

Employees' Perspectives on Self-Efficacy-Building Supervisory Behaviours in Professional Contexts

Component 2: Presentation

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Overview

- Ethical considerations
 - Insider-research considerations
- Background
- Literature review
- Aim and objectives
- Methods
- Findings
- Conclusions
- recommendations
- Reference list

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical Frameworks

- Research conducted ethically, responsibly and with reflective rigour
- Guided by:
 - Concordat to Support Research Integrity (Universities UK, 2019)
 - UWTSD Research Ethics & Integrity Code of Practice (2022)
 - UWTSD Research Data Management Policy (2022)
 - Tri-Council Policy Statement (Government of Canada, 2022)
 - WABC Code of Business Coaching Ethics & Integrity (2007)
- Ethical approval granted 16 June 2025

Risks and Safeguards - Participants

Risks

- Emotional discomfort
- Loss of confidentiality
- Identification of supervisors

Safeguards

- Informed consent and withdrawal rights
- Psychological safety protected
- Confidentiality and anonymity ensured

Risks and Safeguards - Researcher

Risks

- Researcher bias
- Reputational damage

Safeguards

- Independent triangulation
- Respondent anonymity
- Coaching-informed approach

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Insider-Research Considerations

Insider-Research Considerations

- Dual role: insider-researcher and CEO
- Advantages
 - Access
 - Autonomy
 - Reduced barriers
- Safeguards
 - Separate research email
 - Clients excluded
 - Tutor consultation

BACKGROUND

Background

- Professional Context
 - Leaders seek coaching to build confidence, often reflecting underlying self-efficacy beliefs
- Practice-Based Issue
 - Research offers limited insight into employees' perceptions of supervisory behaviours that foster self-efficacy in professional contexts
- Relevance
 - Self-efficacy is identified as a core future competency linked to resilience, adaptability and performance (World Economic Forum, 2023).
 - Understanding employee experiences clarifies how supervisory actions shape self-efficacy, informing leadership and coaching practice

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic Underpinning

- Social Cognitive Theory: Human functioning is shaped by the interaction of personal, behavioural and environmental factors (Bandura, 1986)
- Self-efficacy, a core personal factor, defined as belief in capability to execute actions to achieve desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997, p. 3)
- Three observable sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious learning and verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1977)
 - Summarized as “I do”, “I see” and “I hear” (Halliwell, Mitchell and Boyle, 2022, p. 42)

Relevance of Self-Efficacy in Professional Contexts

- Strong predictor of work performance (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998)
- Influences decision-making under pressure and adaptability (Bandura and Wood, 1989; Malone, 2001)
- Associated with perceived organizational support (Rozikan *et al.*, 2024)
- Malleable (Gist and Mitchell, 1992) and influenced by leadership behaviour (Aggarwal and Krishnan, 2013)
- Identified by the WEF (2023) as a core future workforce competency

Gaps and Limitations in Applied Research

- Limited application across professional sectors and participant groups
- Proliferation of specialized self-efficacy subtypes (Igu *et al.*, 2023)
- Limited empirical testing of self-efficacy sources as defined by Bandura (1977), evidenced by Chang, Zhong and He (2025)
- Leader-centric studies with limited insight into employee perceptions

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

To examine the prevalence of supervisory behaviours employees perceived as fostering self-efficacy and to analyze how these behaviours were categorized within three observable sources in professional contexts.

Objectives

1. To critically examine the prevalence of supervisory behaviours that employees perceived as contributing to self-efficacy in professional contexts.
2. To identify and categorize these behaviours within three observable sources of self-efficacy and explore how they were perceived to influence employees' self-efficacy.
3. To generate practical recommendations that equip coaches with strategies to help supervisors foster employee self-efficacy.
4. To critically evaluate the findings in relation to existing academic literature on supervisory behaviours as a source of employee self-efficacy.

METHODS

Research Paradigm

- Subjectivist ontological perspective: reality is shaped by individual perceptions (Gray, 2022, p. 24)
- Interpretivist epistemological stance: knowledge is constructed through human interpretation in social contexts (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010, p. 64)
- Inductive logic: progressed from specific observations to broader generalizations (Dewey, 1910, pp. 79-80)

Research Design

- Sequential mixed-methods design
- Combined quantitative breadth with qualitative depth
- Method triangulation strengthened validity through multiple perspectives (Bell and Waters, 2018, p. 25)

Phase 1: Questionnaire

- 26-item closed-ended online questionnaire
- Yielded 119 valid responses
- Identified prevalence of supervisory self-efficacy-building behaviours
- Captured source categorization, general self-efficacy and demographic and professional variables

Phase 2: Interviews

- 20 semi-structured interviews using stratified sampling by occupation and level
- Six open-ended questions shared in advance; conducted via Zoom
- Clarified behavioural frequency and supervisory context
- Identified specific behaviours and employee preferences

Methodological Issues Identified and Addressed

- Questionnaire

- Misallocated behaviour counts cleansed and corrected
- NGSES delivered on a 4-point scale rather than the intended 5-point scale

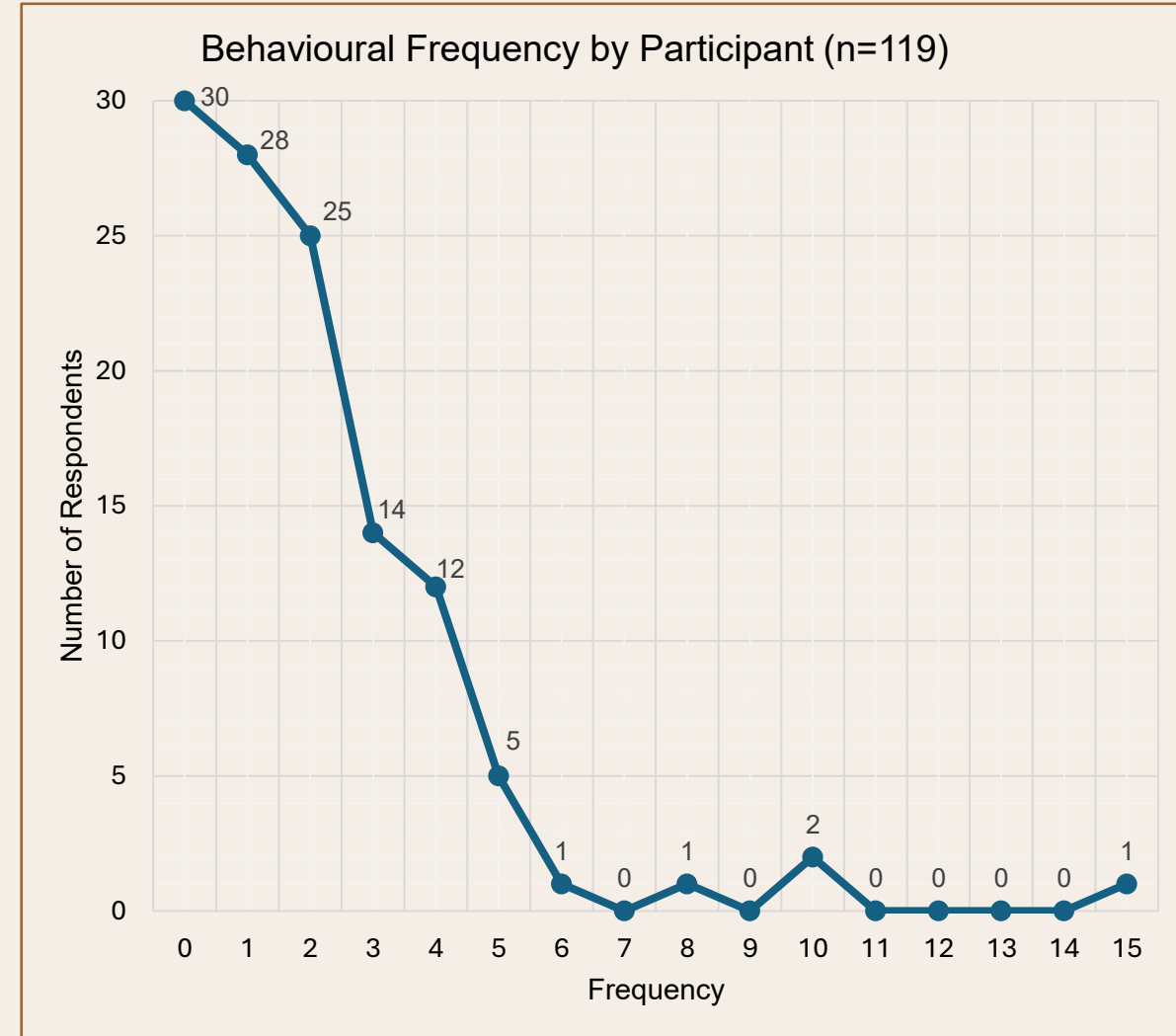
- Interviews

- Region and language criteria were removed from stratification to maintain focus on professional context
- Researcher familiarity assessed; no exclusions required

FINDINGS

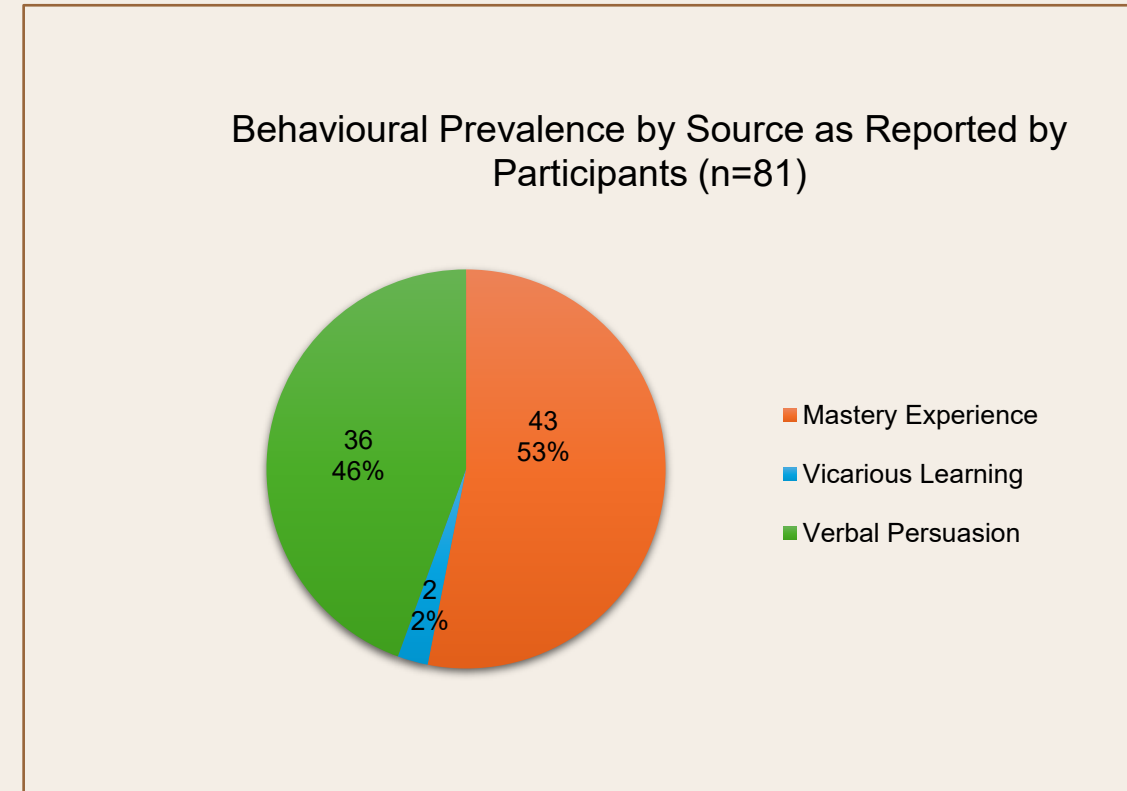
Objective 1 – Prevalence of Supervisory Self-Efficacy-Building Behaviours

- Supervisory self-efficacy-building behaviours were infrequent
- Behavioural frequency varied by professional context
- Large organizations showed the lowest frequencies
- Minimal variance across gender, age or tenure



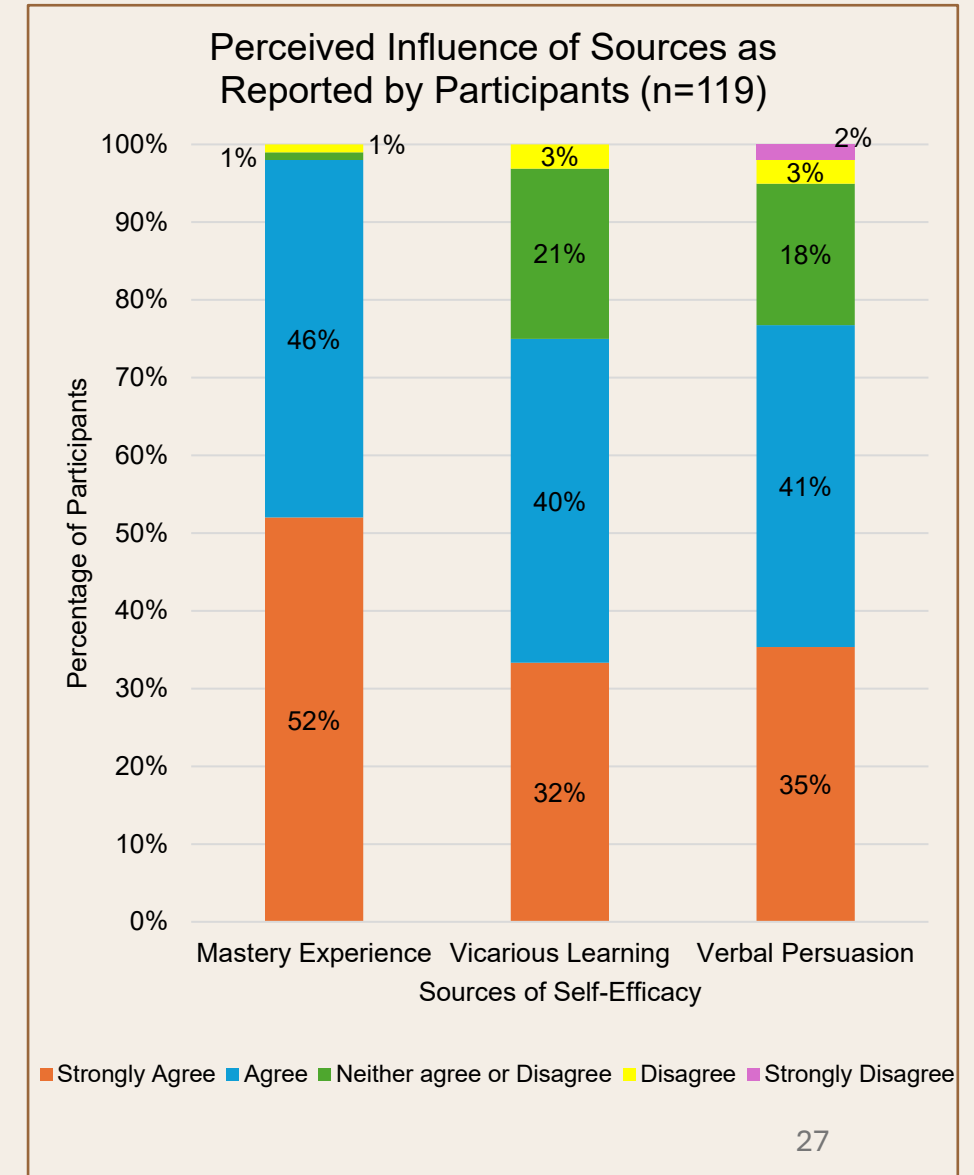
Objective 2 – Categorization of Supervisory Self-Efficacy-Building Behaviours

- Actual supervisory behaviours across self-efficacy sources (n=81)
- Supervisor practice was concentrated in two sources: mastery experience and verbal persuasion
- Vicarious learning was rarely utilized



Objective 2 – Perceived Influence of Self-Efficacy Sources

- Employees rated mastery experience as the most influential source
- Verbal persuasion and vicarious learning were also perceived as influential, with modest differences between them
- Clear gap between the perceived value of vicarious learning and its limited use in practice



Objective 2 – Identification of Supervisory Self-Efficacy-Building Behaviours

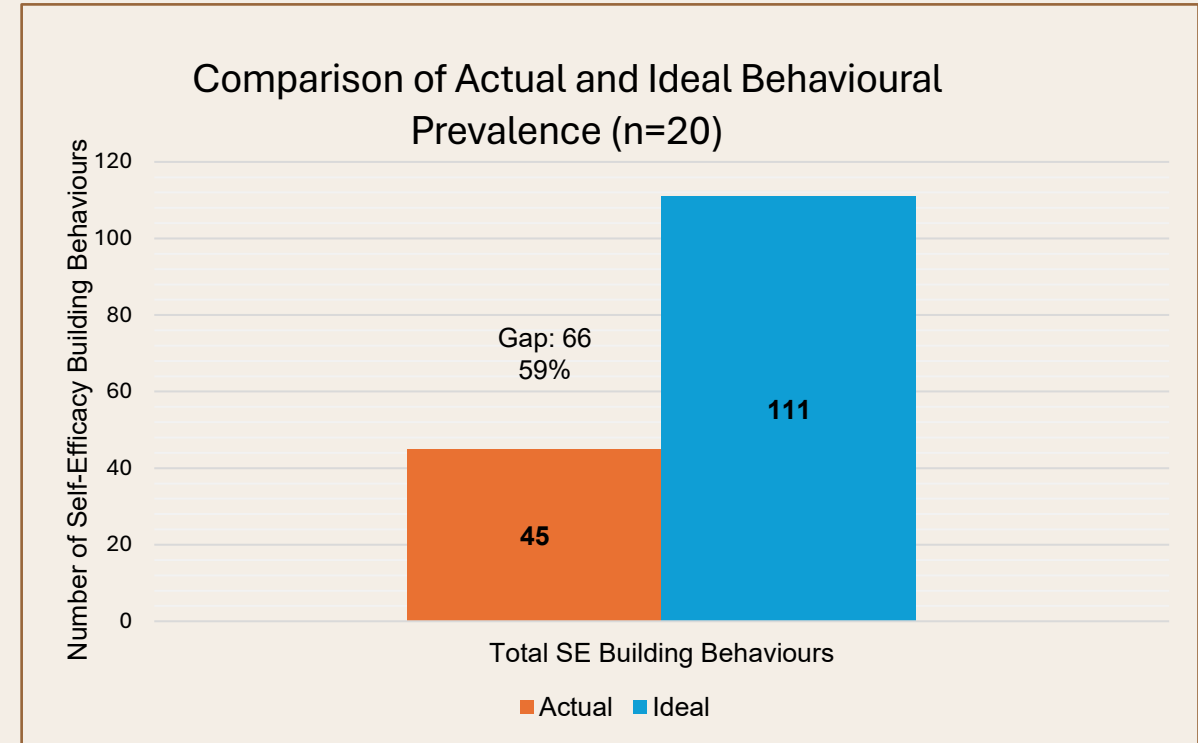
- 15 distinct supervisory behaviours identified
- Three behaviours accounted for 44% of all reported self-efficacy-building behaviours

Self-Efficacy-Building Behaviours by Theme (n=15)

Self-Efficacy Building Behavioural Themes (n=15)		Total Behaviours (n=45)		Self-Efficacy Source
1	Autonomy	9	20%	Mastery Experience
2	Peer Engagement	6	13%	Mastery Experience
3	Direction	5	11%	Verbal Persuasion
4	Reminder	4	9%	Mastery Experience
5	Encouragement	4	9%	Verbal Persuasion
6	Delegation	3	7%	Mastery Experience
7	Planning	3	7%	Mastery Experience
8	Recognition	2	4%	Verbal Persuasion
9	Listening	2	4%	Verbal Persuasion
10	Empathy	2	4%	Verbal Persuasion
11	Priority Reassessment	1	2%	Mastery Experience
12	Resource enablement	1	2%	Mastery Experience
13	Authority	1	2%	Mastery Experience
14	Observation - Process	1	2%	Vicarious Learning
15	Expert	1	2%	Vicarious Learning
15		45	100%	
Behavioural Themes		8	53%	Mastery Experience
		5	33%	Verbal Persuasion
		2	13%	Vicarious Learning

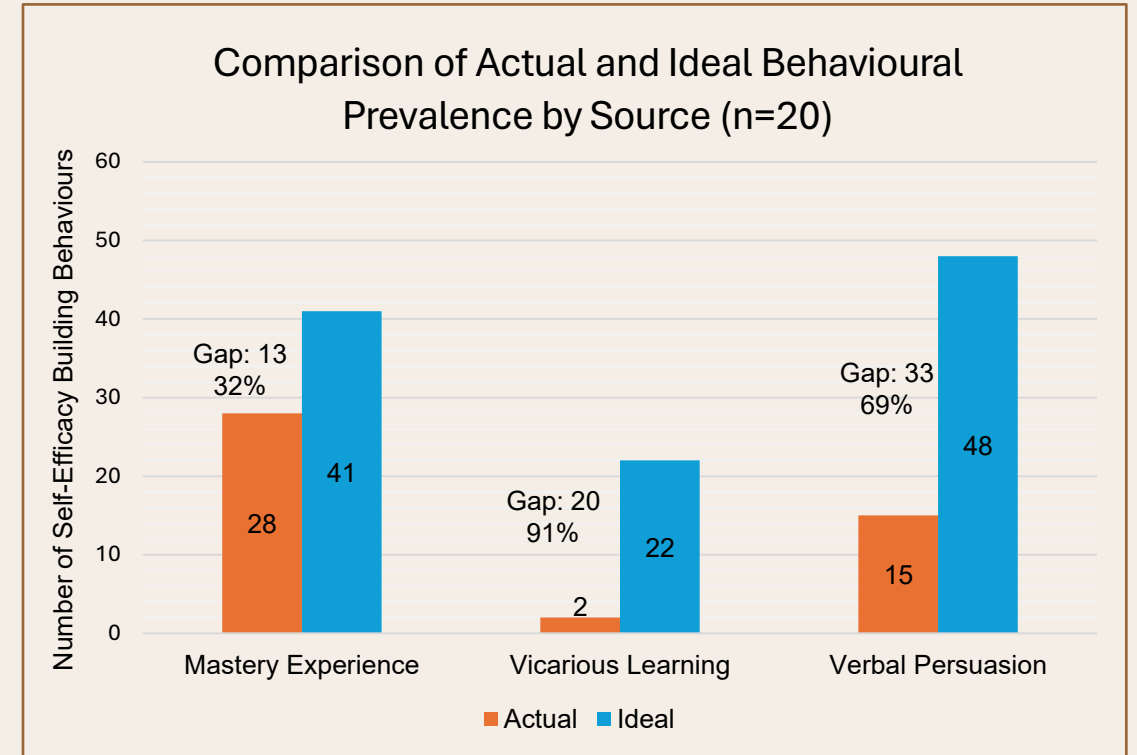
Objective 3 – Actual vs Ideal Frequency of Supervisory Self-Efficacy Behaviours

- Ideal supervisory self-efficacy-building behaviours exceeded actual frequency by 59%



Objective 3 – Actual vs Ideal Supervisory Self-Efficacy Behaviours Across Sources

- The overall gap reflected uneven shortfalls across sources, with the largest deficits in vicarious learning and the smallest in mastery experience.



Objective 3 – Ideal Supervisory Self-Efficacy Building Behaviours

- Employees identified specific supervisory behaviours they would like to experience more frequently, indicating clear priorities for efficacy-building support

Ideal Self-Efficacy-Building Behaviours by Theme
(n=11)

Ideal Self-Efficacy Building Behavioural Themes (n=11)		Interviewees (n=20)		Self-Efficacy Source
1	Autonomy	4	20%	Mastery Experience
2	Practical guided problem-solving	3	15%	Mastery Experience
3	Specific Recognition	3	15%	Verbal Persuasion
4	Stretch Assignments	2	10%	Mastery Experience
5	Contextual Exposure	2	10%	Vicarious Learning
6	Delegation	1	5%	Mastery Experience
7	General Recognition	1	5%	Verbal Persuasion
8	Encouragement	1	5%	Verbal Persuasion
9	Validation	1	5%	Verbal Persuasion
10	Comprehensive Feedback	1	5%	Verbal Persuasion
11	Intentional Modelling	1	5%	Vicarious Learning
11		20	100%	

Objective 4 – Evaluating Findings Against Existing Literature

- General self-efficacy scores showed no relationship with actual or ideal behavioural frequency, reinforcing the limits of generalized measures for task-specific efficacy (Bandura, 1997)
- Patterns in general self-efficacy score did not align with age or years in role, diverging from theoretical claims of linear growth with accumulated experience (Sherer *et al.*, 1982)
- Trust emerged as the only relational factor employees linked to self-efficacy, aligning with research emphasizing supervisory trust as central to efficacy development (Malone, 2001; Gale, Alemdar, Cappelli and Morris, 2021)

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

- Supervisory self-efficacy-building behaviours were applied infrequently across professional contexts
- Employees reported a substantial gap between the frequency of self-efficacy-building behaviours experienced and those desired
- Supervisory practice was concentrated narrowly on two self-efficacy sources, limiting the breadth of efficacy development
- Employees demonstrated clear and consistent identification of behaviours perceived to strengthen self-efficacy
- General self-efficacy measures did not predict patterns of supervisory support, highlighting the limits of generalized instruments

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

- Equip supervisors to engage employees in intentional dialogue to clarify support needs for new and challenging tasks
- Develop supervisors' capability to apply a balanced behavioural repertoire across the three observable self-efficacy sources
- Embed source-based behavioural strategies into coaching, leadership development, onboarding and performance discussions

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