

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SCHOOL CLIMATE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COGNITIVE EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND CLASSROOM DISPOSITION OF RETIRABLE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the mediating effect of school climate on the relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of teachers among the 400 teachers in Davao Region. This study employed non-experimental design utilizing descriptive correlation technique. The statistical tools used were mean, pearson-r, regression technique, and medgraph using Sobel z-test. Research instruments on school climate, cognitive emotional regulation of teachers, and classroom disposition of retirable public school teachers which were validated were used as sources of data. Using pearson-r, the results revealed that there is a significant relationship between school climate and cognitive emotional regulation, there is a significant relationship between school climate and classroom disposition of public school teachers, and there is a significant relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of public school teachers. Utilizing megradph Sobel z-test, the results of the study also suggest that there is also a partial mediation on the effect of school climate on the relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of public school teachers.

Keywords: Mediating Effect, School Climate, Cognitive Emotional Regulation of Teacher, Classroom Disposition of Retirable Public School Teachers, Non-Experimental Quantitative Research Design, Educational Management, Philippines

1. Introduction

Dispositions play a key role in determining whether and how teachers mobilize their intellectual resources and professional commitments in impacting student learning. It affects how teachers function as moral educators of children, as they model ways of being and interacting in the world, whether consciously or unconsciously. Teachers' dispositions directly affect their effectiveness as educators. Teachers with good disposition tend to have energy, enthusiasm, creativity, and imagination, and students often feel that these

teachers can help them deal with personal issues and encourage a collaborative working environment with students in their classes (Steven & Olivarez, 2005; Pink, 2006).

Considering the utmost importance of classroom disposition, retireable teachers are not always in their best dispositions. Every day, teachers are continually exposed to a wide variety of potentially arousing stimuli. Inappropriate, extreme or unchecked emotional reactions to such stimuli could impede functional fit within society; therefore, teacher must engage in some form of emotion regulation almost all of the time. Generally speaking, teachers suffer emotional dysregulation in class while dealing with students of different social background. Teachers who are emotionally dysregulated exhibit patterns of responding in which there is a mismatch between their goals, responses, and/or modes of expression, and the demands of the social environment (Levitin, 2006; Mullin & Hinshaw, 2007).

Conversely, a teacher may hold professional knowledge and or skills but simply not possess the disposition to act. This may manifest itself in behavior such as not grading papers in a timely manner, using unfair grading procedures, disregarding students' special needs, assigning inappropriate homework, failing to consider or allow various viewpoints in the classroom, and acting unethically, dishonestly, or illegally (Marzano, 2006; Tolar, 2009).

The ability to control aspects of the self is one important skill that needs to be developed. Without this ability one would have great difficulty accomplishing anything, regardless of how good he might feel about oneself. Cognitive emotional regulation is monitoring and controlling own behavior, emotions, or thoughts, and altering them in accordance with the demands of the situation. Teachers need a sense of emotional regulation to perform well in work (Gross, 2007; Linehan, Bohus & Lynch, 2007).

Promoting a positive school climate will improve many different areas of teachers' behavior and practices. Teachers working in a positive climate will be more creative and perform better. By promoting a positive school culture, teachers develop a sense of community which makes teachers happier in their work. Positive school climate helps in establishing effective schools as it impacts teacher productivity, performance, collaboration, communication, satisfaction, and it can also energize and elicit support from parents and community (Gignac, 2006; Anderson, 2006).

However, schools are not always about good things as there are many problems confronting our schools such as bullying and harassment, inadequate academic performance, children who feel left out or fall between the cracks, disrespectful behavior, unmotivated students, and frustrated teachers. In specific, many teachers find the demands of being a professional educator in today's schools difficult and at times stressful. When work stress results in teacher burnout, it can have serious consequences for the health and happiness of teachers, and

also the students, professionals, and families they interact with on a daily basis (Morrison, 2005; Borman & Dowling, 2008).

The researcher has not come across of a similar study especially in the local context. This undertaking therefore can be considered as a new knowledge and an additional document to the existing information for each variable involved in the study. It is in this extensive perspective that the researcher decided to conduct the study. The extent of classroom disposition of retirable public school teachers cannot be discounted and underscored. One important variable which contributes to classroom disposition of retirable public school teachers is the cognitive emotional regulation as mentioned in various literatures such as that of Matthews, Zeidner & Roberts, (2002), Gross (2007), and Mayer, Salovey, Caruso & Sitarenios, (2003).

2. Research Objective

The purpose of this study was to look into the mediating effect of cognitive emotional regulation to the relation between school climate and classroom disposition of retirable teachers. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following objectives:

1. To describe the level of school climate.
2. To describe the level of classroom disposition of retirable public school teacher.
3. To describe the level of cognitive emotional regulation of teacher.
4. To describe the significance of: cognitive emotional regulation and school climate, school climate and classroom disposition of retirable teachers, and cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retirable teachers?
5. Is the mediating effect of school climate on the relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retirable public teachers significant?

3. Methodology

This study employed a testing of mediation. The interest of the study was to investigate the relationship between school climate and classroom disposition of retirable teacher; the relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and school climate; and the cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retirable teacher. (Johnson, 2012).

The general test for mediation was to examine the relation between the predictor and the criterion variables, the relation between the predictor and the mediator variables, and the relation between the mediator and criterion variables. A mediating variable is one that lies intermediate between independent causal factors

and a final outcome. Mediating variables aim to estimate the way a variable Z affects the impact of X on Y (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

The study was conducted in ten divisions in Region XI. This includes 400 teachers from the the division of Compostela Valley Province, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Mati City, Digos City, Davao City, Panabo City, Tagum City, and Island Garden City of Samal (IGACOS).

4.Results

4.1 Level of School Climate

The overall mean score for the level of school climate is 4.15 or high level which indicates that most of the items regarding school climate of the retirable public teachers are oftentimes manifested. The cited overall mean score was the result obtained based on the mean scores of 4.28 or very high for attitude and culture, 4.23 or very high for *leadership/decisions*, 4.22 or very high both for *learning/assessment* and *community relations*, 4.18 or high for *student interactions*, 4.15 or high for *discipline environment*, 4.04 or high for *faculty relations*, and 3.90 or high for *physical appearance*.

The very high level for *attitude and culture* indicated that school climate as felt by retirable public teachers was always manifested, if not almost all of the time. The mean rating for this indicator which was 4.28 was the result of the very high scores assigned by the teachers to the specific items in the questionnaire appended in this study. This included being part of the community, working towards collective goals, listening to, representing and having a voice, welcoming and being comfortable in talking to adults and/or designated peer counselor, and having traditions that promote school pride and a sense of historical community.

The respondents had a very agreeable rating on *leadership/decisions*. Its mean rating of 4.23 described as very high level specified that the school climate of retirable public teachers was always been felt by the teachers. The descriptors for this particular indicator as underscored in the questionnaire were having a sense of vision, and a mission that is shared by all, leadership being in tune with students and community, leadership demonstrating a high level of accountability, and finding ways to make it happen, school's decisions being conspicuously grounded in the mission, and teacher leadership being systematic and integral to the school's leadership strategy of decision-making.

The rating of 4.22 for *learning/assessment* obtained a very high level of descriptive rating as a result of the rating given by the respondents on the following items in the research instrument: students being seen as the primary users of assessment information, and assessment being used for the purpose of informing the learning process and is never used to punish or shame, assessment targets being clear and attainable for learners,

instruction being dynamic, involving, learner-centered and challenging, and teachers having some mode of making sense of, and being responsive to, varying learning styles. On the other hand, a high rating was placed by the teachers on the observation that students are being given systematic opportunities to reflect on their learning progress.

In the same manner, in *community relations*, the very high level descriptive rating revealed that the school climate was oftentimes manifested by the respondents. The mean rating was 4.22 which was the outcome of the responses of teachers in the following items in the questionnaire: being perceived as welcoming to all parents, sending out regular communication to community including invitations to attend key events, and having service learning efforts which are regular, promoting student learning and positive community relations. On the other hand, a high level was placed on the retireable public teachers' assessment on having volunteer efforts to be well-coordinated, volunteers are plentiful and conspicuously appreciated, and community members being regularly invited to speak in classes.

A high level of *student interactions* with the mean rating of 4.18 was also evident among the respondents denoting that this indicator was oftentimes felt by the retireable public teachers. The descriptors as underscored in the questionnaire are the following: attending school events and activities and valuing athletes as quality community members and approach their role with a humble sense of honor. On the other hand, a high level of rating was placed by the retireable public teachers in expecting to engage in authentic learning activities and to be taught with methods that make them responsible for their own learning, feeling sense of community and school is defined by the warm regard for the inhabitants of the building, and expecting to be given ownership over decisions that affect them.

On the other hand, the mean rating of 4.15 for *discipline environment* was high. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: classrooms being positive places and teachers maintaining a positive effect, and follow-through with consequences in a calm and non-personal manner, considering teaching and discipline within the lens of basic student needs that must be met for a functional class, teacher-student interactions could be typically described as supportive and respectful, teachers using effective discipline strategies that are defined by logical consequences and refrain from punishments or shaming, and school-wide discipline policy being consistently applied.

A high level of *faculty relations* with the mean rating of 4.04 was also evident among the respondents denoting that this indicator was oftentimes felt by the teachers. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: being congenial to one another and commonly collaborate with one another, attending to problems as a team, using their planning time constructively and refrain from denigrating students in teacher areas, being typically

constructive when speaking of each other and/or administrators, and having the time and interest to commune with one another, and feeling very little isolation.

A high level of *physical appearance* with the mean rating of 3.90 was also evident among the respondents denoting that this indicator was oftentimes felt by the teachers. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: having some signages for visitors as they enter the building, teachers and students taking ownership of physical appearance, the current student works being displayed to show pride and ownership by students, many essential fixtures, appliances and structural items remaining in good conditions, and having no litter of waste materials.

Data indicated that the respondent retirable public teachers highly felt the school climate of their respective schools. This further means that practices related to school climate are oftentimes manifested and are done or practiced by concerned authorities or stakeholders. It also denotes that retirable public teachers assess their school's climate to be favorable for them in the dispensation of their duties and responsibilities.

4.2 Level of Cognitive Emotional Regulation of Teachers

The computations revealed an overall mean score of 3.77 or high rating for the cognitive emotional regulation which indicates that the said respondents were high in cognitive emotional regulation. The score was derived from the mean scores of 4.34 or very high for *refocus on planning*, 4.29 or *very high* for *positive reappraisal*, 4.05 or high for *positive refocusing*, 3.85 or high for *rumination*, 3.83 or high for *acceptance*, 3.64 or high for *putting into perspective*, 3.55 or high for *self-blame*, 3.32 or moderate for *catastrophizing*, and 3.07 or moderate for *blaming others*.

Data revealed that the respondents had manifested a very high level of refocus on planning as manifested in the following descriptors in the questionnaire: thinking of what they can do best, thinking about how they can best cope with the situation, thinking about a plan of what they can do best, and thinking about how they can best cope with the situation.

In the same vein, the respondent's level of positive reappraisal was very high as evidenced by an overall mean score of 4.29, indicating that they have always observed and practiced the situations, which include thinking they can learn something from the situation, thinking that the situation also has its positive sides, looking for the positive sides to the matter, and thinking that they can become a stronger person as a result of what has happened.

The mean rating of 4.05 for positive refocusing obtained a high level score as a result of the rating given by the respondents on the following items in the research instrument: thinking of pleasant experiences, thinking

of nicer things than what they have experienced, thinking of something nice instead of what has happened, and thinking of pleasant things that have nothing to do with it.

More so, results revealed that the respondents had manifested a high level of rumination as manifested in the following descriptors in the questionnaire: thinking about how they felt on what they have experienced, wanting to understand about the feeling and ways the teacher do about what they have experienced, being preoccupied with what one is thinking and feeling about what have experienced, and dwelling upon the feelings of the situation evoked.

Likewise, the mean rating of 3.83 for acceptance obtained a high level score as a result of the rating given by the respondents on the following items in the research instrument: accepting what has happened, accepting the situation, learning to live with, and having no means to change anything about the situation.

The mean rating of 3.64 for putting into perspective obtained a high level score as a result of the rating given by the respondents on the following items in the research instrument: telling oneself that there are worse things in life, thinking that it hasn't been too bad compared to other things, thinking that other people go through much worse experiences, and thinking that it all could have been much worse.

A high level of *self-blame* with the mean rating of 3.55 was also evident among the respondent retireable public teachers, denoting that they oftentimes felt this indicator. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: thinking about the mistakes they have committed, thinking that basically they made the mistake, feeling that teachers are the one who is responsible for what has happened, and feeling that teachers are the one to blame for every failure.

On the other hand, a moderate level of catastrophizing as evidenced by the mean rating of 3.32, which indicates that the retireable public teachers sometimes felt or has resorted to have done the situations, which include: thinking that what they have experienced is much worse than what others have experienced, keeping on thinking about how terrible the situation they have experienced was, often thinking that what they have experienced is the worst that can happen to a person, and continually thinking about how horrible the situation has been.

Lastly, a moderate level of blaming others as evidenced by the mean rating of 3.07, which denotes that the retireable public teachers sometimes felt or has manifested the following situations: feeling that others are responsible for what has happened, thinking about the mistakes others have made, feeling that basically the cause lies with others, and feeling that others are to be blamed for it.

4.3 Level of Classroom Disposition of Retirable Public Teachers

The computations revealed an overall mean score of 4.36 or very high rating for classroom disposition ratings of teachers which indicates that the said respondents always manifest classroom disposition. The score was derived from the mean scores of 4.47 or *very high* for *general frame of reference*, 4.37 or *very high* for *perceptions about subject field*, 4.35 or *very high* for *purpose of education and process of learning*, 4.33 or *very high* for *perceptions about other people*, and 4.30 or *very high* for *perceptions about self*.

The mean rating of 4.47 for *general frame of reference perception* was very high. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: treating students with dignity and respect at all times, being concerned about attitudes, beliefs, feelings and welfare of others, being sensitive to student differences, being patient when working with students, and demonstrating intellectual and academic curiosity. In the same vein, the mean rating of 4.37 for *perceptions about subject field* was very high. The mean rating was the outcome of the teachers' responses in the following items in the questionnaire: demonstrating enthusiasm for the subject being taught, demonstrating positive attitude towards their subject and learning in general, actively seeking out growth opportunities, creating connections to subject matter that are meaningful to students, and engaging in research-based instructional practices.

Likewise, the mean rating of 4.35 for *purpose of education and process of learning* was very high. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: demonstrating and encouraging democratic interaction in the classroom, taking responsibility in creating positive classroom environment, making efforts to promote educational equity for all students, understanding that the students have certain needs that must be met before learning can take place, and expecting all students to succeed.

A very high rating was also seen on the retireable public teachers' *perceptions about other people*, based on the mean rating of 4.33. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: willing to receive feedback and assessment of their teaching from peers, students and supervisors, listening to the ideas and suggestions of their colleagues for improving instruction, cooperating with colleagues in planning instruction, viewing teaching as a collaborative effort among educators, and trusting in abilities and problem solving skills of others.

Lastly, the mean rating of 4.30 for *perceptions about self* was found to be very high among retireable public teachers. The descriptors in the questionnaire were: being thoughtful and responsive listeners, engaging in self-reflection to capture insight into themselves and their impact on student learning and well-being, maintaining emotional control, using appropriate language and appropriate tone of voice, and adapting to unexpected new situations.

Overall, the data indicated that the teachers manifested a very high level of classroom disposition. This means that the teacher have always manifested in displaying thoughts of helping students become successful at

a very high extent, and that these things that they should know and be able to do when they are faced with certain situations in their classrooms are manifested always, if not almost all of the time.

4.4 Correlations between Cognitive Emotional Regulation, School Climate and Classroom Disposition of Retirable Public Teachers

Displayed in Table 4 are the results of the relationship between the independent (cognitive emotional regulation), dependent (classroom disposition) and mediator (school climate) variables. Bivariate correlation analysis using Pearson product moment correlation was employed to determine the relationship between the variables mentioned.

Based on the first correlation analysis, cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of revealed a computed r-value of 0.352 with a probability value of $p = 0.000$ which is significant at the 0.05 level. This implies that the higher the cognitive emotional regulation the retirable public teachers display, the higher will be their classroom disposition. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of the respondents was therefore rejected.

In the same manner, second correlational analysis was employed between cognitive emotional regulation and school climate, which yielded an r-value of 0.470 with a probability value of $p = 0.000$, which is significant at 0.05 level. This implies that the higher the cognitive emotional regulation the retirable public teachers display, the higher will be their assessment on the school climate. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and school climate as perceived by the respondent retirable public teachers was therefore rejected.

The last correlational analysis was employed between school climate and classroom disposition, which yielded an r-value of 0.604 with a probability value of $p = 0.000$, which is significant at 0.05 level. This implies that higher levels of school climate as perceived by retirable public teachers mean higher levels of classroom disposition. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between school climate and classroom disposition of the respondents was therefore rejected.

4.5 Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables

Data was analyzed with linear regression method as input to the medgraph. Mediation analysis developed by Baron and Kenny (1986) is the mediating effect of a third variable in the relationship between two variables.

There are four steps to be met for a third variable to be acting as a mediator. In Table 5, these are categorized as Steps 1 to 4. In Step 1, cognitive emotional regulation as the independent variable (IV) significantly predicts classroom disposition of the retirable public teachers, which is this study's dependent

variable (DV). In step 2, cognitive emotional regulation significantly predicts school climate, the mediator (M). In step 3, school climate significantly predicts classroom disposition of the retirable public teachers. Because the three steps (paths a, b and c) are significant, further mediation analysis through medgraph is warranted, involving the Sobel z test to assess the significance of mediation effect. If the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable becomes non-significant at the final step of the analysis, full mediation will be achieved. It means all of the effects are mediated by the mediator variable. In addition, if the regression coefficient is substantially reduced at the final step but remains significant, only partial mediation is obtained, which implies that part of the independent variable (cognitive emotional regulation) is mediated by the mediator (school climate) but other parts are either direct or mediated by other variables that are not included in the model. In this case, as gleaned in step 4, the combined effect of cognitive emotional regulation on classroom disposition was found to be insignificant after mediated by school climate. Therefore, full mediation took place since the effect was found to be not significant at 0.05 level.

Furthermore, the result of the computation of mediating effects is shown in Figure 3. The Sobel test yielded a z-value of 8.126 with a *p* value of 0.001, which is significant at 0.05 level. This means that the full mediation accounted by school climate on the relationship of cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retirable public teachers is significant. In addition, the causal relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition has been reduced from a significant beta coefficient value of 0.352 to 0.087, which then became insignificant, at the inclusion of school climate, the mediator variable.

Lastly, the figure shows the results of the computation of the effect size in the mediation test conducted between the three variables. The effect size measures how much of the effect of cognitive emotional regulation on classroom disposition can be attributed to the indirect path. The total effect value of 0.352 is the raw correlation between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition. The direct effect value of 0.087 is the size of the correlation between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition with school culture included in the regression. The indirect effect value of 0.265 is the amount of the original correlation between the cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition that now goes through school climate to classroom disposition ($a*b$) where “a” refers to the path between the independent variable and mediator variable and “b” refers to the path between the mediator variable and the dependent variable. The ratio index is computed by dividing the indirect effect by the total effect; in this case, 0.265 by 0.352 equals 0.753. It seems that about 75.3 percent of the total effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable goes through the mediator variable, and about 24.7 percent of the total effect is either direct or mediated by other variables not included in the model.

5. Conclusion

With considerations on the findings of the study, conclusions are drawn in this section. The respondent retireable public teachers were found to exhibit a high level of cognitive emotional regulation, high level of school climate, and very high level of classroom disposition. The results of the study also confirm that there is a significant relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retireable public teachers. In the same manner, there is a significant relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and school climate. A significant relationship also exists between school climate and classroom disposition of retireable public teachers. Lastly, the results of the study also suggests that school climate has partial mediation effect on the relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retireable public teachers.

6. Recommendations

The study found a significant relationship between cognitive emotional regulation and classroom disposition of retireable public teachers. The researcher therefore recommends that the Department of Education, especially its working units in the regional, provincial, city and district levels as well as the public school administrators may look on the findings of the study as an imperative basis in orienting the teachers, especially those who are in the retireable phase, on the importance of cognitive emotional regulation to maintain their disposition in the classroom. The Department may also organize activities that would allow the retireable public teachers to feel valued in their continued service to the public as a way of transcending from the emotional phase of near retirement.

The study also reveals a significant relationship between school climate and classroom disposition of retireable public teachers. The researcher therefore recommends that school administrators may maintain a good or improve the school's climate by bridging the communications between themselves and their subordinate teachers.

The study also reveals that there is a significant relationship between school climate and classroom disposition of retireable public teachers. With this, the researcher recommends that the school administrators may conduct open forums or organize activities sessions on a regular basis to improve the school's climate which will likely improve classroom disposition of teachers.

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