Correlation approach assessed the relationship between leisure activities and self-efficacy.

This study was conducted at the Camarines Norte State College in the Philippines, covering 269 students from the population of 9,047, computed through Raosoft Sample Size Calculator. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure proper representation within the subgroups of interest in the population, thereby increasing the precision and accuracy of results in this study. Using this method, the relationship between participation in leisure activities and self-efficacy will be gauged against different demographic strata that may indicate a key trend or difference.

The data to be gathered shall be through ethical practices, with necessary approvals to be gained from Adamson University's research ethics committee and CNSC's administration. There was an informed consent acquired from the student respondents before the distribution of the survey questionnaires. After data collection, the dataset shall be cleansed and tallied for accuracy, then forwarded to a statistician for analysis using appropriate statistical methods in arriving at meaningful conclusions from the research.

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## Result and Discussion

The study aimed to assess the impact of leisure activity participation on the self-efficacy and holistic development of public tertiary school students. The demographic profile of the respondents showed a predominance of female students (65.43%) compared to males (34.57%), aligning with global trends where female enrollment in higher education often exceeds that of males. Most participants were in their third year (43.39%), followed by second-year (28.62%) and first-year students (25.28%), with fourth-year students constituting a minimal proportion (2.60%). Regarding academic tracks, the majority were enrolled in STEM programs (49.07%), while smaller percentages pursued HUMSS, accountancy, tech-vocational, agriculture, medicine, and sports courses.

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### Leisure activities.

The study evaluated leisure activities across various domains: relaxing, developmental, socializing, activity with an attractive environment, productive, esthetic, entertaining, and exciting. Students exhibited high engagement levels in most areas, with the highest participation in relaxing activities such as listening to music (mean = 3.78), developmental activities like outdoor pursuits (mean = 3.58), and activities within green spaces (mean = 3.76). Socializing activities were also significant, with volunteering services (mean = 3.25) showing the highest engagement. Productive activities like playing sports (mean = 3.42) and esthetic activities such as running through landscapes (mean = 3.32) were highly rated. Entertaining and exciting activities, including watching movies at home (mean = 3.69) and exploring new hobbies (mean = 3.22), also received high scores.

Table 1. Leisure activity participation of selected tertiary education students

	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
A. Relaxing Activity	3.37	0.4408	very high
B. Developmental Activity	3.35	0.5137	very high
C. Socializing Activity	2.95	0.7556	high
D. Activity with an Attractive Environment	3.62	0.4999	very high
E. Productive Activity	3.11	0.6504	high
F. Esthetic Activity	3.13	0.6274	high

G. Entertaining Activity	3.47	0.4605	very high
H. Exciting Activity	3.46	0.5067	very high
<b>Leisure Activity Participation</b>	<b>2.94</b>	<b>0.3549</b>	<b>high</b>

The analysis of differences in leisure activity participation based on sex, year level, and academic track revealed no significant differences based on sex. However, year level analysis showed a significant difference in the category of activities with an attractive environment, where fourth-year students demonstrated higher participation. Significant differences were observed across course tracks, with students in sports tracks showing the highest participation in developmental and exciting activities, while accountancy students exhibited higher engagement in socializing, productive, and activities with an attractive environment. Overall, the study underscores the crucial role of leisure activities in enhancing students' well-being and self-efficacy.

Table 2. Analysis of the difference between the level of leisure activity participation among students when their profile

GROUPING VARIABLES	INDICATORS	Test value	P-VALUE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	
				ON	DECISION
SEX	A. Relaxing Activity	7650.00	0.371	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	B. Developmental Activity	7261.50	0.123	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	C. Socializing Activity	7694.00	0.417	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	D. Activity with an Attractive Environment	7438.50	0.194	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	E. Productive Activity	7465.00	0.233	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	F. Esthetic Activity	7407.00	0.197	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	G. Entertaining Activity	7566.00	0.3	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	H. Exciting Activity	7406.50	0.192	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	Leisure Activity Participation	7237.00	0.117	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
YEAR LEVEL	A. Relaxing Activity	3.35	0.341	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	B. Developmental Activity	1.44	0.697	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	C. Socializing Activity	4.15	0.245	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	D. Activity with an Attractive Environment	10.54	0.014	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>
	E. Productive Activity	0.75	0.861	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	F. Esthetic Activity	2.20	0.532	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	G. Entertaining Activity	6.13	0.106	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	H. Exciting Activity	0.88	0.831	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	Leisure Activity Participation	1.99	0.575	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
COURSE TRACK	A. Relaxing Activity	5.08	0.533	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	B. Developmental Activity	13.59	0.035	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>
	C. Socializing Activity	14.229	0.00001	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>
	D. Activity with an Attractive Environment	17.22	0.008	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>
	E. Productive Activity	12.93	0.044	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>

F. Esthetic Activity	10.00	0.125	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
G. Entertaining Activity	13.52	0.036	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>
H. Exciting Activity	4.35	0.63	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
Leisure Activity Participation	17.10	0.009	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>

**Self-efficacy.** The analysis of self-efficacy among tertiary education students reveals generally high levels of confidence across various domains, with an overall average score of 3.37, indicating strong agreement with their capabilities. In Sport Discipline Efficacy, students show significant confidence in their technical skills, although there is room for improvement in physical fitness, as indicated by lower scores for related statements. Similarly, Psychological Efficacy scores suggest that while students are highly self-motivated, there is a need for better emotional control.

In Professional Thought Efficacy, students exhibit strong commitment to their performance goals but show a need for improved life organization skills to prevent negative impacts on their performance. The highest levels of Personality Efficacy are observed in students' adherence to ethical standards, although self-confidence is identified as an area requiring development. These findings suggest that while students are generally effective in various areas, there are specific aspects where targeted support could enhance overall efficacy.

Table 7. Level of self-efficacy among tertiary education students

	WEIGHTED MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
A. Sport Discipline Efficacy	3.3	0.5323	strongly agree
B. Psychological Efficacy	3.43	0.5014	strongly agree
C. Professional Thought Efficacy	3.44	0.4928	strongly agree
D. Personality Efficacy	3.37	0.4613	strongly agree
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	<b>3.37</b>	<b>0.4077</b>	<b>strongly agree</b>

Demographic factors such as sex and year level do not significantly affect self-efficacy levels, indicating consistent perceptions of self-efficacy across these variables. However, notable differences are observed in Professional Thought Efficacy among students from different academic tracks, with those in the Sports track demonstrating higher self-efficacy in professional thoughts compared to students from other tracks. This highlights disparities in career preparation and professional development across different academic disciplines.

Grouping variables	INDICATORS	Test value	P-VALUE	VERBAL INTERPRETATION	DECISION
SEX	A. Sport Discipline Efficacy	7134.5	0.076	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	B. Psychological Efficacy	7871	0.6	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	C. Professional Thought Efficacy	7768	0.484	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	D. Personality Efficacy	8117	0.911	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	Self-efficacy	7540.5	0.287	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
YEAR	A. Sport Discipline Efficacy	2.559	0.465	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	B. Psychological Efficacy	0.981	0.806	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	C. Professional Thought Efficacy	1.08	0.782	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	D. Personality Efficacy	4.141	0.247	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
	Self-efficacy	1.86	0.602	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
Course track	A. Sport Discipline Efficacy	6.756	0.344	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>

B. Psychological Efficacy	6.112	0.411	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
C. Professional Thought Efficacy	15.966	0.014	significant	<i>reject null hypothesis</i>
D. Personality Efficacy	8.356	0.213	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>
Self-efficacy	10.722	0.097	not significant	<i>accept null hypothesis</i>

The study also finds a moderate positive relationship between leisure activity participation and self-efficacy, with a significant correlation indicating that increased engagement in leisure activities is associated with higher self-efficacy. Challenges such as health issues, time management difficulties, and lack of resources hinder students' participation in leisure activities. Addressing these challenges through targeted interventions could enhance students' engagement in leisure activities and, consequently, their self-efficacy.

	<b>Correlation Coefficient</b>	<b>P-VALUE</b>	<b>VERBAL INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>DECISION</b>
Leisure Activity Participation AND Self-efficacy	.616**	.000	Moderate positive correlation	Reject Ho

\*\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

*0.90 to 1.00 (-.90 to -1.00) - Very high positive (negative) correlation*

*0.70 to 90 (-.70 to -.90) - High positive (negative) correlation*

*0.50 to .70 (-.50 to -.70) - Moderate positive (negative) correlation*

*0.30 to .50 (-.30 to -.50) - Low positive (negative) correlation*

*0.00 to .30 (.00 to -.30) - negligible correlation*

## Conclusion

The study concluded that college students of public tertiary exhibit high participation in relaxing and developmental activities, especially listening to music, walking, outdoor activities, and regular physical exercise. Gender differences in leisure participation were not significantly observed, but fourth-year students are more involved in activities with attractive environments. Students under various academic tracks had different leisure activity preferences, where sports students were more into developmental activities, while accountancy students preferred socializing and productive activities. There were no significant effects of sex and year level towards self-efficacy, but the academic track made an impact on some areas, particularly on Professional Thought Efficacy. Other factors recognized to hamper participation in leisure include school demands, lack of time, financial constraints, and psychological and social constraints.

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