

Examining the Role of Gender, Job Status, Marital Status, and Semester Level on General Self- Efficacy and Social Self- Efficacy of Management Students¹

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of gender, job status, marital status, and level of semester on general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy of management students. The study employed quantitative approaches along with statistical tools like independent sample and one-way ANOVA to assess the role of demographic status on general and social self-efficacy. The population of the study is students who were studying in the Master of Business Studies (MBS) program of Tribhuvan University's constituent campuses located in Kathmandu Valley. Responses were collected through a self-administered questionnaire general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy scale developed by Sherer et al. (1982), using convenience sampling. Regarding results, except for marital status of the students, gender, job status, and semester level did not affect the general self-efficacy. Based on the overall mean value, students have general self-efficacy, while they are neutral in the case of social self-efficacy. Gender, job status, marital status, and semester level did not affect social self-efficacy. The students will learn the importance of self-efficacy to succeed in their personal and professional lives. This also adds value to efficacy theory and also whether the demographics of students affect their self-efficacy level.

Keywords: college, demographics, general self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, students

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Introduction

There are different ways to measure the self-efficacy of university students that may contribute to the success of the students in different arenas. Types of self-efficacy to be examined in students may vary over time because they are evolving day by day (Louis et al., 2024). Bandura (2006) mentioned that there is not one best category of self-efficacy to examine. So, one can choose according to the needs of the situation. The development of society, nation, and world is backed by the youth's self-efficacy (Gautam et al., 2019). One's general expectations and assumptions about themselves in a general pattern to respond to a situation is the general self-efficacy. Social self-efficacy is defined as one's capacity to handle people in society and to keep a job (Sherer et al., 1982). Both general and social self-efficacy help increase confidence levels. People with high general self-efficacy may be competent. It seemed that both types of self-efficacy are important for an individual.

Individuals' ability to interact with others and adjust the situation is social self-efficacy (Smith & Betz, 2000). Social confidence is important for every area of one's life. Who is good at social self-efficacy can move away from a situation of depression (Ahmad et al., 2014). Many colleges and universities overlook this part of education in favor of training students' knowledge and skills. As a result, many students have low self-efficacy, are not interested in interaction, and are unable to actively engage in class activities and instruction. Moreover, they will not have good physical and mental health. Thus, it is imperative to enhance college students' development of self-efficacy consciousness in their academic pursuits (Groot & Opdenakker, 2025). Self-efficacy can help improve performance in organization, career choices, academic performance, and optimism (Hackett, 1995; Karademas, 2006). Although the fact that self-efficacy is not only the result of inborn quality but also learned behavior from the situations and experiences. Furthermore, Lent (2020) mentioned that the demographic status of students may also affect the degree of self-efficacy.

Management graduates are the managers and entrepreneurs of tomorrow. They certainly need to have courage to do something after graduation. Students need to have general self-efficacy for establishing their own business or doing jobs. Similarly, social self-efficacy in them is needed for dealing with all the stakeholders around them whether they are employed or self-employed. These two kinds of self-efficacy many not only come from within but also from outside. It will be worth examining the issues related to

how demographic factors affect self-efficacy. Most researchers have studied academic self-efficacy of college students. Furthermore, very little research has been conducted on how demographic factors affect self-efficacy of Nepalese university students. No study has been identified on this particular topic. So, researchers in this study identified the research gap in the case of management graduate students of Nepalese university, so the study aimed to identify the general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy of students studying in the MBS program along with the role of gender and academic semester, marital status, and job status on it.

Literature review

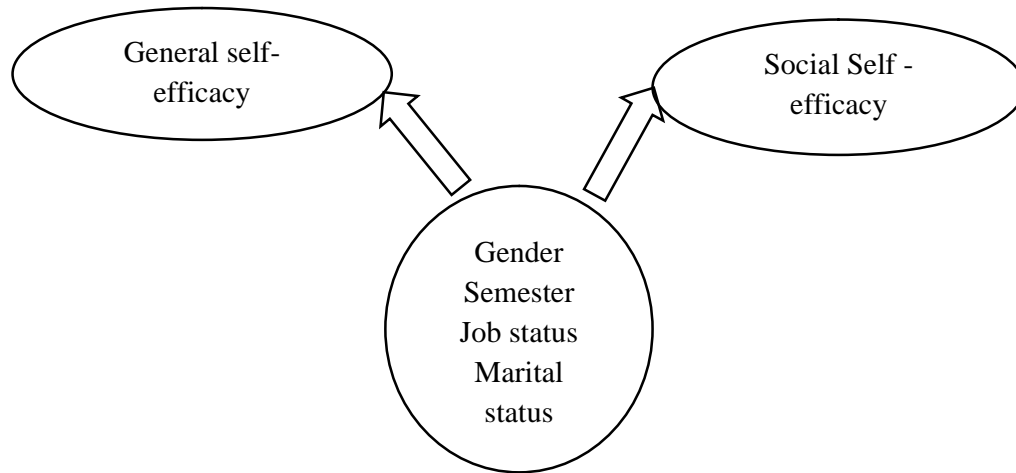
Self-efficacy theory highlights that individual's ability to do something even in harder situations. It is also a psychological process (Bandura, 1977). Individuals can enhance their behavior as they gain mastery in certain areas, as mentioned in the self-efficacy theory. It highlights that an individual's mastery in certain areas is determinant in contributing to behavioral change and past experiences. General self-efficacy is the result of past experiences and skills (Sherer et al., 1982). Gautam et al. (2019) found that gender affects self-efficacy. As indicated by mean values, women have a higher degree of self-efficacy than men. People's attributions are influenced by their sense of self-efficacy. People with low self-efficacy blame issues on their incapacity to resolve them; those with high self-efficacy can seek solutions to them (Schaumburg et al, 2013). Boosting self-efficacy in making professional decisions enhances learning capacity by raising students' drive to gather data, set goals, and increase their self-efficacy in making decisions (Linlin, 2017). Students with high self-efficacy lead to good academic performance, experience less negative emotions, and have a good state of mind (Shuyuan & Zhijian, 2022; Yangbo, 2013). Self-efficacy is linked to both individual conduct and job skills as well as the capacity to apply learned skills to carry out the proper work and behavior. Consequently, it is essential to focus on how college students are developing their emotional intelligence (Sun & Lyu, 2022).

The idea of Bandura (1986) is that people with high self-efficacy or confidence can succeed in achieving more outcome expectations. So, this idea suggests that students with high self-efficacy can get positive results, whether they go into a job or self-employment after completing a master's degree. The range of results, like personal satisfaction, status, and salary, can be achieved if someone has high self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Bandura, 1997). Experience, vicarious experience, feedback, and

emotional and psychological state are the foundation of self-efficacy (Bandura, 2012). These four sources of self-efficacy are expected to provide some outcomes (Lent et al. 2017). Sherer et al (1982) created two factors of self-efficacy among a sample of college students, namely general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy. People believe that succeeding in several situations is general self-efficacy (McShane & Glinow, 2018). Students with high self-efficacy can accept changes, and with low self-efficacy avoid challenges or give up (Tentama, 2019).

Moreover, the demographic status of children may also affect the degree of self-efficacy, for example, the environment they are raised in, male and female children may get different experiences, leading to the development of self-efficacy. Male and female children may not get access to opportunities due to the feminine and masculine concepts (Lent, 2020). Gender plays a significant role in career development self-efficacy based on several findings (Hackett & Betz, 1982). Students' level of year is correlated to self-efficacy (Omotoy, 2023). Mufidah et al. (2025) found that academic year, gender, and student status do not affect academic self-efficacy. The academic performance of students is determined by gender, level of study (Tinto, 1975; Christmann, 2017; Amparo et al., 2018; Refae et al., 2021). Moraga-Pumarino et al. (2025) and Groot and Opdenakker (2025) provided meaningful insight into gender differences in self-efficacy. Female high school students showed lower scores on self-esteem and self-efficacy (McKay, 2014). The literature indicated that the types of accessibility of opportunities are different for males and females. Self-efficacy is the result of one's experience and knowledge gained. Furthermore, it also indicated that the higher the level of education higher the degree of self-efficacy. This literature is directed towards the following hypotheses:

- H₁: Gender influences general self-efficacy
- H₂: Marital status influences general self-efficacy
- H₃: Job status influences general self-efficacy
- H₄: Semester level influences general self-efficacy
- H₅: Gender influences social self-efficacy
- H₆: Marital status influences social self-efficacy
- H₇: Job status influences social self-efficacy
- H₈: Semester level influences social self-efficacy

Figure 1*Conceptual framework***Material and methods**

A descriptive and analytical research design was employed with a structured questionnaire. The population of the study was all students studying in the Master of Business Studies (MBS) program of Tribhuvan University (TU)'s constituent campus located in Kathmandu Valley. The sample for this study comprised 204 students. Oral consent was obtained from students before distributing the questionnaire for ethical consideration. Those who accepted the request were provided with a survey questionnaire. The self-administered structured questionnaire was distributed to the respondents to assess the general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy of students. Similarly, self-efficacy of the respondents was measured using the 18-item General self-efficacy scale, and the 6-item Social self-efficacy scale developed by Sherer et al. (1982). The respondents were asked to rate their opinion on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree. Altogether 309 questionnaires were distributed, but 234 responses were received. Only 204 of the 234 responses were used for analyzing the data because 30 of them deemed invalid. The data was distributed and collected between May 28 and August 1. Convenience sampling was used to collect the sample.

Descriptive statistics, frequency, mean, and standard deviation were used to assess the general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy of students. Moreover, to examine

the effect of marital status and gender of the students on general and social self-efficacy, an independent sample t-test was used. Likewise, one-way ANOVA was used to examine the effect of job status and semester level on general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy.

Operational definition

General self-efficacy- refers to a person's willingness to achieve something without being limited in a specific behavioral area. Social-self efficacy- refers to a person's capacity to deal and interact with people. Descriptive statistics like mean frequency and percentage were used to describe the sampled data. (Sherer et al., 1982)

Reliability of the independent and dependent variables

Table 1

Reliability test

Variables	Cronbach alpha
General self-efficacy (17items)	0.874
Social self- efficacy (6 items)	0.742

Table 1 shows Cronbach's alpha for general and social self-efficacy of 0.874 and 0.742, respectively. The reliability of both variables exceeded 0.70, indicating that both are reliable.

Results

Table 2

Descriptive statistics

Status	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	58	28.4
	Female	146	71.6
	Total	204	100
Age	20-25	71	35.3
	26-30	124	60.8
	31-35	8	3.9
	Total	204	100
Marital status	Unmarried	172	84.3
	Married	32	15.7
	Total	204	100
Job status	Not employed	159	77.9
	Employed	38	18.6

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	Self-employed	7	3.4
	Total	204	100
Semester level	Second	81	39.7
	Third	29	18.6
	Fourth	94	3.4
	Total	204	100

Source: field survey 2025

Table 2 presents the demographic status of respondents. Among 204 respondents, female students were 71% and male students were 28.4%. In terms of age, the highest percentage, 60.8% of students, belonged to the age group between 26 and 30 years, followed by the age group between 20 and 25, with 35.3% and the age group between 30 and 35 years. Unmarried students were 84.3%, and married students were 15.7%. most of the students (77.9%) were not employed, 18.6 % were in employment, and only 3.4 % were in self-employment. The highest percentage (39%) of students was from the second semester, 18.6% from the third semester, and 3.4% from the fourth semester, based on the sample taken for the study.

Table 3

Respondents' responses towards general self-efficacy

Agreement factor	SD	D	N	A	SA
Able to implement plan I make	2	12	46	130	14
	1%	5.9%	22.5%	63.7%	6.9%
I can get down to work when I should.	2	14	56	122	10
	1%	6.9%	27.5%	59.8%	4.9%
Keep trying despite I fail at first attempt	2	2	20	134	46
	1%	1%	9.8%	65.7%	22.5%
Achieve important goals that I set	1	2	52	124	25
	0.5%	1%	25.5%	60.8%	12.3%
Never give up jobs before completing	1	2	23	137	41
	0.5%	1%	11.3%	67.2%	20.1%
I do not avoid facing difficulties	3	8	27	145	21
	1.5%	3.9%	13.2%	71.1%	10.3%
Try jobs even complicated one	1	2	48	141	12
	0.5%	1%	23.5%	69.1%	5.9%

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Stick to unpleasant jobs to finish	1 0.5%	20 9.8%	63 30.9%	108 52.9%	12 5.9%
Do something, once I decide	3 1.5%	10 4.9%	33 16.2%	135 66.2%	23 11.3%
Trying to learn something new, though I fail at first attempt	3 1.5%	4 2%	54 26.5%	120 58.8%	23 11.3%
Handle unexpected problems well	1 0.5%	11 5.4%	82 40.2%	91 44.6%	19 9.3%
Try to learn new things though it is difficult	1 0.5%	8 3.9%	49 24%	131 64.2%	15 7.4%
Failure just makes me try harder	10 4.9%	27 13.2%	119 58.3%	48 23.5%	10 4.9%
Feel secure about my ability	1 0.5%	10 4.9%	21 10.3%	147 72.1%	25 12.3%
Self-reliant person	0.0 0.0%	0.0 0.0%	55 27%	109 53.4%	40 19.6%
Do not give up easily	1 0.5%	4 2%	22 10.8%	126 61.8%	51 25%
Capable of dealing with most problems	1 0.5%	6 2.9%	28 13.7%	133 65.2%	36 17.6%

The highest percentage of students, 63.7% agreed that they can work according to their plan. Second highest 22.5% percentage of them were neutral, third highest percentage 6.9% of them strongly agreed. But 5.9% of them disagreed, which indicated they cannot work according to the plan, and only 1% strongly disagreed with the agreement factor.

The highest percentage of students, 59.8% agreed with the statement “I can get down to work when I should”. Second second-highest number (22.5%) of them were neutral, and 4.9% strongly agreed. The third highest percentage, 6.9% of them disagreed, and 1% of them strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they cannot get down to work when they should. But 5.9% of them disagreed, which indicated they cannot work according to the plan, and only 1% strongly disagreed with the agreement factor.

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The highest percentage of students, 65.7% agreed with the statement “If I can’t do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.” Second-highest percentage (22.5%) of them strongly agreed, and 9.8% were neutral. The lowest percentage, 1% of them disagreed, and 1% of them strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they do not keep trying until they can if they fail to do the job the first time.

The highest percentage of students, 60.8% agreed that they achieve goals after they set them. Second-highest number (25.5%) of them were neutral regarding the statement, and 12.3% of them strongly agreed. The lowest percentage, 1% of them disagreed, and 0.5% of them strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they fail to achieve the goal even though it is important to them.

Most of the students (52.9%) agreed that they do not give up until they complete. 20.1% of them strongly agreed, and 11.3% of them were neutral when 1% of them disagreed, and 0.5% strongly disagreed with the statement, indicating that they gave up before completing them.

Most of the students (71.1%) agreed that they do not avoid facing difficulties while 10.3% of them strongly agreed, and 13.2% of them were neutral when 3.9% of them disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. It indicates they are afraid of facing difficulties.

Most of the students (69.1%) agreed that they try, although something looks complicated while 5.9% of them strongly agreed, and 23.5% of them were neutral. It indicates they do not try if something looks complicated.

Most of the students (52.8%) agreed with the statement “When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it”— 5.9% of them strongly agreed, and 30.9% of them were neutral; 9.8% of them disagreed, and 0.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. It indicates they do not try to finish if something look unpleasant.

Most of the students (66.2%) agreed that they go right to do a job once decided while 11.3% of them strongly agreed, and 16.2% of them were neutral— 4.9% of them disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. It indicates that when they decide to do something, they do not go right to work on it.

Huge number of the students (58.8%) agreed that they do not give up trying to learn something new, though initially not succeed while 11.3% of them strongly agreed, and 26.5% of them were neutral— 2% of them disagreed, and 1.5% strongly disagreed

with the statement. It indicates that they give up trying to learn something new, though initially not succeed.

In the same way 44.6 % of them agreed that they can handle unexpected problems while 9.3% of them strongly agreed, and 40.6% of them were neutral— 5.4% of them disagreed, and 0.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. It indicates that they cannot handle unexpected problems.

Most of the students (64.2%) agreed that they try to learn new things, although that is difficult while 7.4% of them strongly agreed, and 24% of them were neutral— 3.9% of them disagreed, and 0.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. It indicates that they avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.

Most of students, (58.3%), were neutral with the agreement factor “Failure just makes me try harder” while 25.3% of them agreed and 4.9% of them strongly agreed— 13.2% of them disagreed and 4.9% strongly disagreed with the statement. It indicates failure does not make them try harder. The table also shows that the respondents do not feel secure about their ability to do things. Only a few percentage of them give up easily.

Table 4

Respondents' responses towards the social self-efficacy agreement factor

Agreement factors	SD	D	N	A	SA
Able to make new friends	7 3.4%	61 29.9%	46 22.5%	58 28.4%	32 15.7%
Able to make friends with them who are	16 7.8%	36 17.6%	78 38.2%	67 32.8%	7 3.4%
Approach friends whom I want instead of waiting for him or her to come to me	11 5.4%	50 24.5%	59 28.9%	65 31.9%	19 9.3%
Try to become friends with someone who seems uninterested at first, I do not give up easily	30 14.7%	75 36.8%	61 29.9%	33 16.2%	5 2.5%
Handle myself well in social gatherings	9 4.4%	23 11.3%	54 26.5%	107 52.5%	11 5.4%

Have friends due to my ability	8	28	56	102	8
to make friends	3.9%	13.7%	27.5%	50%	3.9%

Most of the students, 29.9% disagreed with the statement It is not difficult for me to make new friends, indicating that they feel difficulty in making new friends; whereas 28.4% of them agreed and 22.5% of them were neutral. Among them, 3.4% strongly disagreed and 15.7 % strongly agreed with the statement.

The majority of the students were neutral with the agreement factor, “If I meet someone interesting who is hard to make friends with, I will not stop trying to make friends with that person”—32.8% agreed with the statement, and 3.4% strongly agreed. However, 17.6 % of them disagreed, and 7.8% of them strongly disagreed. It indicated that they will not try to make friends if they find him or her not interesting.

The majority of the students (31.9%) agreed that they meet someone they like to meet rather than waiting for them to come; 28.9% were neutral with the agreement factor. Whereas, 24.5% disagreed with the statement, and 5.4% strongly disagreed; 9.3 % of them strongly agreed.

The majority of the students (36.8%) disagreed that they do not want to try more if they find someone uninteresting at first; 29.9% were neutral with the agreement factor. While 14.7% disagreed with the statement; 16.2% agreed and 2.5 % of them strongly agreed with the statement, indicating that they do not give up despite they find someone uninteresting to make friends at first.

The majority of the students (52.5%) agreed that they handle themselves well in social gatherings, while 26.5% were neutral with the agreement factor, 11.3% disagreed, and 4.4 % of them strongly disagreed with the statement. The majority of the students (50%) agreed that they make friends due to their abilities in making friends, while 27.5% were neutral with the agreement factor. Among them 13.7% disagreed, and 3.9 % of them strongly disagreed with the statement referring to their inability to make friends. Another 3.9% of them strongly agreed with the statement.

Table 5

Overall mean, standard deviation of general self-efficacy

GSE	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
	204	3.8365	0.40306	1.35	4.71

Table 5 shows the overall mean value of (3.8365) of general self-efficacy of students with low standard deviation (0.40306) showed they agreed they have general self-efficacy.

Table 6

Overall mean, standard deviation of general self-efficacy

SSE	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
	204	3.1348	0.66662	1.5	4.67

Table 6 presents the overall mean value of (3.1348) of social self-efficacy of students with a low standard deviation (0.66662) showed they are neutral in the social self-efficacy agreement factor.

Table 7

Relationship between demographic profile and general self-efficacy

Relationship	Statistical tools	P value	Sig.	Remarks
Gender and GSE	t = -0.719	p = 0.473	Insignificant	H ₁ rejected
Marital status & GSE	t = -0.5304	p = 0.00	Significant	H ₂ accepted
Sem level & GSE	F = 1.446	p = 0.238	Insignificant	H ₃ rejected
Job status and GSE	F = 0.369	p = 0.692	Insignificant	H ₄ rejected

Note: GSE = general self-efficacy

Table 8

Relationship between demographic profile and social self-efficacy

Relationship	Statistic test		Remarks	
Gender and SSE	t = 1.482	p = 0.140	Insignificant	H ₅ rejected
Marital status and SSE	t = -1.405	p = 1.62	Insignificant	H ₆ rejected
Semester and SSE	F = 3.025	p = 0.051	Insignificant	H ₇ rejected
Job status and SSE	F = 2.054	p = 0.131	Insignificant	H ₈ rejected

Note: SSE = social self-efficacy

Discussions

As per the descriptive results of this study, the general self-efficacy of the students, with a mean value of 3.8365, showed that they agreed with the agreement factors under general self-efficacy. Students who are studying in the Master of Business Studies program have self-efficacy in general, not being specific in particular areas. This result is in line with (Sherer et al., 1982). According to Sherer et al. (1982), general self-efficacy is the result of past experiences and skills. It showed that students who are

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studying at the master's level have some experience and education. However, among 17 statements under the general self-efficacy scale, the majority of the student showed their degree of self-efficacy in 16 items.

It indicated that they have confidence in implementing the plan once they make it, getting down to work when they should, never giving up, however, they fail at first attempt, ability to achieve important goals, do not leave jobs before completing them, not being afraid of facing difficulties, try for something complicated, try for something unpleasant, do something once decided, passionate to learn something new, ability to handle unexpected problems, feel secure for their ability, reliant person, ability to deal with problems, do not give up easily. Students were neutral regarding the statement "Failure just makes me try harder." It is also related to the idea of Bandura (1986) that people with high self-efficacy or confidence can succeed in achieving more outcome expectations. Based on this idea, it can be assumed that students with high self-efficacy can achieve positive outcomes, whether they go into a job or self-employment after completing a master's degree.

Results showed that job status, gender, and the semester they are studying in did not affect the level of general self-efficacy. These results are not connected with (Hackett & Betz, 1982; Lent, 2020; Omotoy, 2023). Gender plays a significant role in career development self-efficacy based on several findings (Hackett & Betz, 1982; Groot & Opdenakker, 2025). Students' level of year is correlated to self-efficacy (Omotoy, 2023). It indicated that particular situations and contexts may differ, and the findings of one context to another context. Today's students, irrespective of gender, can access information and knowledge equally if they want. This might be the reason behind it.

However, further study from respondents from all over Nepal will be needed for precise results. The level of semester they are studying also did not affect the level of general self-efficacy. It happened because they could develop self-efficacy from everywhere they sought. Only the level of the semester may not affect the development of self-efficacy. Students from lower to higher semesters may not be the only determining factor in increasing self-efficacy. Sources of self-efficacy may be experience in their personal life, as Bandura (2012) and Sherer et al. (1982) have noted Only marital status affects general self-efficacy, as mentioned by the demographics of students (Lent, 2020). It is concluded that married students will develop resiliency because they have to

handle family problems and student life. This situation may help develop general self-efficacy.

Regarding social self-efficacy of the students, the mean value of 3.1348 showed that they were neutral in those agreement factors under social self-efficacy. However, among 6 statements, the majority of the students showed social self-efficacy in three agreement factors, about the ability to handle themselves in social gatherings, personal ability to make friends, and willingness to meet someone they like. This showed, as mentioned in the social self-efficacy scale of Sherer et al. (1982). Some of the students, though that is a small percentage, showed a lack of social self-efficacy, meaning they do not want to be involved in a social context. Management students are entrepreneurs or managers of tomorrow; they need to have social self-efficacy to succeed in their respective areas. No matter whether they get back to employment or self-employment, they need to interact with stakeholders. So the social self-efficacy of students needs to be improved.

But surprisingly, the semester level, gender, marital status, and job status of students did not affect the level of social self-efficacy. Students from higher or lower semesters do not have any influence. There may not be different academic activities they go through. So they need to go through higher academic activities as they move into higher semesters, which will help develop social self-efficacy.

Conclusion

This study examined the general self-efficacy and social self-efficacy of students studying in Masters of Business studies program of Tribhuvan University. The result showed that the overall mean of general self-efficacy of students indicated that they have self-efficacy. It is a good sign for students to achieve something in life wherever they go. Although they have self-efficacy in general, the overall mean value of social self-efficacy showed they are in a neutral situation. This result is not a proper sign of becoming successful in a social setting.

Gender, job status, and the level of semester they are studying in did not have any influence on general self-efficacy. The result of the study will help students know about their general and social self-efficacy. This will let them improve in social self-efficacy. Social self-efficacy is important for management students. This result will help academic institutions think of doing something better to increase student's general and social self-efficacy, if gender does not have any role for general self-efficacy. It might indicate both

have equal access to knowledge or information and equally take a keen interest in learning something. The result of the study will also help understand the importance of the self-efficacy theory and how it can be used to understand the level of self-efficacy of students. Only the analysis of the relationship demographics of students on general and social self-efficacy of students is a limitation of the study. So future researchers can see how the self-efficacy of the students is related to other factors like academic performance, employment opportunity. Limited area coverage and low sample size itself might be the limitation of the study. So, future researchers may add more sample sizes covering areas all over Nepal to get precise results and generalize it.

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