EPRA International Journal of Environmental Economics, Commerce and Educational Management
Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra0414 |ISI I.F Value: 0.815|SJIF Impact Factor (2025): 8.57 ISSN: 2348 – 814X
Volume: 12 | Issue:7 |July 2025

MULTICULTURAL PERSONALITY OF SCHOOL HEADS AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE TEACHING COMPETENCE OF TEACHERS

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra23213
DOI No: 10.36713/epra23213

ABSTRACT

The study explored the relationship between multicultural personality of school heads and culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers in District 1 public secondary schools of Davao City Division. Also, it investigated the association of the involved variables and the domains of multicultural personality of school heads that significantly influence culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. With the use of probability sampling, 203 public secondary teachers were selected as the respondents. Utilizing the descriptive-correlational survey method, the data collated were analyzed through the use of Mean, Product-Moment correlation and Regression Analysis. Results revealed that there was a high multicultural personality of school heads and a high culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. Furthermore, there was a significant relationship between multicultural personality of school heads and culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. Moreover, all domains of multicultural personality of school heads, namely, culturally empathy, social initiative, open-mindedness, emotional stability, and flexibility, were found to have significantly influence the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. Based on the findings, it was further suggested that higher officials in the Department of Education may concretize programs and interventions on strengthening the multicultural personality of school heads which would reinforce the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. More so, future researchers may further explore the variables considering other factors research methods.

KEYWORDS: *Multicultural Personality; Culturally Diverse Teaching Competence; Davao City Division, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Today, more and more nationalities, races, and ethnics of students are represented in the school. While diversity brings excitement to teachers, they also pose challenges. A culturally diverse classroom can be one of the best tools for enhancing student learning in the classroom. While diversity in the classroom contributes positively in numerous ways, individuals' customs, traditions, and values can be obstacles for students to succeed in class well, when the students feel inferior to mix around with other students. The different attitudes of student participation in a culturally diverse classroom can pose challenges to teachers. This attitude shapes their learning styles, and that can cause misunderstanding between students and teachers' expectations. Apparently, teachers are not sufficiently prepared to face challenges which may arise in a culturally diverse classroom (Sari & Yuce, 2020). Having a culturally diverse classroom is a challenge among teachers and a global issue. In India, it is a country with diversity in all its forms. In this case, students and teachers from varied backgrounds often do not grasp entirely or appreciate one another's environments (Dyer, 2018). Lack of experience or knowledge may result in culturally insensitive classrooms, lowering minority students' success. Some instructors are unwilling to learn cultural competency even when provided training (Yıldırım, 2019). In Indonesia, its vibrant tapestry of cultural, religious and social diversity poses challenges like teacher unpreparedness and inadequate resources can hinder its effective integration (Naz et al., 2023). This diversity enhances the nation's cultural wealth while simultaneously posing challenges to unity, harmony and national stability (Dellarosa, 2021). In a South African multicultural classroom, for example, a Nigerian teacher cannot understand the behaviour of South African learners without some knowledge of their background or history. The same is true for a European or American teacher in an Asian multicultural classroom, especially if he or she has not yet learned about the learners' cultural background and worldview (Iwuanyamwu, 2023).

In the Philippines, one of the major problems is providing quality education for the indigenous learners. Research shows that around the world, the marginalized indigenous communities are characterized by poor education due to many compelling reasons. Major attribute to this is the lack of schools and especially teachers who are culturally competent to teach diverse learners (Arabit-Zapatos et al., 2019). In Sultan Kudarat, Protacio (2022) disclosed that teachers could experience fulfillment or even challenges in teaching culturally diverse students. These challenges include a sense of not

belonging in class; a lack of experience dealing with diverse linguistic needs; large class size; the strong influence of the first language; insufficient time to address each student's needs; and a language policy that is not supportive.

In General Santos, Garcia and Pantao (2021) revealed that teachers have lack of knowledge, skills, preparation, and experiences that build their requisite for professional competency in multicultural classrooms. The absence in the conduct of seminars and trainings on the pedagogical skills needed to address cultural sensitivity and on the use of effective instructional practices and materials made them less efficacious on their instructional engagement. The lack of discussion and integration of multicultural issues in the curriculum limited the respondents in understanding other culture and languages.

Apparently, culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers is essential for fostering an inclusive learning environment where students from all backgrounds feel respected and understood. When teachers are equipped with intercultural competencies, they could bridge cultural gaps, which helps prevent misunderstandings and builds trust with students. It is believed that the multicultural personality of school heads plays a crucial role in promoting culturally diverse teaching competence among teachers. School heads with strong intercultural awareness and adaptability are better positioned to model inclusive behaviors, create supportive policies, and foster a school culture that values diversity.

Despite the recognized importance of multicultural personality traits in school leadership, there was a research gap in understanding how school heads' multicultural personality directly influences the culturally diverse teaching competence of their teachers. This gap suggested a need for research that examines the mechanisms through which school leaders' multicultural personalities foster an inclusive, culturally aware instructional environment by developing teachers' culturally diverse teaching competence. In particular, this study examined the status of the multicultural personality of school heads and the culturally diverse teaching competence of public secondary teachers in Davao City Division. It also explored the association of the two variables. In the educational context, this undertaking offered essential guidance to policymakers, helping them craft policies, programs, interventions, projects, and activities that could enhance and strengthen the competence of teachers to deal diverse students in a classroom setting. Additionally, this scholarly work was designed to benefit the wider school community. The researcher also intended to share the study's results at the division, regional, national, and international conferences and publish it in a Scopus-indexed journal, as required by the Graduate School.

REVIEW OF SIGNIFICANT LITERATURE

The related literature and studies of this study provided inputs about the multicultural personality of school heads on culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. Also, it presented varied studies showcasing the association of the involved variables in this study. The independent variable is multicultural personality of school heads. It has five indicators namely: culturally empathy, social initiative, open-mindedness, emotional stability, and flexibility (Summerfield, Prado-Gascó, Giménez-Espert, & Mesa-Gresa, 2021). Meanwhile, the dependent variable is culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. It has six indicators namely: general awareness, providing instruction to reduce/eliminate prejudice, building respect for diversity, and combating prejudice (Lampadan, Thomas, Hibbert, Ginajil and Gara, 2019).

Multicultural Personality of School Heads

Multicultural education is the construction of school curricula, teaching instructions, classrooms, and school environments filled with student culture. In order to be practiced in everyday life, multicultural education must be taught at the elementary level to combat the problems that arise from multiculturalism. Principals are required to use information technology facilities to support daily activities (Sugiarto, 2022).

Multicultural education requires school leaders or principals with multicultural skills (Miled, 2019). These skills are critical to creating a school that values individual differences. Also, these skills demonstrate the principal role of principals in promoting equality, social justice, and the implementation of inclusive learning in schools. With this role, principals can have access to power and become transformative agents to fight inequality in the educational community. Principals who understand and apply the concept of multiculturalism are expected to encourage teachers better to understand their students regardless of their cultural background and socioeconomic level so that the educational needs of students are met, and the quality of their education is maintained (Khaleel et al., 2021).

Although this multiculturalism poses challenges for all education systems, the principals face a more complex school context (Juharyanto et al., 2020, 2021; Nurabadi et al., 2022). This context includes how the principal creates a harmonious environment for dominant ethnic/religious groups and minorities, both students, teachers, and school staff. Although there is much research on multicultural leadership in schools (Velarde et al., 2020), the role of school leaders in the context of multicultural teacher cultures has not been extensively studied. Research on multicultural school leadership typically focuses on how to shape students with multicultural attitudes but rarely examines the influence of school leaders in supporting a multicultural teacher culture (Zamroni et al., 2021).

The more the principal is aware of multiculturalism in the school and community environment, the more school policies will pay more attention to the existing multicultural reality (Abu Bakar et al., 2021). Although school leaders can try to improve multicultural teacher culture by implementing multicultural school policies (Maisyaroh et al., 2021), little research has been conducted on the relationship between (multicultural) school leadership and multicultural teacher culture. Several research findings provide recommendations to school principals on how to make the school environment more multicultural (Scibetta & Carbonara, 2020; Serin & Bozdag, 2020) and develop instruments to measure multicultural leadership to measure multiculturalism in schools (Greene, 2019) without investigating whether multicultural leadership of school principals can have an effect on multicultural teacher culture. In addition to the direct relationship between school leadership and multicultural teacher culture, school leaders can indirectly influence multicultural teacher culture through their multicultural inspiration, personality, and attitudes (Anglim et al., 2019; Hofhuis et al., 2020).

Multicultural leadership by school leaders inspires teachers in their multicultural teaching practices. It is important that the principal, as a role model in the school, can inspire teachers to improve multicultural teacher culture (Kang et al., 2019) because the success of a principal depends on the extent to which the principal can inspire teachers and the teachers can then implement this in the classroom by, for example, implementing multicultural teaching. Multicultural personality theory posits that personality traits predict variations in multicultural competence (intercultural comfort, effectiveness in intercultural environments, and cultural adaptability and adjustment) (Summerfield et al., 2021). Multicultural personality is defined as success in professional effectiveness, personal adjustment, and intercultural interaction. Based on this definition, it can be understood that the multicultural leadership exhibited by the principal can influence the multicultural teacher culture through multicultural personality (Musadad & Adha, 2022).

Culturally Empathy

This refers to empathy toward the feelings, thoughts, and behavior of individuals with a diverse culture. Hogan (1975) offered a different conceptualization of empathy, describing it as a non-cognitive social intelligence influenced by multiple factors. This fundamental distinction has led to empathy measures being developed based on different conceptualizations of empathy, measuring a range of skills and abilities (Scoyoc, 2023). Zhang (2022) stated that empathy has therapeutic qualities in an educational setting and should therefore bear an essential presence in the context of school. It seems appropriate then to view school head empathy as a required competency necessary to promote a positive learning environment.

According to Wilson (2019), to initiate the process, school heads need to stage their empathy: listen when they are not interested, appear to care when they do not with the expectation that feigned attentiveness will result in genuine concern. Further, school heads need to be eager to use empathy strategically to engage in empathizing with perspectives they consider to be unacceptable or offensive. Numanee et al (2020) implied an ethical responsibility on the school heads to engage teachers' narratives by providing emotional openness to understanding a student's perspective of racial injury. A teacher who employs strategic empathy, therefore, encourages empathetic engagement, fostering a connectedness (Sun et al., 2023).

Active empathy requires self-reflective participation that leads to confrontation of oppression and overcoming emotional injury. Zembylas (2023) embraced Boler's (1999) definition of active empathy and introduces the idea of a reconciliatory perspective of teacher empathy. The reconciliatory perspective of teacher empathy involves a shared reflective engagement with another individual's emotional life. Reconciliatory empathy involves recognizing the troubled knowledge that a student bears and demonstrating emotional openness to traumatic racial injury. Specifically, reconciliatory empathy creates opportunities for approaching traumatic racial injury with students in classrooms. Therefore teachers must create an environment of trust in the classroom to allow emotions of woundedness to be addressed.

Social Initiative

It is actively approaching intercultural social situations while also taking the initiative in these situations. Initiative can also mean a plan that is targeted at solving a particular problem. It also means independent evaluation and ability to act, power to make an attempt, a behavior to overcome a difficulty or to develop a situation further, or a strategy in different languages (Upton & Kassim, 2020).

Taking initiative is a significant element of leadership when approached from the perspectives of cognitive structure, beliefs, values, affective traits, and dynamic relations, providing autonomy, balancing power, empowering self-control, self-sufficiency, organizational social behavior, and positive relationship approach. Initiative is an expression of an influence, a real and recognized authority, rather than a legally described authority. In other words, it is an area of impact and power that is reflected from the area of skills and abilities, instead of an authority resulting from a hierarchical position. It is the transfer of formal authority to organizational structure in order to empower authority in the administrative sense (Ambos et al., 2023).

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Initiative is a form of thinking and acting that is revealed in the presence of such personal characteristics. Apart from personal characteristics mentioned above, organizational sense of belonging, commitment, and adaptability are also psychological engagements with potential effects on initiative. One of the most important results of initiative taking is autonomy. Taking initiative influences institutional autonomy positively. Taking initiative as a primary focus of administrative processes, functional autonomy, organizational change, execution of organizational behavior beyond predefined roles and responsibilities, strengthening personnel, and transfer of authority will possibly accelerate the expected structural shift, especially in educational organizations (Looze et al., 2019)

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study determined the status of the multicultural personality of school heads and culturally diverse teaching competence of public secondary teachers in Davao City Division. In particular, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of multicultural personality of school heads as perceived by public secondary teachers in terms of:
   - 1.1 culturally empathy;
   - 1.2 social initiative;
   - 1.3 open-mindedness;
   - 1.4 emotional stability; and
   - 1.5 flexibility?
2. What is the level of culturally diverse teaching competence of public secondary teachers in terms of:
   - 2.1 general awareness;
   - 2.2 providing instruction to reduce/eliminate prejudice;
   - 2.3 building respect for diversity; and
   - 2.4 combating prejudice?
3. Is there a significant relationship between multicultural personality of school heads and culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers?
4. Which domains of multicultural personality of school heads significantly influence the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers?

METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the methodology of the study, detailing the research design, selection of participants, data-gathering tools, ethical protocols, data collection procedures, and methods of data analysis that will be utilized in the investigation.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a quantitative research framework, specifically using a descriptive correlational method. Quantitative research is characterized by its structured exploration of phenomena through gathering numerical data and applying statistical, mathematical, or computational techniques. Grounded in the positivist perspective, this approach emphasizes statistical methods, including hypothesis testing, inferential analysis, and mathematical modeling. Additionally, quantitative research often includes methodologies such as experimental and quasi-experimental designs, random assignment, blinding, and the use of structured instruments like questionnaires with set response options (Ahmad et al., 2019).

A descriptive correlational research design seeks to outline the characteristics of variables and explore the degree of association between them. Bhat (2024) explained that this approach involves gathering data to examine specific variables and assess their interrelationships. The primary objective is to give a comprehensive view of the variables and how they relate to each other, without modifying them or suggesting causal links. This design is effective for identifying patterns and correlations while ensuring an objective analysis of the data.

This research was identified as quantitative, as it was based on the collection and examination of numerical data. A descriptive method was utilized to assess the current status of school heads' multicultural personality and teachers' culturally diverse teaching competencies. Additionally, the study employed a correlational design to explore the relationship between these two variables among public secondary schools in the Davao City Division.

RESEARCH RESPONDENTS

This research examined a sample of 203 public secondary school teachers from District 1 of the Davao City Division. The Raosoft Calculator was employed to determine this sample size, applying a 0.05 margin of error to downscale the initial population of 425 teachers, those teaching Grades 7 through 10 for at least five years, to 203 participants. This sample size aligned with Hair et al. (2018), who recommended a minimum of 50 to 100 participants for studies utilizing regression analysis. Consequently, the selected 203 respondents were considered adequate to meet the study's objectives.

The researcher employed a probability sampling method known as cluster sampling to select participants. In this approach, the entire population is divided into specific groups, or clusters, from which a random selection of clusters is made using either simple random sampling or systematic random sampling techniques for data collection and analysis (Fleetwood, 2024). In this study, clusters were chosen to ensure representation from all secondary schools within District 1 of the Davao City Division.

The study set clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, requiring participants to be secondary teachers of Grades 7 to 10 with a minimum of five years of teaching experience. This criterion was based on the assumption that three years in the public school system enabled teachers to accurately assess both the multicultural personality of school heads and the culturally diverse teaching competencies of their colleagues. Additionally, participants retained the right to exit the study at any time should they feel uncomfortable with the survey.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Data for this study were gathered through an adapted survey questionnaire developed specifically for this research. The questionnaire was structured into two distinct sections to comprehensively meet the research objectives: the first section aimed at evaluating the multicultural personality traits of school heads, while the second section was dedicated to assessing the culturally diverse teaching competencies of teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The findings emphasize that cultural empathy is frequently demonstrated by school heads in their interactions. The high mean scores suggest that school heads are often aware of and sensitive to the diverse cultural backgrounds of those they work with, creating an inclusive and understanding environment. This aligns with the importance of cultural empathy in fostering positive relationships and promoting a respectful, collaborative school atmosphere.

Further analysis reveals that the specific behaviors tied to cultural empathy, such as enjoying getting to know others profoundly, setting others at ease, and being a good listener are consistently rated highly. These behaviors reflect a strong tendency among school heads to actively engage with and understand their staff and students from different cultural backgrounds. The findings emphasize that school heads who demonstrate cultural empathy contribute significantly to a supportive and harmonious school environment, enhancing overall school effectiveness and promoting mutual respect among all stakeholders.

The high cultural empathy of school heads confirmed the assertion of Wilson (2019) claiming that school heads need to stage their empathy: listen when they are not interested, appear to care when they do not with the expectation that feigned attentiveness will result in genuine concern. Further, school heads need to be eager to use empathy strategically to engage in empathizing with perspectives they consider to be unacceptable or offensive. Numanee et al (2020) implied an ethical responsibility on the school heads to engage teachers' narratives by providing emotional openness to understanding a student's perspective of racial injury.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presented in this chapter are the findings based on the results of data gathered, the conclusions drawn from the findings and the recommendations for consideration.

The study aimed to determine the relationship between the multicultural personality of school heads and the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers in selected public secondary schools in District 1, Davao City Division. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered from 203 secondary teachers through validated and pilot-tested instruments. Statistical tools included mean, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis at a 0.05 significance level.

Findings showed that both the multicultural personality of school heads and the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers were high School heads demonstrated strong traits such as open-mindedness and cultural empathy, while teachers effectively addressed the needs of diverse learners. A significant relationship was found between the two variables, indicating that school heads with strong multicultural traits positively influence teachers' cultural responsiveness and inclusive teaching practices.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were offered:
The level of multicultural personality of school heads is high which means that it is oftentimes evident. Notably, open-mindedness is always evident while cultural empathy, social initiative, and emotional stability are oftentimes evident. On the other hand, flexibility is occasionally evident.
Meanwhile, the level of culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers is high. Specifically, building respect for diversity and combating prejudice are oftentimes evident while general awareness, providing instruction to reduce/eliminate prejudice is occasionally evident.

Based on the findings, multicultural personality of school heads and culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers are related. All domains of multicultural personality of school heads are linked to the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Furthermore, all domains of multicultural personality of school heads have significant influenced the culturally diverse teaching competence of teachers. Of which, open-mindedness has the highest coefficient, indicating it has the most substantial influence on teachers' culturally diverse teaching competence This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The significant and moderate positive correlation between the multicultural personality of school heads and cultural diverse teaching competence of teachers supports the principles established in Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1977) as cited by McLeod (2024). This theory highlighted that people learn new behaviors by observing and imitating others. It emphasizes the importance of observational learning, where individuals acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs by watching the actions of others and the consequences that follow, leading to the modeling and adoption of observed behaviors.

In this theory, it is important to understand how people learn from others and how their behavior is shaped by their environment. SLT can be applied to many areas, including education, and can help teachers and school principals understand how to create inclusive and effective learning environments. In a school context, this theory suggests that teachers may adopt culturally diverse competencies by observing and emulating school heads who display multicultural awareness and inclusivity.

Recommendations

The following suggestions were offered based on the conclusions of the study: Relevant to the findings of this study, DepEd officials may prioritize the development and strengthening of multicultural competencies among school heads and teachers to foster more inclusive and effective educational environments. Encouraging school heads to further cultivate traits such as cultural empathy, emotional stability, and flexibility can enhance their ability to lead diverse schools and support teachers in addressing the needs of a multicultural student body. Additionally, providing targeted professional development programs that focus on building teachers' competencies in combating prejudice, increasing awareness, and promoting respect for diversity may significantly enhance their teaching effectiveness, leading to better educational outcomes for all students.

Moreover, school heads are encouraged to further enhance their multicultural leadership skills, particularly by focusing on fostering flexibility and deepening their emotional stability to better support teachers in diverse classrooms. School heads may also continue promoting open-mindedness, cultural empathy, and social initiative, as these qualities not only positively influence their leadership effectiveness but also play a crucial role in enhancing the culturally diverse teaching competence of their staff. Providing regular training and resources to teachers to build on their existing competencies, such as addressing prejudice, raising cultural awareness, and integrating inclusive practices, will strengthen the overall school environment, creating a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive learning experience for all students.

Furthermore, teachers may continue developing their culturally diverse teaching competencies by focusing on enhancing their general awareness of cultural differences and further integrating strategies to reduce and eliminate prejudice in the classroom. Emphasizing respect for diversity and promoting inclusive teaching practices should remain a priority. Additionally, teachers are encouraged to engage with school heads to foster a collaborative environment that values cultural empathy, social initiative, and emotional stability, as these qualities are significantly linked to teachers' ability to effectively manage diverse classrooms. Continued professional development opportunities that focus on these areas will help both teachers and school leaders create an inclusive

learning environment where all students feel valued and respected.

Lastly, future researchers are encouraged to explore the deeper mechanisms through which the multicultural personality traits of school heads influence the development of culturally diverse teaching competence among teachers. Investigating how specific aspects, such as open-mindedness, cultural empathy, and emotional stability, shape teaching practices in diverse classrooms could provide valuable insights. Additionally, it would be beneficial to examine the role of teacher professional development programs in strengthening these competencies and whether these traits can be further cultivated through targeted training. Longitudinal studies may also help determine the long-term impact of these traits on student outcomes in culturally diverse settings. Expanding the scope of this research to include a wider variety of school contexts and geographical locations may yield more generalizable results and offer practical recommendations for improving diversity-focused leadership and teaching practices.

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