

Contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust of teachers in public elementary schools

ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the level of contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental. This employed universal sampling, using the non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing the correlational method. The respondents of the study were 131 public elementary school teachers. Data were analyzed using the mean, Pearson Product Moment Coefficient Correlation (Pearson r), and regression analysis. The interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in terms of respect, competence, personal regard, and integrity was oftentimes manifested. The contemplative pedagogy of public elementary school teachers in terms of academics, ability, and class was manifested oftentimes. There was a statistically significant relationship between contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers. Moreover, the domains of contemplative pedagogy significantly influence interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental. This result may serve as the basis of school heads showing good and effective school heads to be enhanced by the teacher mostly on the part of lowest features which are being sure of themselves in class situation and thinking of their ability is sufficient to cope with school work.

Keywords: Contemplative pedagogy, interpersonal trust, public elementary school teachers, Philippines

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemplative pedagogy involves teaching methods designed to cultivate deepened awareness, concentration, and insight. Contemplation fosters additional ways of knowing that complement the rational methods of traditional liberal arts education. Demonstrated benefits of contemplative practices include stress reduction, enhanced attention and awareness abilities, improved self-regulation, and enhanced empathy awareness. The expansion of the body of research on contemplative practices leads to an increased interest in those practices by the education systems [1].

“Instructors and learners alike deal with a multitude of distractions, demands on their time, anxieties about teaching and learning, and the pressure to multitask. There are a variety of teaching and learning challenges that one may encounter, which can be addressed by contemplative pedagogical practices, including student distraction or anxiety, superficial learning, rigid thinking, inability to see how course material relates to students’ daily lives, and students who are motivated by grades, rather than by learning”[2].

“The integration of contemplative practices encourages instructors and learners to focus on the present moment, to engage in teaching and learning fully, and to achieve focus and attention in the classroom. Professors find that not only are students better able to be present at the moment with the subject matter and each other, but they are better able to

hold on to what they are learning over time and integrate it into meaningful patterns [3]. Contemplative practices can help students tap into their emotional reaction to course materials and confront difficult course topics, allowing them to engage more openly and holistically with the course material and their peers in the class"[4].

Harrell [5] stressed that "many contemplative practices have cultural and religious foundations, and it's important to acknowledge these. Instructors who wish to adopt contemplative practices in the classroom should do so with a mindset toward openness and inclusion". "Practices that draw upon evidence-based practices and the science of teaching and learning rather than religious practice can help students achieve high levels of attention, focus, and insight without causing alienation, exclusion, or discomfort. Whenever possible, instructors should strive to understand the origins of the practices they are incorporating into their courses and should provide an appropriate amount of context about the history of the practice for students"[6].

In the Philippines, interpersonal trust among teachers is very low [7]. "Teachers have difficulty trusting each other because of the fear that if someone divulges something, the same information will be known to others, most especially the school principal. If not, they are scared to share their ideas/innovations because of fear of being imitated and not acknowledged. Since competition is too stiff because of limited items for promotion, teachers tend to be competitive and doubtful. Through contemplative teaching, teachers can understand what areas might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes. Some methods of contemplative teaching include journaling, requesting student and peer feedback, and recording an actual teaching moment" [8].

In the Davao Region, the problem of interpersonal trust also exists and persists. A feeling of alienation is easily felt among teachers not only in the two units of the district but also in their schools. This problem of interpersonal trust has impeded good relationships and performance [9]. In this scenario, the researcher takes a fervent interest in this study that may help in finding out the contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust of teachers.

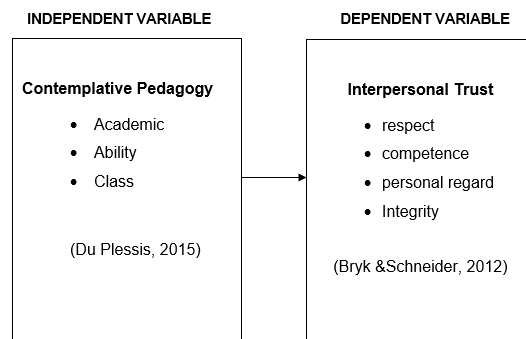


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study used the non-experimental quantitative research design utilizing a correlational method. This method was used when the objective was to describe the status of the situation

as it existed at the time of the study to explore the causes of a particular phenomenon. In correlation research, it involved collecting data to determine whether the degree of a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables [10].

Quantitative research design aims to determine the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population. Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once). A descriptive study establishes only associations between variables [11]. For an accurate estimate of the relationship between variables, a descriptive study usually needs a sample of hundreds or even thousands of subjects. The estimate of the relationship is less likely to be biased if they have a high participation rate in a sample selected randomly from a population. In all studies, subject characteristics can affect the relationship they are investigating. Limit their effect either by using a less heterogeneous sample of subjects or preferably by measuring the characteristics and including them in the analysis.

2.2 Research Respondents

The respondents of this study are the 131 teachers of public elementary schools in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental. They evaluated their peer through survey questionnaires that were administered to them. The teachers involved in the study served at least three years and above in public elementary schools. This study was conducted in the school year 2021-2022. The researcher used universal sampling to select the respondents. This means that the entire population of the study was considered as respondents.

2.3 Research Instrument

The research instrument used in gathering the data was based on various authors globally. The questionnaires were contextualized to the local setting. Refinement of the questionnaires was made possible through the assistance of the thesis adviser and three other validators who evaluated the content of the questionnaire.

The questionnaires were composed of 50 items for ten indicators in this study. Each indicator was made up of 5 item questions. Likert's scale was adopted to determine the contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental. The reliability and validity of the result of the instrument had a mean rating of .782 Cronbach's alpha.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The data was gathered through the following procedures: A letter of permission was secured by the researcher to conduct the study on the contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental. The letter of permission and appearance were signed and granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies, Adviser and School Principal, Moderators, and Teacher in Charge in public secondary school.

Adequate and clear copies were printed to avoid problems with the administration. The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to the respondents of the study and they were requested to answer the questionnaire honestly so that valid and reliable data was elicited. It took two weeks for the researcher to distribute the questionnaire and two weeks for the questionnaire to be retrieved. One hundred percent (100) of the questionnaire was retrieved due to the availability, kindness, and cooperation of the respondents. The results

were collated and tabulated before being subjected to statistical treatment and analyzed and interpreted based on the purpose of the study.

2.5 Data Analysis

The gathered data was classified, analyzed, and interpreted by using the following statistical tools:

Mean. This was used to determine the level of contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation or Pearson r. This was used to examine the relationship between contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental.

Regression Analysis. This was used to measure the predictive power of contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in Manay District, Division of Davao Oriental.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Contemplative Pedagogy of Teachers

Table 1. *Extent of Contemplative Pedagogy of Teachers*

No	Indicators	Mean (x)	SD	Descriptive Level
1.	academic	3.57	0.41	High
2.	ability	3.80	0.45	High
3.	class	2.98	0.44	Moderate
	Overall	3.45	0.37	High

Presented in Table 1 is the summary of the contemplative pedagogy of public elementary school teachers in terms of academic, ability and class. The mean ratings of these indicators are as follows: communication (3.57) or high; evaluation (3.80) or high; planning (2.98) or high and implementation (3.83).

The overall mean rating of 3.45 which is described as high with a standard deviation of 0.37.

This means that the contemplative pedagogy of public elementary school teachers in terms of academic, ability, and class indicators are manifested oftentimes by the teachers. This signifies that teachers breaking down the tasks will make them seem more manageable, keep them organized, and help them be more productive and efficient. If they are still having difficulty managing the workload, ask a coworker for advice or speak with the supervisor to prioritize the work.

This finding supports the study of Pace[12], which emphasized that breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps enhances teachers' ability to stay organized and effective in their instructional practices. Additionally, Torres et al.[13] highlighted that teacher collaboration and supervisory support are critical in helping educators prioritize and manage their responsibilities effectively. Similarly, the research by Hartney[14] demonstrated that

structured task management and guidance from school leaders significantly improve teachers' capacity to maintain high-quality teaching while managing workload stress.

3.2 Interpersonal Trust of Teachers

Table 2. *Extent of Interpersonal Trust of Teachers*

No	Indicators	Mean (x)	SD	Descriptive Level
1	Respect	3.40	0.68	High
2	Competence	2.90	0.61	Moderate
3	personal regard	3.71	0.65	High
4	integrity	3.22	0.64	Moderate
	Overall	3.31	0.56	Moderate

Presented in Table 2 is the summary of the level of interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in terms of respect, competence, personal regard, and integrity. The mean ratings of these indicators are as follows: respect (3.40); competence (2.90); personal regard (3.71) and integrity (3.22).

The overall mean rating is (3.31) which described as moderate and a standard deviation of 0.56. This means that interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers in terms of respect, competence, personal regard, and integrity is sometimes manifested by the teachers. This indicates that the teachers maintain an understanding of their role obligations and hold expectations about the role obligations of the other. They added that interpersonal trust is built on four criteria; respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity.

This finding coincides with the study of Kolleck et al.[15], who found that moderate levels of interpersonal trust among teachers often reflect a need for more consistent communication and shared expectations within educational teams. Likewise, the research by Simmons (2020) highlighted that trust in professional relationships is often based on occasional, rather than continuous displays of respect and integrity, which can impact team dynamics and collaboration. Furthermore, van der Werff[16] emphasized that trust in educational settings is complex and evolves, with sporadic manifestations of respect and competence influencing overall trust levels.

3.3 Significance of the Relationship Between Contemplative Pedagogy and Interpersonal Trust

Table 3. *Significance of the Relationship Between Contemplative Pedagogy and Interpersonal Trust*

Variables	r-value	Degree of Correlation	p-value	Decision (Ho)
contemplative pedagogy	0.860	High Correlation	0.00	Rejected
interpersonal trust				

Presented in Table 3 is the significant relationship between contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers with an overall r-value of 0.860 with an equivalent p-value of 0.00 at α 0.05 of significance set in this study.

Since the overall computed value is very much higher than the tabular value, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. It could be stated, therefore, that there is a significant relationship between contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers. This implies that the higher the results of the contemplative pedagogy of teachers, the better the results of the interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers.

This finding aligns with the study of Black et al.[17], which demonstrated that reflective and contemplative teaching practices can foster stronger relationships and trust among educators by promoting empathy and deeper understanding. Similarly, the research by Jackman [18] indicated that teachers who engage in contemplative pedagogy tend to build more respectful and trust-based environments in their schools as they model openness and mindfulness in their interactions. Additionally, Louis & Murphy [19] found that trust in educational settings often grows when teachers actively participate in practices that emphasize reflection, personal growth, and mutual respect, reinforcing the positive link between pedagogy and trust.

3.4 The Domains of Contemplative Pedagogy Significantly Influence Interpersonal Trust

Table 4. *The Domains of Contemplative Pedagogy Significantly Influence Interpersonal Trust*

Model	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	F-value	p-value	Decision
Regression	55.3897	3	84.23	0.00	Rejected
Residual Total	503.301	128			
	535.101	131			

Note: Significance when $P < 0.05$ (2T)

		<i>Contemplative Pedagogy</i>			
<i>Interpersonal Trust</i>		<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	(Indicators)				
Academic		-.275	-.256	-2.503	.000
ability		.014	.012	.125	.895
Class		-.217	-.205	-1.807	.021

R	.651
R ²	.424
F	84.23
ρ	0.00

Presented in Table 4 is the significance of the domains of contemplative pedagogy significantly influence interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers with an overall computed F-value of 84.23 with a p-value of 0.00 at α 0.05 of significance set in this study. Since the overall computed value is much higher than the tabular value.

This indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected. It could be stated, therefore, that the domains of contemplative pedagogy significantly influence interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers. This implied that the higher the domains of contemplative pedagogy teachers, the better the domains of interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers.

This finding affirms the view of Rendón & Kanagala [20], who highlighted that contemplative practices in education foster stronger interpersonal connections and mutual respect among teachers. Similarly, Reeves [21] found that when teachers engage in reflective and contemplative practices, they tend to build trust-based professional relationships, as these practices encourage open dialogue and emotional intelligence.

Moreover, this finding validates the Social Capital Theory [22], which emphasizes that trust and collaboration within communities, including educational settings, are built through shared values, norms, and mutual obligations. Contemplative pedagogy fosters these shared experiences, leading to stronger interpersonal trust among teachers. This theory supports the idea that trust within a group grows as individuals engage in meaningful, reflective, and collaborative interactions.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the level of interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers, as manifested in respect, competence, personal regard, and integrity, was high. Additionally, the study established that the contemplative pedagogy of these teachers, encompassing academic, ability, and class dimensions, was also high.

A significant relationship was found between contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Furthermore, the study concluded that the domains of contemplative pedagogy were significantly influenced by interpersonal trust, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve interpersonal trust among public elementary school teachers, school heads should focus on addressing gray areas related to self-perception and consider developing a reliable and valid instrument to measure subject-based academic self-pedagogy in elementary school children.

To enhance the contemplative pedagogy of public elementary school teachers, teachers should work on areas such as self-assurance in the classroom and recognizing the sufficiency of their abilities to handle school work.

To upgrade both contemplative pedagogy and interpersonal trust, school heads should prioritize low-result areas such as fostering strong team dynamics, creating optimal conditions for student growth, and demonstrating honesty, dependability, and loyalty.

To further enhance these factors, school heads can involve teachers in safety planning, provide clear instructions, and create a safe work environment. Additionally, they should encourage continuous skill development and adaptability to changing circumstances, including the adoption of new technologies and methodologies.

Particularly, studies that explore the long-term effects of implementing contemplative pedagogy on interpersonal trust and overall school climate can be included.

CONSENT

In this quantitative study, rigorous ethical standards were applied to ensure the privacy and protection of all respondents. Before data collection, informed consent was secured, and respondents were informed about the study's objectives and the confidentiality safeguards in place. To maintain anonymity, no personal information was gathered, and each respondent was assigned a distinct code for use during data analysis. The collected data were stored securely on encrypted servers, with access restricted to the research team. Results were reported in a summarized format, making it impossible to trace any specific responses back to individuals. Additionally, statistical analyses were conducted in such a way that minimized any chance of identifying individual respondents, further ensuring their privacy throughout the process.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)

Option 1:

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

Option 2:

Author(s) hereby declare that generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models, etc. have been used during the writing or editing of manuscripts. This explanation will include the name, version, model, and source of the generative AI technology and as well as all input prompts provided to the generative AI technology

Details of the AI usage are given below:

- 1.
- 2.

3.

REFERENCES

1. Barbezat, D. P., & Bush, M. (2013). *Contemplative practices in higher education: Powerful methods to transform teaching and learning*. John Wiley & Sons.
2. Faerm, S. (2020). Contemplative pedagogy in the college classroom: Theory, research, and practice for holistic student development. *Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios en Diseño y Comunicación. Ensayos*, (78), 159-182.
3. Nilson, L. B. (2016). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource for college instructors*. John Wiley & Sons.
4. Burack, C. (2014). Responding to the challenges of a contemplative curriculum. *Journal of Contemplative Inquiry*, 1(1), 8-21.
5. Harrell, S. P. (2018). Soulfulness as an orientation to contemplative practice: Culture, liberation, and mindful awareness. *Journal of Contemplative Inquiry*, 5(1), 6.
6. Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). Research on teaching and teacher education and its influences on policy and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 45(2), 83-91.
7. Villanueva, L. S. (2017). Interpersonal closeness, self-disclosure, and attachment styles of university students in the Philippines. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 6(2), 29-40.
8. Lambersky, J. (2016). Understanding the human side of school leadership: Principals' impact on teachers' morale, self-efficacy, stress, and commitment. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 15(4), 379-405.
9. Sichon, D. J. S., & Guhao Jr, E. S. (2020). Implementing an effective student discipline: school heads 'perspective. *International Journal for Scientific and Technology and Research*, 9(3), 3168-3191.
10. Pregoner, J. D. M., & Baguio, J. B. (2024). Learning strategies and readiness towards blended learning in English subjects as predictors of students' satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 50(4), 170-184.
11. Pregoner, J. D. (2024). Research approaches in education: A comparison of quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods. *IMCC Journal of Science*, 4(2), 31-36.
12. Pace, D. (2017). *The decoding the disciplines paradigm: Seven steps to increased student learning*. Indiana University Press.
13. Torres, R., Alipio, M., & Sudaria, R. E. (2021). Organizational, teacher, and administrative determinants of quality improvement implementation during COVID-19 pandemic: Insights from a higher education institution in Iligan City, Philippines. *IMCC Journal of Science*, 1(Special), 1-14.
14. Hartney, E. (2020). Stress management to enhance teaching quality and teaching effectiveness: A professional development framework for teachers. In *Occupational stress: Breakthroughs in research and practice* (pp. 306-331). IGI Global.
15. Kolleck, N., Schuster, J., Hartmann, U., & Gräsel, C. (2021). Teachers' professional collaboration and trust relationships: An inferential social network analysis of teacher teams. *Research in Education*, 111(1), 89-107.
16. van der Werff, L., & Buckley, F. (2017). Getting to know you: A longitudinal examination of trust cues and trust development during socialization. *Journal of Management*, 43(3), 742-770.
17. Black, A., Busch, G., & Woodrow, C. (2017). Using contemplative practices to enhance teaching, leadership, and well-being. *Health and Wellbeing in Childhood*, 392-420.
18. Jackman, M. M. (2020). Teaching mindfulness to children. In *Mindfulness-based Interventions with Children and Adolescents* (pp. 141-161). Routledge.
19. Louis, K. S., & Murphy, J. (2017). Trust, caring and organizational learning: the leader's role. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 55(1), 103-126.
20. Rendón, L., & Kanagala, V. (2017). Embracing contemplative pedagogy in a culturally diverse classroom. *ICEA Journal*, 1(1), 15-25.

21. Reeves, D. (2022). *Fearless Schools: Building Trust, Resilience, and Psychological Safety*. Archway publishing.
22. Kreuter, M. W., & Lezin, N. (2002). Social capital theory. *Emerging theories in health promotion practice and research: Strategies for improving public health*, 15, 228.

UNDER PEER REVIEW