

Self-efficacy and our future primary school teachers: An Australian cross-institutional study



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Aims

To explore primary pre-service teachers (future teachers of children aged five to twelve years) feelings of confidence and preparedness connected to self efficacy in relation to the curriculum areas of:

- Literacy;
- Numeracy;
- Technology; and
- The fields of arts (dance, drama, media, music and visual arts).



Efficacy beliefs are believed to predict the outcomes that people expect (Bandura, 1997) leading to the assumption that teacher beliefs regarding their own teaching capabilities create powerful influences on overall teachers' effectiveness with students.

Current literature on self-efficacy and teacher education indicates that archetypes and mentors have significant influence on individual's ability to shift and develop confidence levels (Garvis and Lemon, 2014; Geoghegan, et al., 2004; Lemon & Garvis, 2013).

Geoghegan, et al. (2004, p.2) also state that "teacher efficacy is perception based and result orientated and is both context and subject-matter specific".



Approach

- An anonymous survey was administered to pre-service teachers at three Australian universities after ethics approval was gained.
- The survey was administered during the beginning of the semester.



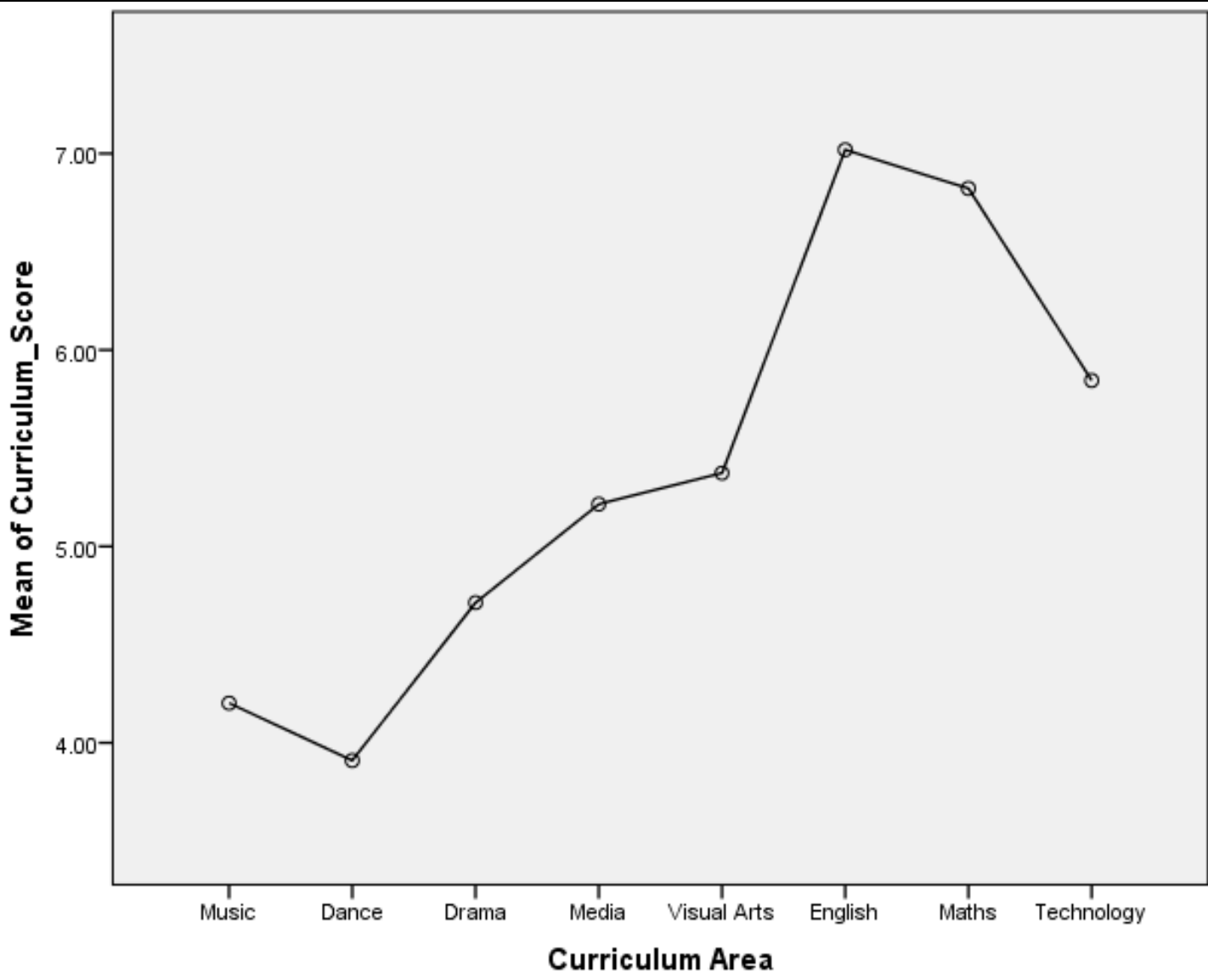
Example items:

- How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well
- How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students
- How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly
- How much can you do to help your student's value learning
- To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused



Participants

Cohort	Location	Number of participants
1	Victoria, Australia	85
2	Queensland, Australia	121
3	Victoria, Australia	133
	TOTAL	339



Mean of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: Music (24)

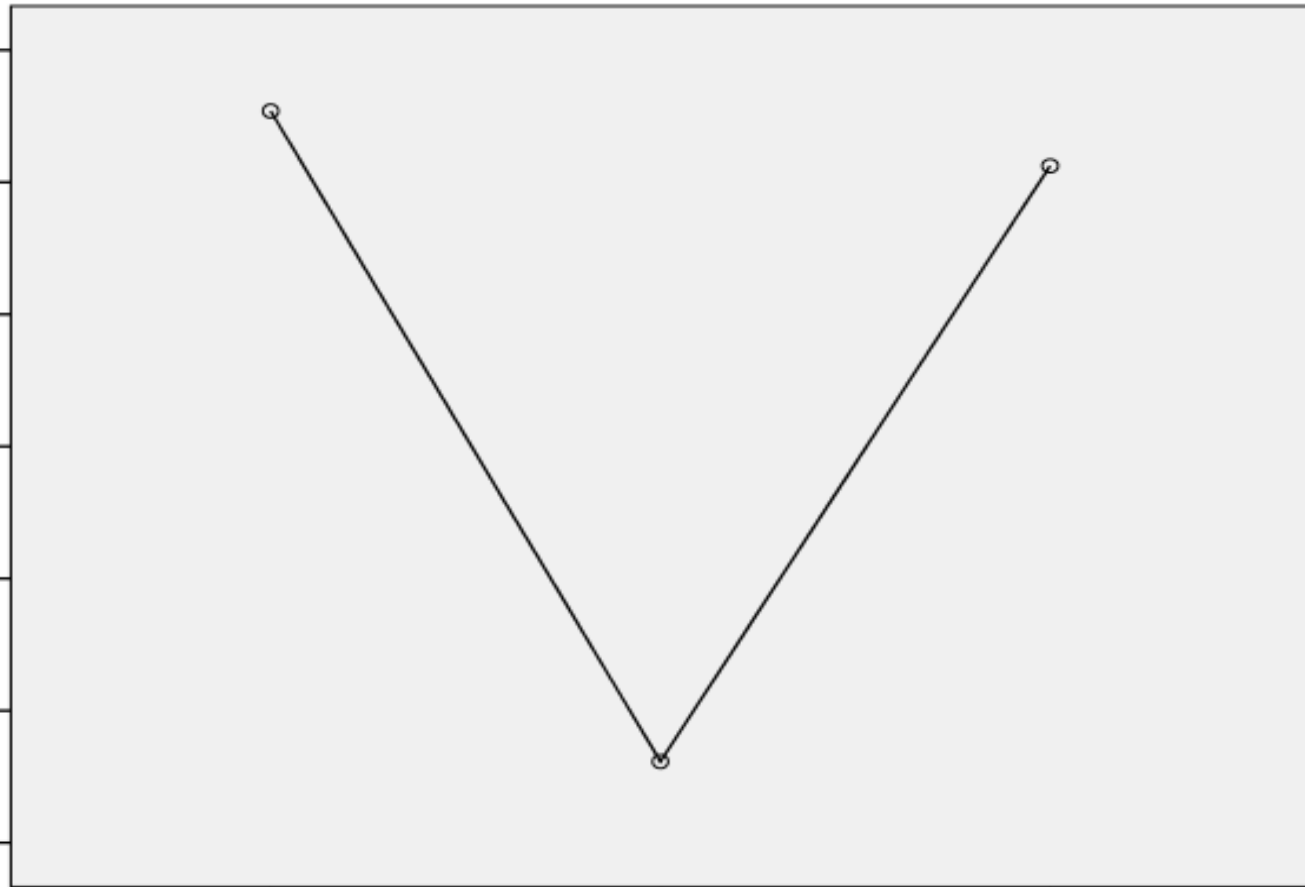
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Cohort 1

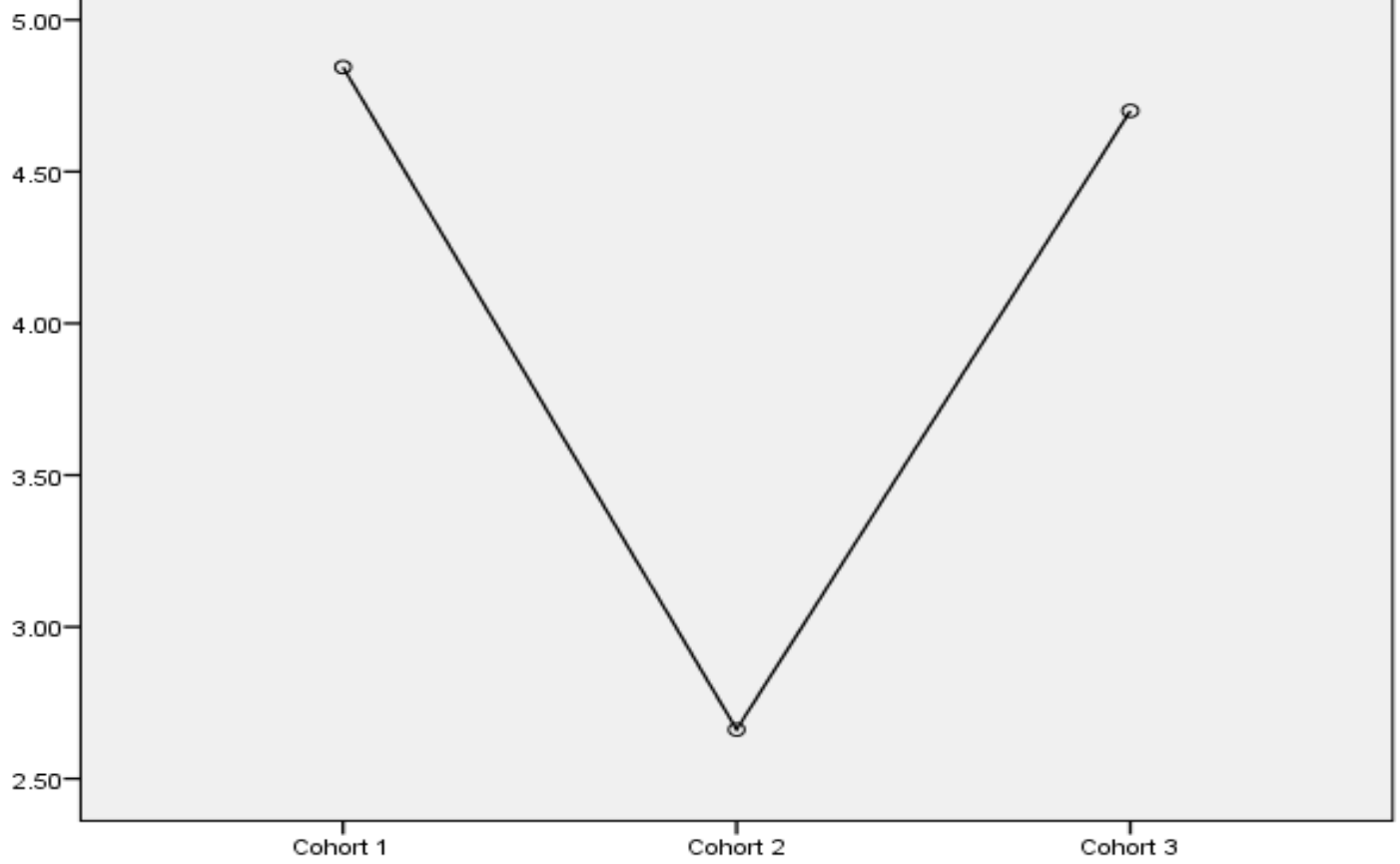
Cohort 2

Cohort 3

Cohort

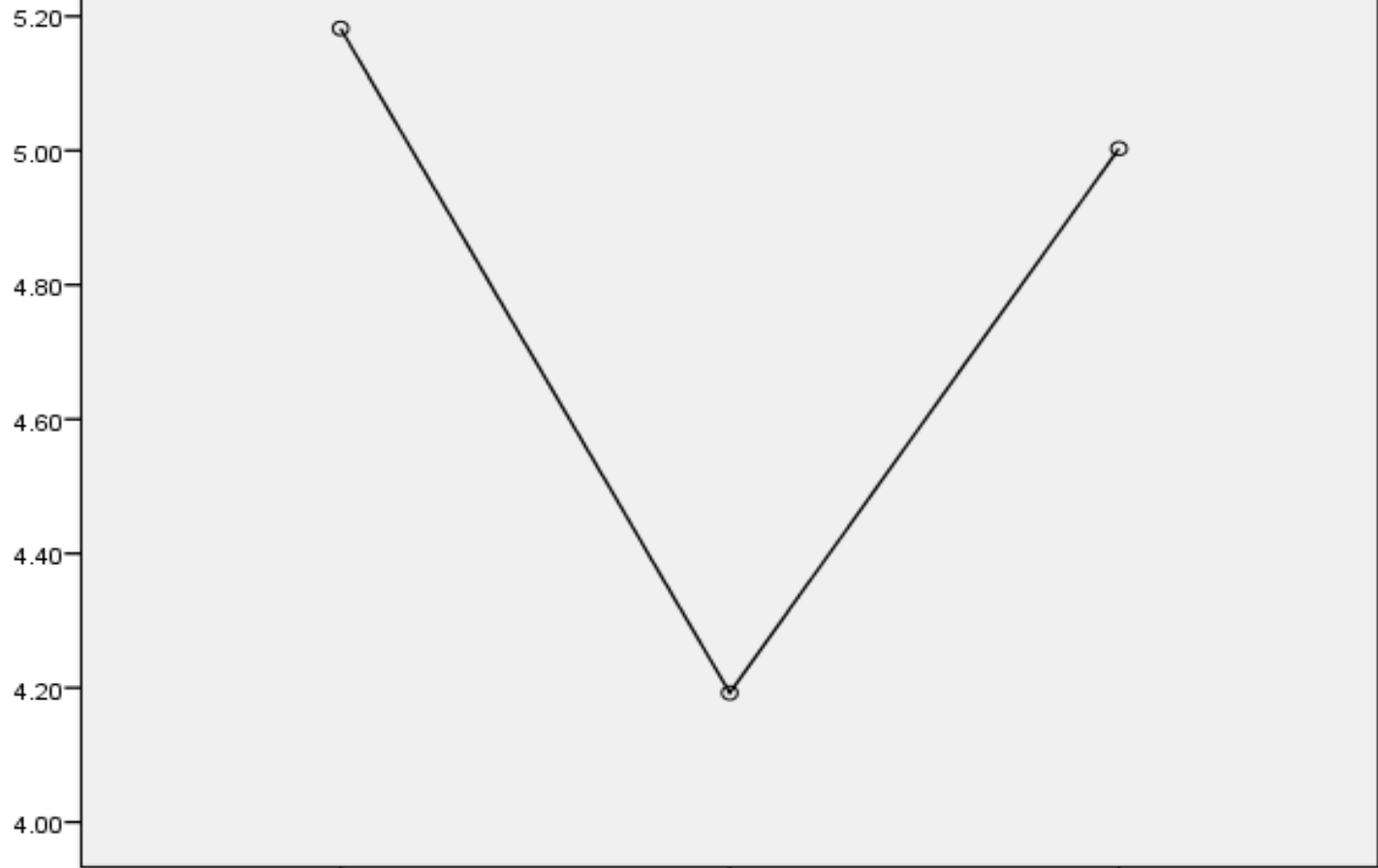


Mean of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: Dance (24)



Cohort

Mean of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: Drama (24)

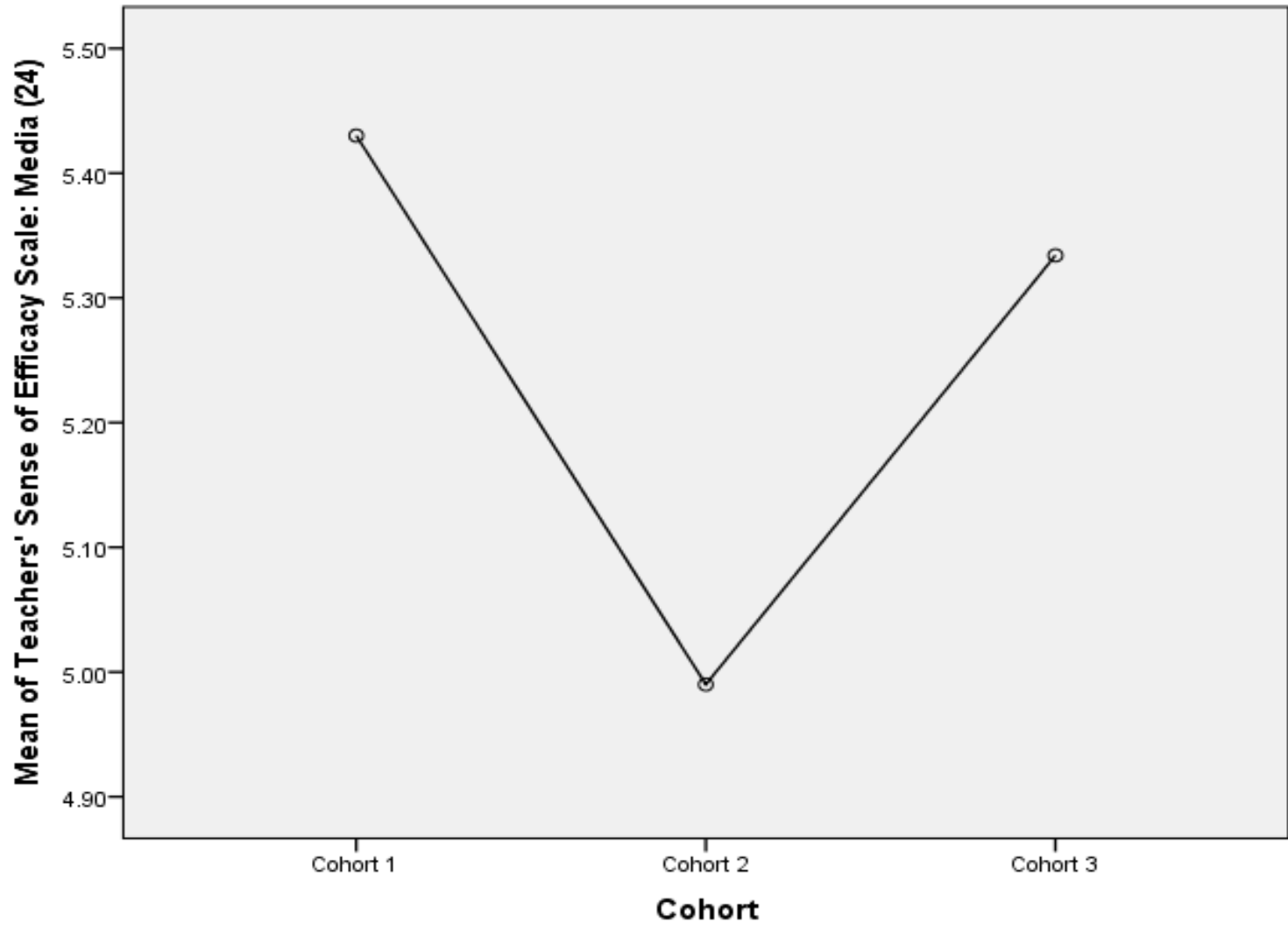


Cohort 1

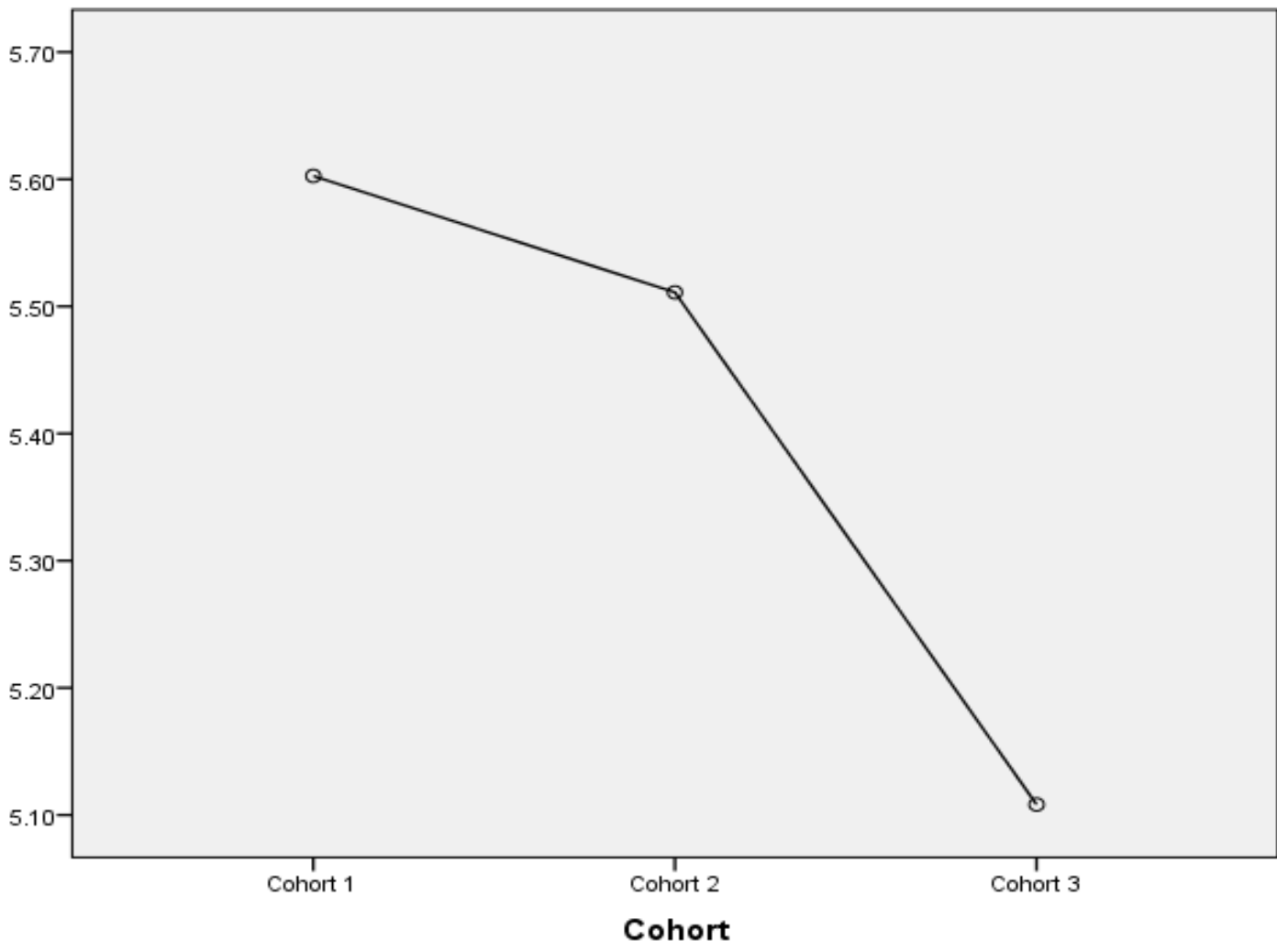
Cohort 2

Cohort 3

Cohort



Mean of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: Visual Arts (24)



Mean of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: English (24)

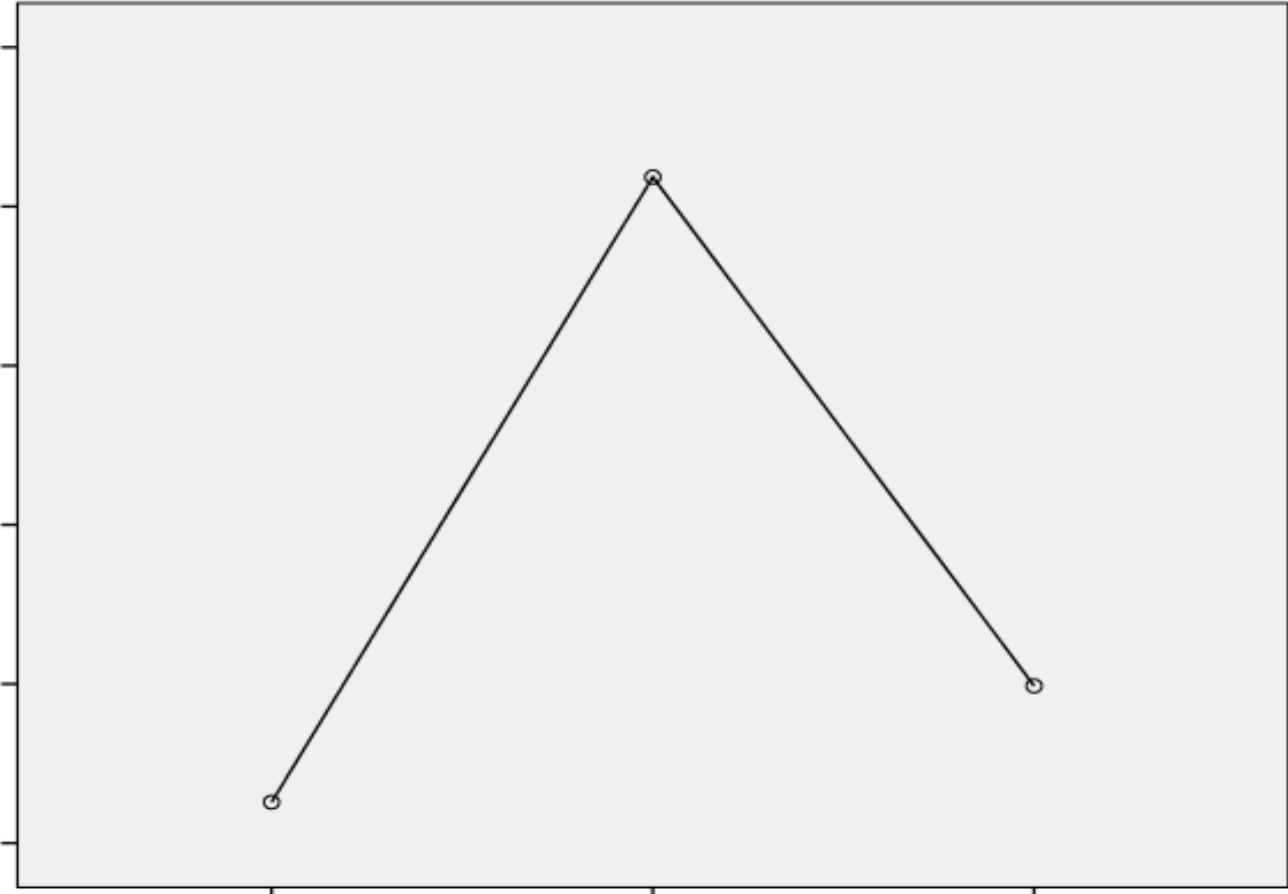
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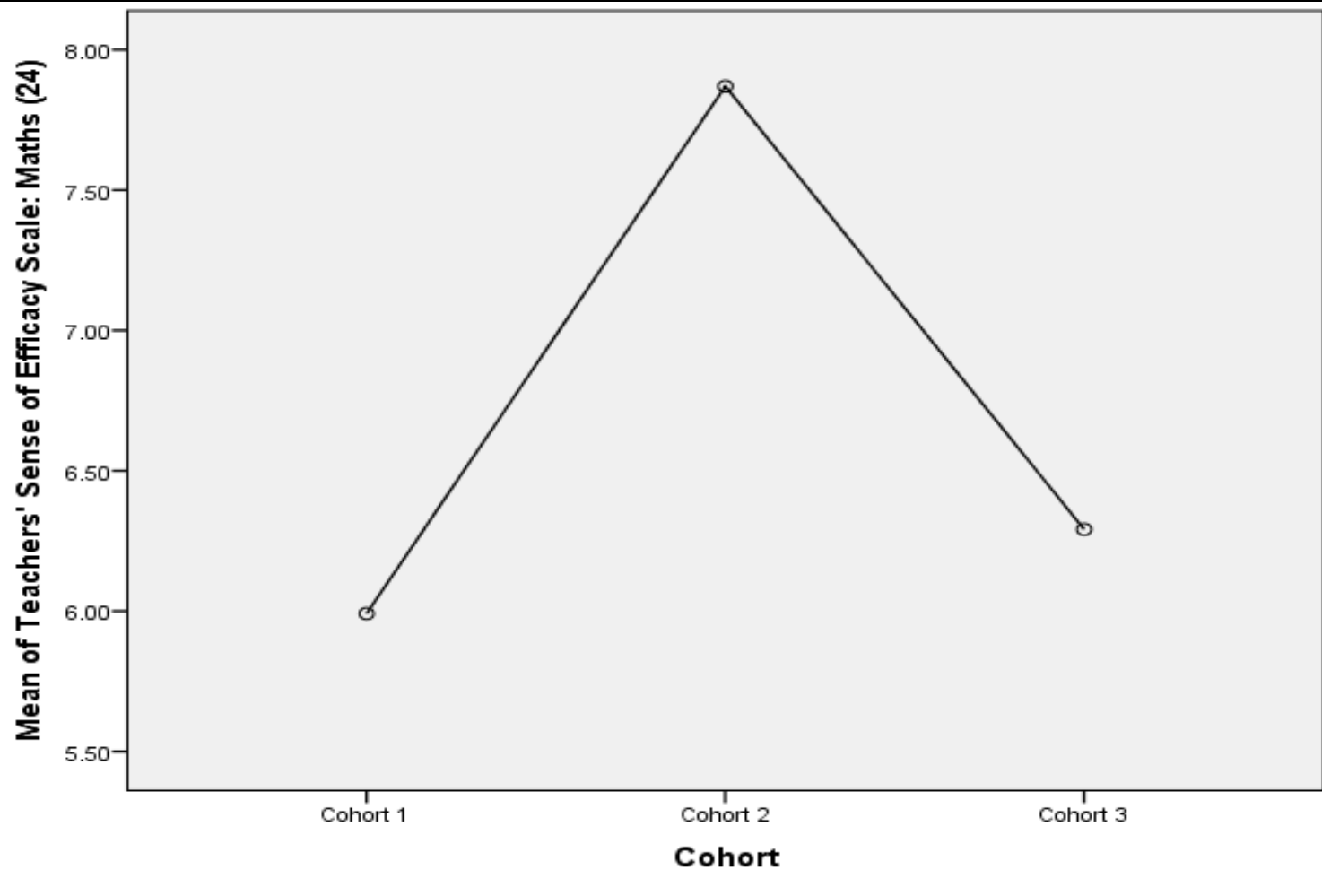
Cohort 1

Cohort 2

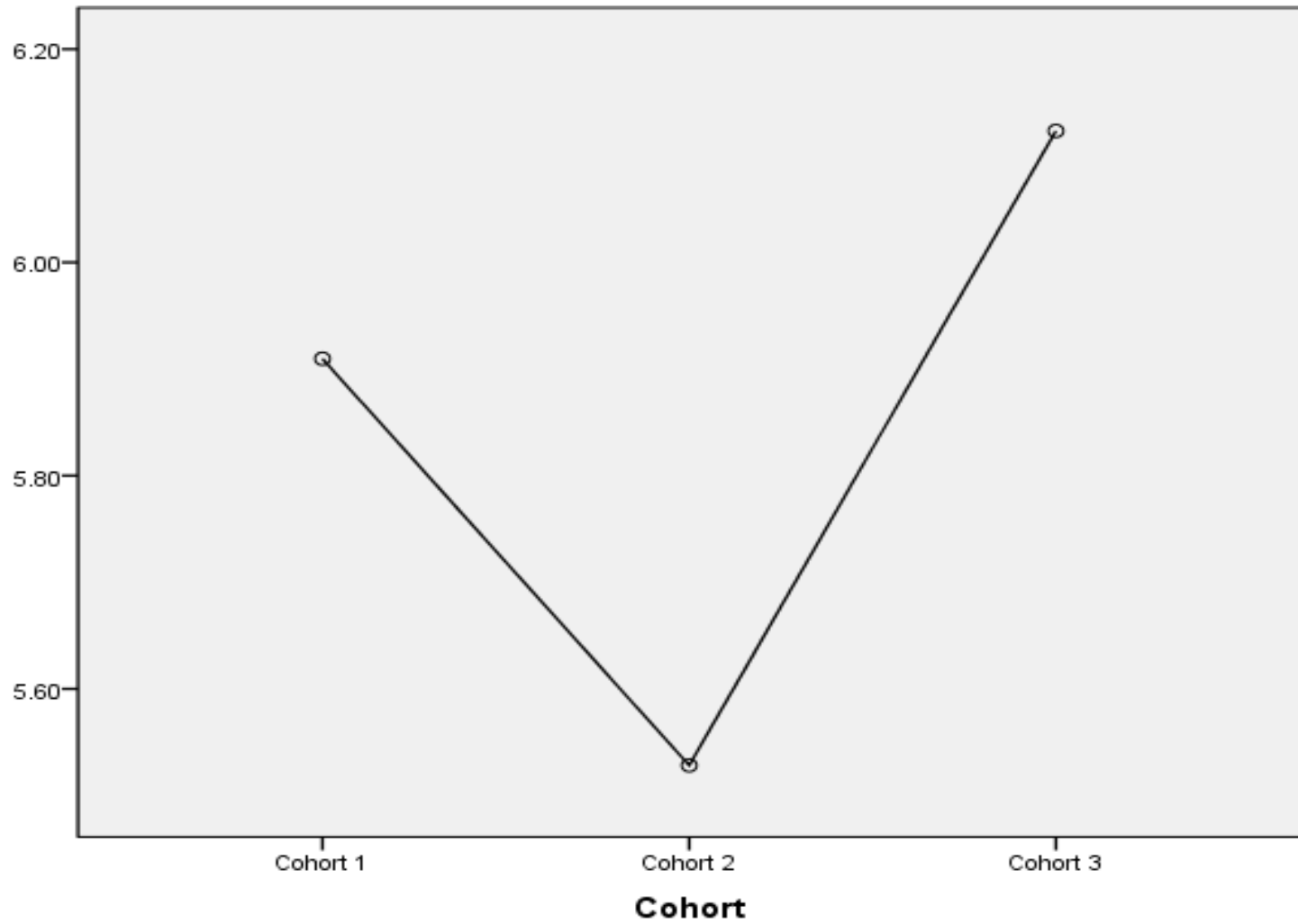
Cohort 3

Cohort





Mean of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: Technology (24)



What does this mean?

Consideration of cultural context
influence

Cultural contexts	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
<i>Year level/degree</i>	Undergraduate Year 2 Bachelor students	Undergraduate Year 2 Bachelor & Graduate Diploma students	Graduate Diploma students
<i>Professional practice experience</i>	10 days	Year 1 experience	20 days
<i>Previous art experience in degree</i>	x1 Music, 1 semester	None	None
<i>Teaching subjects specific to theory-practice links, reflective practice, communication and professional development</i>	Child Development, Literacy, Numeracy, Science, Reflective Practice, Understanding the Learner	Literacy, Numeracy, Child Development, Communication	Literacy, Science, Technology, Child Development, Reflective Practice and professional communication
<i>Early Years Arts</i>	None	x1 general early years subject	None
<i>Personal experience at school – Arts compulsory in curriculum</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>Teaching subjects specific to technology</i>	Integrated in all other subjects as per university policy	None	x1 subject, 1 semester Integrated in all other subjects as per university policy

Some considerations to make

- P-service teachers personal beliefs, behaviours and attitudes towards each of these subjects may have informed their level of perceived competence
- Literacy and numeracy place in curriculum
- Technology is expected to be integrated into all
- Understanding the cultural context in which the pre-service teachers coexists.
- Exposure to the actual teaching

Where to next?

- If variation is caused by teacher educators, greater control about the types of teaching within universities requires further investigation.
- If variation does exist between states and territories in Australia, questions are raised about overall teacher competence.
- If teachers have differences in their perceived levels of capability and competency, what does that mean as teachers move between different contexts?