The Instructor's Educational Philosophy Tendencies and its Relationship to their Degree of Autonomy

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted at Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College, Nueva Ecija, Philippines among the College of Teacher Education Faculty to establish the relationship between their educational philosophy tendencies and the degree of classroom autonomy they exhibit. The researchers conducted a descriptive quantitative correlational study of 19 instructors to identify their teaching philosophies along with their perceived levels of autonomy. The data were analyzed using mean and grand mean as descriptive statistics and Spearman's rank correlation. Results show that the majority of faculty have progressive or constructivist teaching philosophies and that general and curriculum autonomy report moderate levels. Significant correlations were found between certain philosophical orientations and dimensions of teacher autonomy, particularly between essentialism, and professionalism and empowerment. The findings of the study emphasize the complex interplay between educational beliefs and perceived autonomy, suggesting implications for faculty development and institutional policies. It is important because it offers additional insight into the ways in which operating under one teaching pedagogy or another influences higher-education teachers' sense of autonomy.

Keywords: Educational Philosophy, Teacher Autonomy, Higher Education, Curriculum Development, Instructional Practices

INTRODUCTION

For educational institutions, one of the major areas of inquiry would certainly be the relationship between instructors' educational philosophies and the autonomy for educators within the classroom. This research specifically dealt with the faculty of Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College (ELJMC) in Nueva Ecija, Philippines whose pedagogical approaches and autonomy of conduct directly affect the student's learning outcome. ELJMC is a provincial college which takes responsibility to educate the local student; therefore, understanding the dynamics of teaching philosophies and autonomy may increase instruction effectiveness at such unique educational environment.

Educational philosophy allows educators to develop their approaches to teaching and learning (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). ELJMC instructors have orientations that include constructivism, cognitivism, essentialism, progressivism, among others. These philosophies drive their approach to instruction, areas of learning they focus on in the curriculum and their building relationships with students (Urrete, 2023). At the same time, classroom autonomy, the extent to which teachers can independently structure and implement curricula, contributes to the development of transformative pedagogy and targeted learning (Liu et al., 2022; Collie et al., 2020).

The ongoing discussions about the locus of control in the ELJMC content area classrooms reflect the challenges faced by teachers across the Philippines. Thus, teachers are somewhat limited by institutional barriers, although they try to apply pedagogical methods to correspond with their educational philosophies (Yorulmaz, 2023). This study aimed to explore this overlap of perceived types of autonomy in ELJMC instructors that may lead to the aforementioned frameworks. The study aimed to inform the interaction between adherence to external policy and teachers' intrinsic beliefs with respect to mandated curricula. The current issues in the teachers frequently assert with institutional impediments as they endeavor to realize

pedagogical methods that accord with their educational philosophies ([5]). This study aimed at exploring the interrelation between the philosophical frameworks and the perceived levels of autonomy of ELJMC instructors. The research aimed to explore the outcomes in order to gain a deeper understanding of the extent to which externally mandated curriculum can be integrated with internally mandated teaching philosophies.

Understanding this interrelation is important for encouraging pedagogies that are responsive to diverse learners. These results may offer guidance into meaningful and effective staff development activities that could support the goal of greater instructor autonomy and embedding of philosophy within curriculum design (Jiang & Tanaka, 2022). Ultimately, this study sought to contribute to the landscape of best practices in education, offering valuable data for experts, policymakers, and administrators interested in developing meaningful education and nurturing opportunities at ELJMC.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

Dawson (2021) defines Five Dimensions of Teacher Autonomy, which serve as the theoretical framework for this study. Within the study, this framework considers teacher autonomy to be a multidimensional construct consisting of instructional autonomy, curricular autonomy, principal/administrator relationship, professionalism and empowerment, and policy. Teacher autonomy is the view of educators toward how a lot power do they have over their classes and students through classroom instruction, the curriculum, working collaboratively with school leaders, professional development and the policies that govern education (Dawson, 2021). It was this foundation of the different domains of teacher autonomy that the Five Dimensions of Teacher Autonomy Scale (FDTAS) was developed to achieve: the varied ways teachers conceptualized and experienced autonomy in their work. By utilizing this framework, the current study grounds its exploration of autonomy within an established and contextually appropriate model; doing so advocates that when measuring autonomy, this autonomy is a mirror of the intricacies and reality of the current educational landscape (Dawson, 2021).

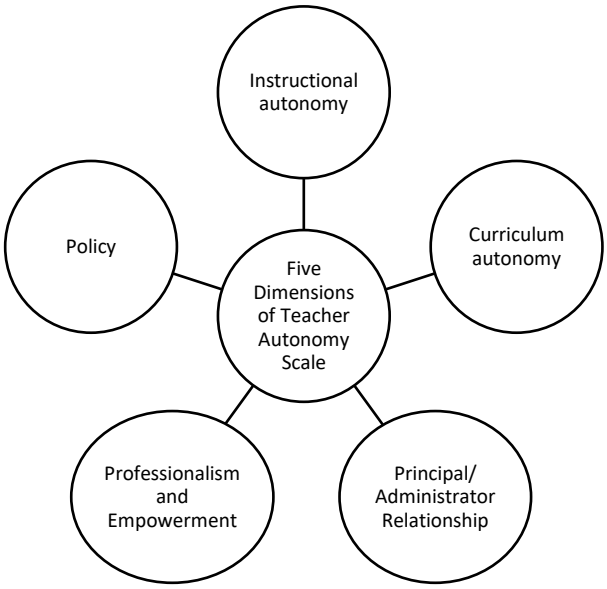

Figure 1. The Five Dimensions of Teacher Autonomy Scale

The conceptual framework of this study, based on the Input-Process-Output (IPO) model, begins with the input component, which includes the respondent profile and variables (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The respondent profile consists of demographic details such as age, sex, highest degree earned, and subject emphasis. These components provide a foundation for the description of the teachers' backgrounds, and an understanding of how they can influence the course of the instructional approach. In this study, the independent variable refers to the instructors' educational philosophy tendencies, which those instructors who identified with an educational philosophy (e.g., progressivism, constructivism, humanism, and more) considered the types of teaching philosophy. Teacher autonomy (including instructional autonomy, curriculum autonomy, principal/administrator relationship, professionalism and empowerment, and policy) is the dependent variable.

The process part shows the methods used to evaluate the correlation between the inputs and outputs. This involves data collection using questionnaires created to obtain respondents' profiles, philosophical orientation, and perceived autonomy. These associations are analyzed statistically through, for example, Spearman's rank correlation.

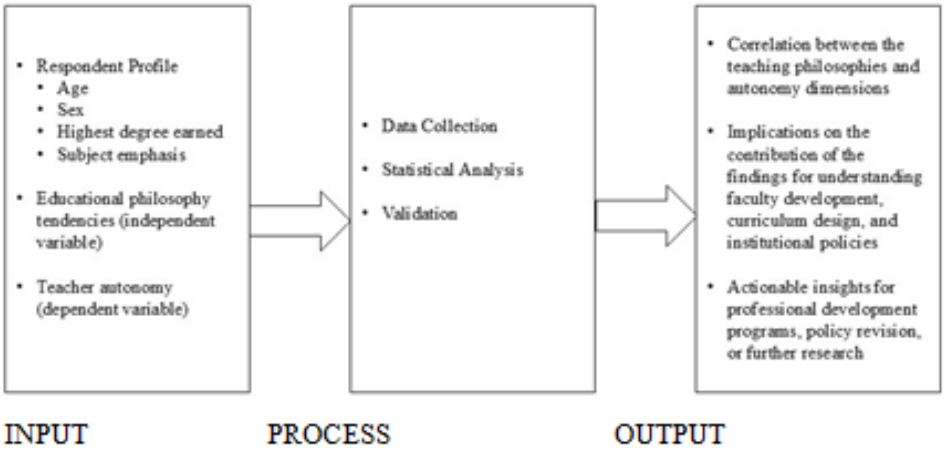

Figure 2. Input-Process-Output Model of the Relationship Between Instructors' Educational Philosophy Tendencies and Their Degree of Autonomy

Lastly, the output component investigates the findings of the research and their results. Such correlations can reveal how the different orientations inform aspects such as teacher autonomy, professional choices, and other dimensions of professional practice. The results add to discussions of faculty development, curriculum and institutional policies. It also formulates actionable recommendations which may inform Professional Developments, policies, or further research in order to empower teachers and improve the outcomes of education. The IPO framework enables the researchers to understand the relationship between instructors' profiles, their teaching philosophies and their perceived autonomy in a contextualized setting, specifically in an institutional context.

RELATED LITERATURE

Educational Philosophy

Educational philosophies are sets of principles that address the fundamental nature of education, its purpose, and its processes, which will significantly affect how a teacher will teach as well as how they will staff their room and even a relationship with their students. There have been a few recent studies that can help us better understand the different philosophical orientations that shape the practice in education (Garrison, 2020; Greengard, 2020; Hermosa et al., 2024). This section explains the main educational philosophies and learning theories that have shaped contemporary pedagogy.

Perennialism stresses the value of timeless knowledge and classical works and it calls for a curriculum focusing on sustaining ideas and cultural heritage ([2]). In this way, a design philosophy is about giving students an understanding of "the basics" — the concepts we designed for the long-term.

Another important educational theory is essentialism, which advocates for a common set of skills and knowledge that all students should learn (Yorulmaz, 2023). This enables a more focused development of pedagogical subjects such as reading and mathematics, in which both teachers and students are better prepared for real-world applications and practical problems ([5]).

Progressivism centers on student needs, prioritizing experiential learning and problem-solving (Webb et al., 2025). This philosophy fosters social development, critical thinking, and creativity by adapting to individual students' changing needs and interests ([3]). Progressivism contributes to a dynamic and responsive learning environment that encourages active student participation (Wu & Dong, 2024).

Reconstructionism views education as a means of addressing social issues and fostering a sense of social responsibility in students (Jiang & Tanaka, 2022). This philosophy aims to produce engaged and socially aware citizens by incorporating societal concerns into the educational process ([6]).

The information processing theory evaluates the cognitive processes involved in memory, learning, and problem-solving. Thus, this theoretical understanding contributes to the crafting of teaching-learning strategies appropriate to the cognitive processes (Salsabila et al., 2024).

Behaviorism, a psychology-focused theoretical approach, investigates behaviors instead of internal processes (Urrete, 2023). Learning, according to this view, is an external reaction to these environmental influences-therefore continuing to have an impact on instructional strategies that involve systematic reinforcement to cause a desired behavior ([2]).

Humanism encompasses the whole man, the uniqueness of man, self-expression, and personal development (Yorulmaz, 2023). The aim of this philosophy is to foster loving and well-adjusted personalities in a learning atmosphere that is safe and positive ([5]).

Both constructivism and cognitivism give emphasis on doing and experience as learning's fundamental concepts. Constructivism is action-oriented learning, and cognitivism celebrates the internal mental processes that underpin memory and problem-solving. In unison, the two theories prompt design of instruction that creates challenging and relevant tasks for students and is conducive therefore to deep learning ([3]).

The many schools of educational philosophy provide teachers with a rich array of tools to address the manifold needs of contemporary learners. Yet although each has its own particular strengths, recent studies indicate that a balanced approach-that brings together elements from various types of philosophy-may be most effective in meeting the diverse learning demands encountered by students today and in preparing them to meet 21st-century challenges (Taff, 2023; Education World, 2024).

Moving forward, educators and policymakers need to think about how to integrate these teaching philosophies adapt to new educational challenges such as technology's increasing role in society (World Economic Forum, 2024); global competencies that are required by everyone irrespective of their country or culture both during their lifetime and beyond. Future research may examine the effectiveness of hybrid techniques, drawing from different educational philosophies to make more comprehensive and flexible learning environments.

Teachers' Autonomy

Teacher autonomy, a multidimensional construct, refers to the professional independence of educators in decision-making in the realms of instructional practice, curriculum choices, professional development, and school policy (Mia, 2023). This section summarizes recent research from across the field that has analyzed current theories of teacher autonomy in relation to issues such as instructional autonomy, curriculum autonomy, the relationships between teachers and principals/administrators, professionalism and empowerment and policy frameworks.

Instructional Autonomy

Instructional autonomy simply means teachers be in control about what, how, and when they teach to student learn (Çolak & Altınkurt, 2024). A significant new finding shows the advantages the creativity and responsiveness of instructional autonomy due to new forms of development. Researcher Sparling (2025), identified that teachers granted greater autonomy in their instruction are more likely to try something new in their classroom and adjust their instruction to address the varied needs of students (Kleinkorres et al., 2023). Even so, the freedom to decide how, when, and even if to teach is frequently constricted by prescriptive external indicators (e.g., test score accountability, curriculum requirements) that institutional autonomy and thereby promote a tension between professional autonomy and institutional mission (Moreland University, 2025). These limitations may prevent teachers from using more student-centered methods and trying new approaches to pedagogy.

Curriculum Autonomy

Curriculum autonomy refers to the ability of teachers to adapt curriculum content to the local contexts and students' needs (OECD, 2024). Research also suggests that increased curriculum flexibilities increase teacher buy in and help improve student outcomes by giving teachers the ability to place learning materials in context (Varatharaj et al., 2021). The curriculum autonomy practiced by teachers would ideally place them in a much stronger position for innovative practices perfect for their unique students' circumstances ([19]). Inversely, this flexibility is compromised by the existence of a rigid national curriculum or an external mandate that forces teachers to prioritize the standardized curriculum over locality or creativity (Ali & Arsaythamby, 2019).

Principal/Administrator Relationships

Perceptions of autonomy are greatly influenced by the relationship between teachers and administrators (Teaching Channel, 2024). When administrators are supportive and include teachers in decision-making processes, it builds trust and collaboration, which enhances teacher autonomy (Marshik et al., 2025). Research indicates that principals who involve teachers in decision making in relation to classroom practices and curriculum contribute to a positive workplace climate that enhances development ([24]). Conversely, rigid bureaucratic education systems that stifle autonomy and responsiveness through top-down mandates can constrict teachers' independence and encourage innovative practices ([19]).

Professionalism and Empowerment

Strong correlation exists between teacher professionalization and empowerment by autonomy (Masson, 2025). Empowered teachers are more inclined to take leadership roles and participate in improving schools (Chartered College of Teaching, 2024). Choice given in pedagogical decisions fosters a sense of ownership and increases common control for the teacher, which positively correlates with job satisfaction and professional commitment (Ertürk, 2023). In addition, studies also show that teachers view themselves as independent and autonomous professionals, demonstrating increased motivation and dedication to their work ([24]).

Policy Frameworks

Educational policies set parameters for teachers and define the limits of teacher autonomy (Yorulmaz, 2023). Policies that allow for decentralized decision-making and greater freedom with curriculum have been linked to greater teacher engagement and well-being ([25]). Nonetheless, these systems of performance accountability limits teacher autonomy by placing a premium on standardized outcomes rather than on individualized ones ([27]). The struggle between policies and professional independence is, thus, at the heart of any genuine attempt to create teacher autonomy within the system.

Relationship between Instructors' Educational Philosophy and Curriculum Autonomies

The interaction between the educational philosophies of instructors and their curriculum autonomies has been studied recently, and it conveys openly the various dimensions of this issue at hand. It has been recently established that educational philosophies provide formative frameworks which mold the ways in which educators embrace teaching and learning process. According to the results of Alemdar and Aytaç (2022), progressive educational philosophy is adopted widely for teachers as well as higher levels of procedural autonomy and a higher level of autonomy in professional development. This reflects the progressivist focus on experiential learning and student-centered approaches, whereby professors emphasize interactive and collaborative learning experiences in the design of their curricula.

On the other hand, essentialist philosophies often support organized curricula that concentrate on core subjects, prioritizing teaching fundamental knowledge and skills. The philosophies of essentialism, on the other hand, do not only advocate for a structured curricula grounded around core subjects but also for the mastery of the foundational knowledge at its heart as well as the skills emerging from it. According to the OECD (2024) report on curriculum flexibility and autonomy, there is confusion because whether these different levels of autonomy are related or autonomous depends on public policy debates over flexibility at a

national level, thus its redefinition is very intricate. Moreover, there is the notion mentioned by Gawne (2023) that third-party curricula often serve to undermine the expertise of teachers through the requirement of adhering to rigid lesson plans that do not allow for adjustments based on the needs of the student population. An over-reliance on commercialized content can undermine teachers as instructional experts and reduce their authority in the classroom.

Curriculum autonomy has its merits alongside disadvantages as well. Research by Woo et al. (2023) presented highlights that teachers are significantly more likely than administrators to believe that students learning is negatively impacted by having limits on autonomy, suggesting that curriculum autonomy is a critical predictor of both teacher effective and teacher satisfaction. However, there remains some gaps in the literature looking into this further. There is a need for longitudinal studies to track how these relationships between educational philosophies and the degree to which the curriculum given greater autonomy develops over time and cross-cultural comparisons to see whether they vary between educational systems. Nor is there sufficient disaggregation, however, to ensure that more nuanced studies directly correlating the educational philosophies of the instructors with the outcome of the students are gathered to understand more clearly the effect that this relationship has on attainment.

Additionally, due to the constant evolution of educational technology, the literature lacks studies on how the philosophies of education can shape curriculum autonomy within tech-enabled learning contexts [22]. Finally, it would be helpful to explore how teachers can be best supported by professional development programs in aligning their philosophical approaches to education with curriculum autonomy-related practices. Filling these gaps would lead to a better understanding of the intricate relationship between teaching philosophies and curriculum autonomies held by educators, particularly for influencing educational policies and practices.

Synthesis

Educational philosophies are instrumental in determining how teaching takes place, the structure of the classroom, and the nature of student relationships. Some of these schools of thoughts like perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, reconstructionism, information processing theory, behaviorism, humanism, constructivism/cognitivism influences the practices of study and teaching. All these philosophies provide various ways to look at education and priorities that can be attached to learning and development.

Recent literature has paid much attention to teacher autonomy, both general and curriculum-specific. Bottom line user denoted general autonomy refers to the freedom that educators have in making decisions about curriculum design, instructional methods, and assessment practices. Curriculum autonomy deals with the teacher's autonomy in the three domains of curriculum design, implementation, and assessment. Both types of autonomies have been found to be associated with job satisfaction engagement in the profession, and the overall teaching effect.

There is a complex and dynamic relationship between educational philosophies of educators and their curriculum autonomy. Philosophical orientations vary widely and may result in differing degrees of wanted autonomy, and methods of curriculum development. After all, these are meant to be the benefits of the curriculum autonomy; however, some challenges still stand such as centralization school education policies and mandatory standardized testing that can inhibit teachers from being flexible. How the relationship changes over time, whether it is similar or different in various educational systems, and how it affects student outcomes in the different educational environments, e.g. whether the increase in proximity to the students leads to higher or lower outcomes, remain topics for future research.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to examine the relationship between instructors' educational philosophy tendencies and their curriculum autonomies to provide the faculty and the school's administrators with data about curriculum studies. The researchers sought to answer the following specific questions:

1. How may the profile of the instructors be described in terms of:

1.1 Age;

1.2 Sex;

1.3 Highest degree earned;

1.4 Years of teaching experience; and

1.5 Subject emphasis?

2. How may the instructors' teaching philosophy tendencies be described in terms of:

2.1 Perennialism;

2.2 Essentialism;

2.3 Progressivism;

2.4 Reconstructionism;

2.5 Information Processing;

2.6 Behaviorism;

2.7 Humanism; and

2.8 Constructivism/ Cognitivism?

3. How may the instructors' autonomy be described in terms of:

3.1 Instructional autonomy;

3.2 Curriculum autonomy;

3.3 Principal/Administrator Relationship;

3.4 Professionalism and Empowerment; and

3.5 Policy?

4. Is there a significant relationship between the instructors' teaching philosophy and their autonomy?

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive quantitative correlational research design to study the relationship between the tendencies of the instructor's educational philosophy and its relationship to instructor perceived general and curriculum autonomy.

Descriptive research seeks to accurately describe characteristics of a population or phenomenon without manipulation of a variable (Blainy, 2025). As a result, this approach is suitable for this study, which aims to describe the educational philosophies and perceptions of teacher autonomy without any intervention.

Quantitative research refers to collecting and scrutinizing numerical data to recognize patterns and relationships (Ormrod, 2024). Statistical treatment of the variables of interest - educational philosophy tendencies and perceived levels of autonomy - is possible by this method.

A correlational design explores how two or more variables are related in some way, but in this case, the researcher does not control for or manipulate any of the variables (Cuttler, 2024). This is appropriate for exploring the relationship between instructors' educational philosophies and their sense of perceived autonomy, as it allows for ties between constructs to be examined without suggesting causal linkages.

These descriptive, quantitative and significant correlation approaches will enable each of the research questions to be assessed comprehensively. Exploratory designs from descriptive methods give a broad overview of the mean, quantitative methods include for calculating numerical, summative methods to assess general trends, and correlational design is a technique to assess possible relationships between the variables of interest ([33]).

A correlational study was employed as the goal of the study is to determine how a variable characteristic could be affected by one or more other variables ([33]). This design allows researchers to investigate the strength and direction of relationships between educational philosophy tendencies and perceived autonomy levels among instructors.

Data Gathering Instrument

A printed questionnaire was used to collect data from respondents. Questionnaire was sent to the participants on 7th March, response was collected in a period of 5 days which closed on 12th March 2025. This time frame gave respondents plenty of time to answer the questionnaire thoroughly, and send it back to the researchers.

The questionnaire was designed with precise care to cover understandable and relevant data to the study objectives. This started with background on the research — what it was, why it was important, and how to fill out the form. This introduction was used to provide respondents with context of the study and prompt their engagement in the study.

The questionnaire was divided into three categories:

The first part, Part A, of the questionnaire was the instructor’s profile, demographic and professional information about the instructors. Summary item related to age, sex, years of teaching experience, highest educational attainment, and specialization were included. The data were critical to explore the demographics of respondents and to study whether there were any trends or patterns in their profiles.

The educational philosophy checklist in Part B of the questionnaire is intended to identify the educational philosophy tendencies of respondents. Respondents respond on a 5-point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree to their degree of agreement with statements representing different educational philosophies. The philosophies addressed constructs (C1) Perennialism, (C2) Essentialism, (C3) Progressivism, (C4) Reconstructionism/Critical Theory, (C5) Information Processing, (C6) Behaviorism, (C7) Humanism, and (C8) Cognitivism/Constructivism processes.

Perennialism (Pe) places the importance on the gaining of knowledge about the great ideas of Western culture, and an emphasis on the cultivation of the intellect through the direct instruction of core curricula. This philosophy is tested on questions 1, 10, 23, 29 and 31. Essentialism (Es) agrees with the delivery of fundamental knowledge and skills through organized and strict means, placing importance on intellectual and moral standards, and it can be tested through items 5, 7, 12, 16, and 17. Progressivism (Pr) centers on child-centered learning, emphasizing the integration of thinking, feeling, and doing in education, with a strong focus on problems and social values; assessed by questions 4, 24, 26, 34, and 36.

Reconstructionism/Critical Theory (Re) located in the space of transformative imagination, placing multiple perspectives at the center, and critical thinking and action at the point of focus is defined by the questions reconceptualizing the issues: 8, 11, 15, 25, and 40. Information Processing (IP) theory which is based on a metaphor of the mind as a computer and concerns how information is coded and processed and is measured in questions 6, 14, 22, 29, and 37. Behaviorism (Be) believes in the observable behavior produced by external stimuli is emphasized; reinforcement and behavioral objectives are key; evaluated through questions 20, 30,

33, 35, and 38. Humanism (Hu) focuses on human potential for development, are mainly effective, and cognitive dimensions affecting human and learning ability, assessed by questions number 3, 13, 18, 21, and 28. Lastly, Cognitivism/Constructivism (CC) perspective emphasizes the construction of knowledge based on personal experiences and social interactions, which was evaluated in questions 2, 9, 19, 27, and 32.

The Part C of the questionnaire is The Teacher Autonomy Scale which is a critical component of this study, designed to assess the level of autonomy experienced by College of Teacher Education Instructors across several key dimensions. This questionnaire is adopted from the study of Dawson (2021). These dimensions are based on the Five Dimensions of Teacher Autonomy Scale (FDTAS), which include constructs in (C9) instructional autonomy, (C10) curriculum autonomy, (C11) principal/administrator relationship, (C12) professionalism and empowerment, and (C13) policy.

The questionnaire consists of statements with a 5-point Likert scale, from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” that measures the teacher autonomy. The Instructional Autonomy is about what teachers get to decide in their classroom, including learning goals, activities, and methods (Pearson & Hall, 1993). Questions 1 through 7 of Part C center on this dimension, such as "I have the freedom to choose teaching methods" and "I can decide on how to sequence instruction."

Curriculum Autonomy (CA) is when teachers have the autonomy of what will get taught to the students, also, teachers decide which textbooks and activities will be used by students. The Part C assessed the CA through questions 8-12. It includes statements such as "I am able to choose what will be taught in my course", "I can choose the materials used in my course" and "I can alter the curriculum when the needs of students require it."

Principal/Administrator Relationship (PAR) refers to the support that teachers get from school administrators. Part C, Questions 13-16 ask about this aspect of collaboration, with statements like “My principal supports my teaching decisions” and “I collaborate with administrators on educational policies.”

Professionalism and Empowerment (PaE) includes teachers’ perceptions of their professional status and ability to influence school decisions. Part C, questions 17 to 21, examined professionalism and empowerment, including statements like “I feel respected by my colleagues,” and “I have opportunities for professional growth.”

Policy (Po) are the ways in which education policy dictates teachers' autonomy, including standardized testing; curriculum requirements. Part C, questions 22 to 26, examined autonomy in relation to policy, with statements such as “I feel constrained by educational policies” and “Policies enable me to innovate in teaching.”

The questionnaire structure made it an all-encompassing facet to address the research objectives. It also sketches out the tool itself into separate sections making the questionnaire structured and supplying a sensible flow of questions, enabling the subjects to return helpful and substantial solutions associated with the each a part of the study.

The psychometric properties of validity and reliability for the Teacher Autonomy and Educational Philosophy Survey are strong, Factor analyses-based support construct validity and show which of the relevant models of autonomy and educational philosophy the questioned complies with. For instance, the Teacher Autonomy Scale with similar content exhibited structural invariance across exploratory and confirmatory analyses (Kara & Bozkurt, 2022). Content validity of the instruments is assured by expert reviews and ensuring that items align with important constructs, such as procedural autonomy and philosophical alignment (Basantes-Andrade et al., 2023; Oluwatayo, 2012).

Population

The research was conducted at ELJ Memorial College in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija during the second semester of the academic year 2024-2025. The study focused on the 19 instructors employed under the College of

Teacher Education in this provincial institution from the total population of 21 after two of the instructors did not participate in the study.

A census technique was employed, examining every member of the target population. This approach aligns with the definition of a census as a complete enumeration or study of every unit, everyone, or everything in a population (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2023). For this particular research, the census method actually fits this research with such a small population size that the entire faculty members of College of Teacher Education could be accurately covered. There are many benefits of using a census for this study. It provides intensive and in-depth information covering many facets of the research problem, as data are obtained from each instructor of the College of Teacher Education as the population. This method also yields more accurate and reliable conclusions since everyone is taken into account (UNESCO, 2024).

Census can also catch everything accurate, although this method takes more time and costs more than sampling methods for larger samples or populations. Considering the number of respondents (19 instructors), the census approach is possible in this case and would provide a complete picture of the population under study.

Since the researchers are investigating the entire population, there will be no sampling error and this would provide a better exploration of educational philosophies and perceived autonomy with all faculty members of the College of Teacher Education at ELJ Memorial College.

Data Analysis

Based on the statement of the problem and nature of research questions, following statistical tools were used:

Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentage distribution were used to summarize the profiles of the respondents (age, sex, highest degree earned, teaching experiences, and subject emphasis).

Tendencies on different philosophical orientations used to analyze the tendencies of philosophical orientations were analyzed using mean and grand mean as descriptive statistics for the instructors' teaching philosophy tendencies. To interpret the result the table below will be used:

Table I. Rating Scale for Teaching Philosophy Tendencies

Scale	Verbal Description
1.0-1.8	Strong Opposition
1.9-2.6	Limited Alignment
2.7-3.4	Moderate Alignment
3.5-4.2	Strong Alignment
4.3-5.0	Full Commitment

For describing the instructors' autonomy, the mean and grand mean were used to analyze the general and curriculum autonomy levels. To verbally describe the instructors' autonomy, the table below were used:

Table II. Rating Scale for Instructors' Autonomy

Scale	Verbal Description
1.0-1.8	Highly Restricted

1.9-2.6	Limited Autonomy
2.7-3.4	Moderate Autonomy
3.5-4.2	Significant Autonomy
4.3-5.0	Full Autonomy

For examining the relationship between instructors' teaching philosophy and their level of perceived autonomy, statistical tool for correlation was used for assessing the relationship between variables, the teaching philosophy scores and autonomy scores (2). This test was used to determine both the strength and direction of the relationship.

To describe the strength of the relationship, the verbal descriptions (Akoglu, 2018) below will be used:

Table III. Verbal Descriptions on the strength of the relationship between Variables

Spearman's ρ Value	Strength of Relationship
0.00−0.19	Very Weak
0.20−0.39	Weak
0.40−0.59	Moderate
0.60−0.79	Strong
0.80−1.00	Very Strong

Ethical Considerations

Ethics are essential to preserving the integrity and credibility of this article. To achieve this, the researchers first obtained informed consent from the 19 faculties who participate in this research. That includes explaining the purpose of the study, what will happen during it and potential implications, as well as letting participants know their involvement is voluntary and they can withdraw at any time with no penalty. In addition, participants received instruction about the use and protection of their data (Resnik, 2020). The integrity of small sample size is also safeguarded by confidentiality and anonymity. The data was anonymized through coding systems of data, and all downloadable data was kept in a secure location with results reported in aggregate to deter identification of individual responses (Saunders et al., 2015).

Fair treatment and non-discrimination were equally important. The researchers ensured that all eligible faculty members have an equal opportunity to participate, without discrimination based on age, gender, race, or other factors. Any benefits or burdens resulting from the research should were distributed fairly among participants ([43]). The researchers evaluated and minimized potential harms toward and risks to participants and ensured that the study benefits outweigh any adverse impacts, so as to maximize benefits. Their findings were intended to contribute positively to the institution and the entire educational community.

Transparency and integrity are therefore major goals of the research process. During data collection, analysis, and reporting of findings, the researchers were transparent about conflicts of interest. Ethical principles stated by American Psychological Association or APA (2020) mandated the articulation of research methods and limitations and also the risks involved. Finally, because there is the potential for power asymmetries between researchers and participants, especially where researchers may be colleagues or superiors, so precautions were put in place to prevent coercion. They stressed that whether or not someone participates won't impact professional relationships or evaluations. Anonymous feedback collection options helped mitigate these concerns ([43]).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire Validation

Internal Consistency

Based on the reliability test by Cronbach's α, the constructs have internal consistency values between 0.70 and 0.82, which create an acceptable to good reliability. Reliability was good for constructs such as C2 (Es; α = 0.80), C6 (Be; α = 0.82), and C12 (PaE; α = 0.80), indicating that items in these constructs are a good fit to the underlying constructs they are supposed to measure. Presumably this is aided by clarity of the items and coherence around the theory. C1 (Pe; α = 0.78), C10 (CA; α = 0.75), C11 (PAR; α = 0.73), and the rest of constructs fall within the acceptable range (α = 0.70–0.79). Though these values are acceptable, the reliability of the items was moderate, and there may still be room for slight improvement in the clarity and definition of items within the construct.

Table IV. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for Each Construct

Construct	Topic	Alpha	Description
C1	Perennialism (Pe)	0.78	Acceptable Reliability
C2	Essentialism (Es)	0.80	Good Reliability
C3	Progressivism (Pr)	0.72	Acceptable Reliability
C4	Reconstructionism (Re)	0.70	Acceptable Reliability
C5	Information Processing (IP)	0.71	Acceptable Reliability
C6	Behaviorism (Be)	0.82	Good Reliability
C7	Humanism (Hu)	0.73	Acceptable Reliability
C8	Constructivism/Cognitivism (CC)	0.71	Acceptable Reliability
C9	Instructional Autonomy (IA)	0.70	Acceptable Reliability
C10	Curriculum Autonomy (CA)	0.75	Acceptable Reliability
C11	Principal/Administrator Relationships (PAR)	0.73	Acceptable Reliability
C12	Professionalism and Empowerment (P&E)	0.80	Good Reliability
C13	Policy (Po)	0.70	Acceptable Reliability

It should be noted that C4 (Re; α = 0.70), C9 (IA; α = 0.70) and C13 (Po; α = 0.70) are on the lower side of the acceptable range, indicating that while they fall within a minimum standard for reliability, further fine-tuning may be needed to ensure stronger consistency for future usability. Such lower values are indicative of the presence of unclear items, a small number of items included for that construct and variability based on circumstances of the participant or their interpretation of the items.

Profile of the Respondents

Table V. Percentage distribution on respondents' age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
22	2	10.50%

23	4	21.10%
24	3	15.80%
25	5	26.30%
26	1	5.26%
29	1	5.26%
32	1	5.26%
33	1	5.26%
34	1	5.26%
TOTAL	19	100%

Table V shows the percentage distribution of the respondents based on their age. The age distribution of the sample reveals that the respondents are predominantly young adults, with ages ranging from 22 to 34 years old. The most frequent age is 25 years, representing 26.3% of the sample, followed by 23 years (21.1%) and 24 years (15.8%). Together, individuals aged 22 to 25 comprise the majority of the sample (73.7%), indicating a strong concentration of younger participants. In contrast, older age groups (26 and above) are underrepresented, with each age from 29 to 34 accounting for only one respondent (5.26% each).

This uneven distribution suggests that the sample skews heavily toward younger individuals, with limited representation from older age groups. The gap in ages between 26 and 29, as well as between 29 and 32, further highlights this imbalance. The median age likely falls within the range of 24 to 25 years, reinforcing the youthful nature of the sample.

The predominance of younger respondents may influence the study's findings, particularly if age is a factor related to the variables under investigation (e.g., teaching philosophies or autonomy). The perspectives and experiences of younger individuals might differ significantly from those of older participants, potentially limiting the generalizability of the results to broader populations. Future studies might consider recruiting a more balanced age distribution to ensure diverse representation and more comprehensive insights (Rahmani, 2022).

Table VI. Percentage distribution on respondents' sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	8	42.10%
Female	11	57.90%
TOTAL	19	100%

Table VI illustrates the percentage distribution of the respondents as per their sex. Regarding sex distribution of the sample, there was a slight predominance of respondents who were female (n = 11; 57.9%), as compared to male (n = 8; 41.1%). While both males and females are present, more females than males are present, introducing the possibility of bias in the sample. If gender is pertinent to this focus on the variables selected for this work, for instance regarding teaching philosophies or autonomy, this disparity in representation in this population could affect the results of the study.

Though not perfectly even, the distribution affords reasonable gender diversity in the sample. Males and females can be compared though the slightly higher number of female respondents cautions the interpretation of results. Subsequent studies could target an equal gender distribution, to ensure balanced representation and reduce possible biases induced by potential differences between the genders.

Overall, the sample represents both gender, with a higher percentage of females possibly following trends of higher universities ratifying, where females predominately practices, like education sectors (Correa et al., 2025). This should be noted, however, if the findings are to be generalized to other populations or settings.

Table VII shows the respondents' highest degree earned. The education level of the sample indicated a strong predominance of the respondents with bachelor degrees, as they comprised 68.4% of the overall participants (13 people). Master's degree: 31.6% (6 people). Although all respondents have completed higher education, most have not pursued postgraduate studies, as this distribution suggests. This also suggests that the sample may mainly consist of early-career professionals or those who have just entered into their profession as indicated by number of people having bachelor's project.

Table VII. Percentage distribution on respondents' highest degree obtained

Highest Degree Obtained	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelors	13	68.40%
Masters	6	31.60%
TOTAL	19	100%

While the master's degree-holders are in the minority, they contribute to the diversity of educational attainment of the participants in the decisional balance. Such an educational composition may affect the results of the study, especially regarding parts of professional development, teaching conceptions, or autonomy perceptions ([23]).

Table VIII. Percentage distribution on respondents' years of experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
1	3	14.29%
2	8	38.10%
5	1	4.76%
6	1	4.76%
7	2	9.52%
8	1	4.76%
11	2	9.52%
18	1	4.76%
25	1	4.76%
30	1	4.76%
TOTAL	19	100%

Table VIII shows the percentage distribution of the respondents based on their years of teaching experience. The distribution of years of experience among the respondents reveals a diverse range, spanning from 1 to 30 years, with a notable concentration in the early career stages. The majority of participants (52.39%) have 2 years or less of experience, with 38.10% having exactly 2 years and 14.29% having just 1 year. This suggests a sample predominantly composed of early-career professionals. There is a gradual decrease in representation as years of experience increase, with only single individuals representing the higher experience brackets of 18, 25, and 30 years (4.76% each). The middle range of experience (5-11 years) shows some representation, with small percentages distributed across these years. This distribution indicates a sample that skews heavily towards less experienced professionals, which could significantly influence the study's findings, particularly in areas related to teaching philosophies, autonomy, or professional development. The perspectives of those with extensive experience (20+ years) are minimally represented, which may limit insights into long-term career development and changes in professional attitudes over time. This experience distribution was carefully considered when interpreting results, as the predominance of early-career perspectives may not fully capture the breadth of experiences and viewpoints across the entire career spectrum in the field.

Table IX shows the percentage distribution of the respondents based on their subject emphasis. The sample's highest academic degree distribution reveals a diverse range of disciplines, with English emerging as the most prevalent field of study at 31.60% (6 respondents). The second most prevalent discipline in the sample is Science, at 21.10% (4 respondents), and Mathematics makes up 15.80% (3 respondents) of the sample. Filipino studies account for 10.50% (2 respondents). There is same proportion for the ICT, Physical Education, Professional Education, and Social Studies represent the share of this sample with 5.26% (1 respondent) respectively.

Table IX. Percentage distribution on respondents' subject emphasis

Subject Emphasis	Frequency	Percentage
English	6	31.60%
Filipino	2	10.50%
ICT	1	5.26%
Mathematics	3	15.80%
Physical Education	1	5.26%
Professional Education	1	5.26%
Science	4	21.10%
Social Studies	1	5.26%
TOTAL	19	100%

The diverse spread reflects the broad array of disciplines represented and could stimulate multi-disciplinary insights of the study. It is possible that English and Science degrees are more prevalent in the context of this educational analysis, leading to their differences in rank. Having many more Degrees in English and Science could suggest that these subjects are more common in the field of education. An academic inclination, a mixture of humanities (English, Filipino, Social Studies) and STEM fields (Science, Mathematics, ICT) are included. Nonetheless, limited representation from some disciplines (i.e., Physical Education, Professional Education) may lead to an underrepresentation of these perspectives in the overall findings.

Having a mix of academic backgrounds could impact the results of the studies and/or how they relate to approaches to teaching / curriculum / pedagogy in a specific subject. It also mirrors the demographics of the broader educational workforce of the institution under study.

Description of the Respondents' Teaching Philosophy

The instructors teaching philosophy tendencies have been described in the Table X. The data shows a diversity of teaching philosophies among respondents, with a preference for more modern, student-centered approaches. Displaced: The new philosophy is progressivism and indicates a full go (M = 4.4). This is consistent with the focus of progressivism on active learning, problem-solving, and experiential education. The second highest: Constructivism/Cognitivism (M = 4.3) and Information Processing (M = 4.3), with full commitment. It is these pedagogical methodologies that highlight cognitive development, knowledge construction, and how to process information.

Humanism, Reconstructionism, and Behaviorism had a relatively high alignment score (M = 4.0) indicating that educators balance the three major arenas of reforms, potential, and modification in their teaching practice. Perennialism (M = 3.4) aligns well with data — not only is there some focus on enduring truths and classical knowledge, which have not changed at all, providing a certain consistency but also streamlining data which leads to the best ways of representing ideas. At the opposite extreme, essentialism is a distant low (M = 3.2) but with moderate alignment, implying less focus on a core curriculum of essential knowledge.

Table X. Description of the Instructors' Teaching Philosophy Tendencies

Teaching Philosophy	Average (M)	Verbal Description
Perennialism (Pe)	3.4	Strong Alignment
Essentialism (Es)	3.2	Moderate Alignment
Progressivism (Pr)	4.4	Full Commitment
Reconstructionism (Re)	4.0	Strong Alignment
Information Processing (IP)	4.3	Full Commitment
Behaviorism (Be)	4.0	Strong Alignment
Humanism (Hu)	4.0	Full Commitment
Constructivism/Cognitivism (CC)	4.3	Full Commitment

This distribution indicates a shift away from traditional essentialism towards a progressive, constructivist, and humanistic orientation of educational approaches. The high ratings for progressivism and constructivism imply that teachers place a high value on student-centered learning, critical thought and active participation in the educational experience (11).

Description of the Respondents' Autonomy

Table XI. Description of the Instructors' Autonomy

Autonomy	Average (M)	Verbal Description
Instructional (IA)	3.3	Moderate Autonomy

Curriculum (CA)	3.2	Moderate Autonomy
Principal/Administrator Relationship (PAR)	4.1	Significant Autonomy
Professionalism and Empowerment (P&E)	3.4	Significant Autonomy
Policy (Po)	3.0	Moderate Autonomy

Table XI reflects the differences in the levels of autonomy perceived by instructors across five dimensions. Results of central tendencies shown in Table XI suggests moderate levels of Instruction Autonomy (IA) at M = 3.3 and Curriculum Autonomy (CA) at M = 3.2. The Principal/ Administrator Relationship (PAR) has the highest score of M = 4.1, indicating significant autonomy, followed by Professionalism and Empowerment (P&E) at M = 3.4 which also indicates significant autonomy. Policy Autonomy (Po) has the lowest average, at M = 3.0 (modest autonomy). These results suggest staff feel the most sense of autonomy in areas that are supported by administrators and professionalism and empowerment and feel more limited in curriculum design and policy decisions.

And the reason this is so important is because of the increased support that they felt from the administrative side of things. The high PAR score is consistent with previous research findings highlighting that supportive administrators provide important resources and mentorship opportunities, directly contributing to a stronger sense of empowerment and job satisfaction (Chen, 2024; Şentürken, 2023). Teachers who feel they have great administrative support are more likely to look for innovative ways to carry out teaching practices better ([48]). In this vein, the high level of autonomy represented by PaE (Professionalism and Empowerment) implies that teachers believe they possess expertise and know best regarding their own professional development and classroom practice. Teachers' autonomy enhances creative self-efficacy and innovative behaviors ([7],[49]), which are in line with findings on adapting practices through skills and experiences of creativity to various dynamics, that are typical of classrooms.

In contrast, the low scores in IA, CA, and Po highlight the areas in which teachers struggled to remain in the box. If the instructional and curriculum autonomy is only strict to a certain degree (moderate) it may find its roots in strict institutional or national guidelines, where teachers' room for maneuver is constrained since they are unable to tailor the content or the methods used to adapt to the needs of students (Paulsrud & Wermke, 2019). The worst score relates to autonomy for policy and indicates the systemic issues faced by teachers where they have low influence over wider education policy. Such non-involvement may affect their capacity to accurately address the realities of the classroom or to advocate to bring about necessary changes in the educational systems ([49]).

These findings are vital for education systems. High PAR aids in reinforcing administrative support structure. Henceforth, school administration should formulate relevant mentoring programs, together with collaborative decision-making processes, to ensure that teachers feel acknowledged and empowered ([48],[49]). Second, the moderate scores regarding curriculum-related autonomy indicate that more flexibility in curriculum design is needed. Involving teachers more actively in the development of curriculum will not only make it more relevant and practical, but it will also foster a sense of ownership over the curriculum among teachers ([49]). Third, addressing low policy-related autonomy needs a structural change to policy and practice so that teacher voices are included in making policy decisions at school and national level. Inspiring educators to join the table will help close the divide between policy decisions and the realities of classrooms ([48]). Lastly, Professionalism and Empowerment must remain high in order to preserve teacher motivation and innovation. This kind of collaborative effort encourages professional development and makes the best use of a school's limited resources, so schools should continue to fund teacher-driven initiatives.

Focusing on areas of limited autonomy and at the same time leveraging current strengths like administrative support and professionalism and empowerment enables education systems to create more supportive environments that will allow teachers to innovate and adapt to meet diverse student needs.

Correlation between Instructors' Teaching Philosophy and Autonomy

Normality

Table XII reports the normality of the variables of teaching philosophy, and autonomy were tested with both Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro-Wilk (S-W) tests. Since the data is the entire population (N = 19), these tests characterize the shape of the distribution rather than making inferences about a larger group. The S-W test, which is more appropriate for smaller datasets, show that most of the variables do not depart significantly from normality (p >. 05), with the exception of Progressivism (Prog) which deviates significantly (W(19) = . 898, p = . 044). This implies that Prog is not normally distributed.

Table XII. Test of Normality

Variable	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Stat	df	Sig	Stat	df	Sig
Pe	.093	19	.200	.978	19	.917
Es	.186	19	.083	.939	19	.250
Prog	.250	19	.003	.898	19	.044
Re	.164	19	.194	.947	19	.359
IP	.203	19	.039	.913	19	.086
Be	.146	19	.200	.945	19	.325
Hu	.170	19	.152	.936	19	.224
CC	.213	19	.024	.935	19	.217
IA	.106	19	.200	.979	19	.932
CA	.187	19	.078	.920	19	.114
PAR	.214	19	.022	.911	19	.078
PAE	.123	19	.200	.967	19	.724
Po	.102	19	.200	.955	19	.486

The K-S test also identifies non-normality in Prog (D(19) = .250, p = .003), as well as in Information Processing (IP; D(19) = .203, p = .039), Constructivism/Cognitivism (CC; D(19) = .213, p = .024), and Principal/Admin Support (PAS; D(19) = .214, p = .022). However, the S-W test results are usually more interpretable for a small population size (Datatab, 2025).

The results imply that normality seems to hold for most of the variables. Yet, for Prog and probably IP, CC, and PAR, their non-normal distributions must be considered when choosing statistical methods. Non-parametric methods may be more appropriate for these variables. Additionally, visual inspections of histograms were analyzed to complement these findings and provide a clearer understanding of the data distribution (Real Statistics, 2024). These results suggest that parametric tests can be used for most variables, but non-parametric alternatives should be considered for Prog.

Teaching philosophies and autonomy variables histograms are given in Figure 2. After checking, some variables show approximate normality while some do not and might get affected in statistical analysis.

Data sets for the teaching philosophies returned Perennialism (Pe) as relatively symmetric, peaking near the mean (M = 3.43), indicating approximate normality. For Reconstructionism (Re), it can also see a symmetrical distribution around the mean (M = 3.98), suggesting normality. Essentialism (Es), on the other hand, shows minor positive skewness, with an abundance of values congregating more on the lower end (M = 3.21), indicating some non-normality. Found along the scale where Progressivism (Prog) and Constructivism/Cognitivism (CC) share negative skewness values clustered around the upper end (M = 4.40 and M = 4.29, respectively). The distributions show departures from normality. Instead, IP is leptokurtic with a peak sharply focused around mean (M = 4.25) and has a relatively thin trailing off. Behaviorism (Be) has a bimodal distribution, with big peaks at different levels, which is a sign of non-normal.

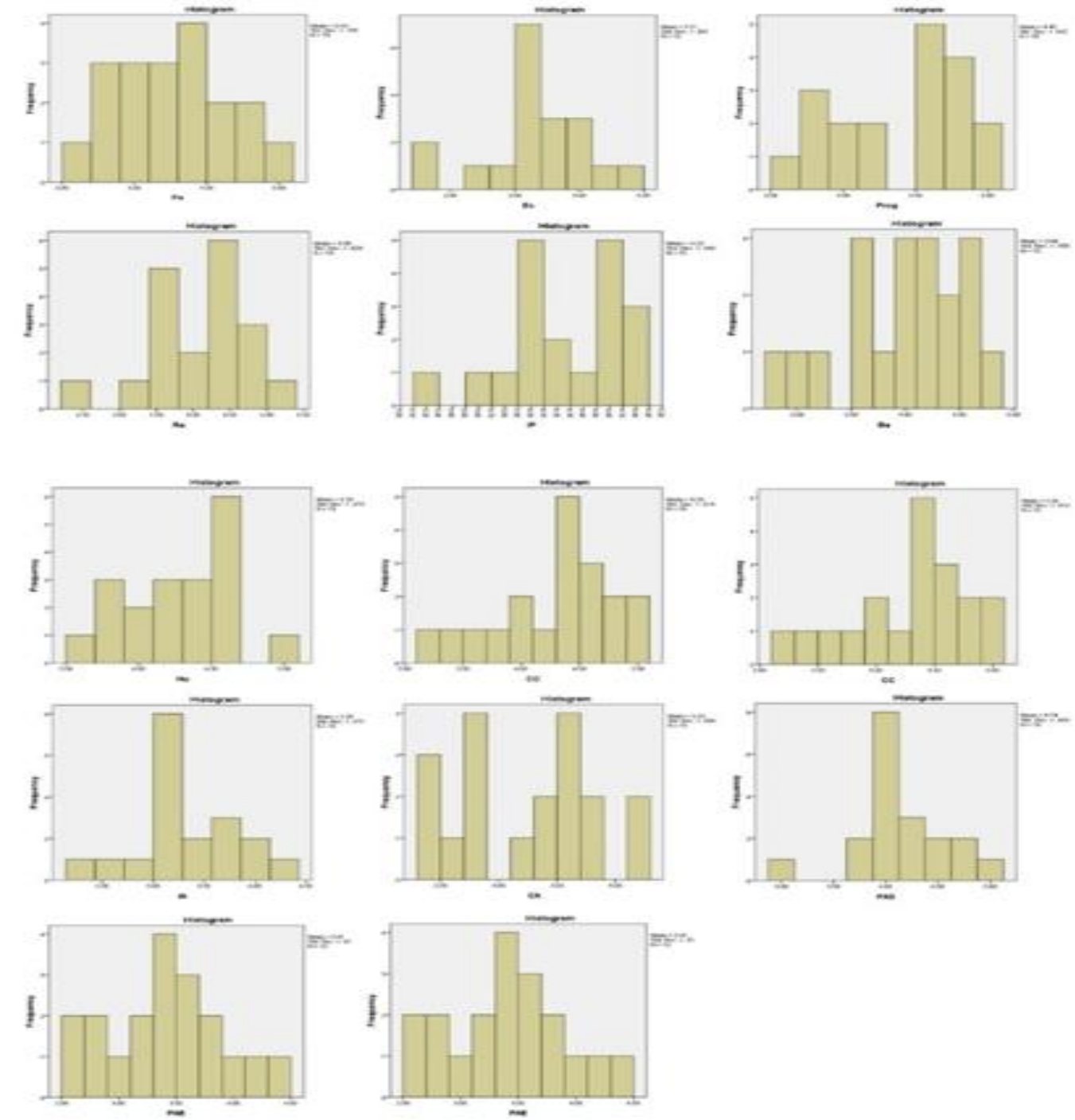

Figure 2. Histogram of Teaching Philosophy and Autonomy

Instructional Autonomy (IA) for autonomy variables shows an approximate normality, as the distribution is symmetrical around its mean (M = 3.30). Similarly, Professional Autonomy and Empowerment (PAE) also does appear normally distributed with a bell-shaped curve around its mean (M = 3.41). On the other hand, Curriculum Autonomy (CA) is bimodal, suggesting non-normality. Principal/Administration Relationship (PAR) has a sharp peak at its mean (M = 4.14), which indicates minimum variability and slight deviation from normality.

In conclusion, various factors exhibit almost normal distribution which could be utilized for parametric applied analysis, while others that are skewed and/or bimodal may indicate the need for non-parametric techniques to be employed for the most precise outputs. None of the statistical tests like Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov are perfect — visual inspection is helpful (and often necessary) to give a better sense of the similarity in data distributions.

Histograms are provided to visualize the distributions for teaching philosophies and, further, the autonomy variables. Some of the variables seem to be approximately normal while others demonstrate kind of deviation that will affect the statistical analysis.

The Perennialism (Pe) teaching philosophies peaked around the mean (M = 3.43) and generally were symmetrical, approximating normality. Likewise, Reconstructionism (Re) exhibits symmetry around the average (M = 3.98), which suggests normality. In contrast, Essentialism (Es) shows weak positive skew, with a greater proportion of cases concentrated towards the lower end (M = 3.21), indicating potential non-normality. They both show negative skewness (values concentrated in the high end (M = 4.40 and M = 4.29, respectively). These plots show departures from normal distributions. But Information Processing (IP) has been nicely peaked around its mean (M = 4.25), with relatively little spread around it. Behaviorism (Be) has a bimodal distribution with peaks at two spots which suggests it is non-normal.

Instructional Autonomy (IA), M = 3.30, shows approximate normality with a relatively symmetrical distribution around the mean for the autonomy variables. PAE also looks normally distributed in bell curve centered around its mean (M= 3.41). On the other hand, the behavior of Curriculum Autonomy (CA) follows a bimodal pattern suggesting non-normality. Principal/Administration Support (PAS); we can notice that it has a high peak around its mean (M = 4.14) with very little variability (leaving the data quite normally distributed).

Even though some variables seem approximately normal for the purposes of parametric analysis, others display skewness or bimodal distribution which is best handled using non-parametric methods. Hence visually inspecting the distributions is complementary to the statistical tests such as Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov, because it cannot provide the difference between distributions by just the statistical tests.

Table XIII. Spearman's Rank Correlation matrix between variables

Teaching Philosophy		Instructional Autonomy (IA)	Description	Curriculum Autonomy (CA)	Description	Principal/ Administrator Relationship (PAR)	Description	Professionalism and Empowerment	Description	Policy	Description
Perennialism (Pe)	ρ	0.31	Weak positive	-0.12	Very weak positive	0.53	Moderate positive	0.53	Moderate positive	0.44	Moderate positive
	Sig	0.19	Not significant	0.61	Not significant	0.02	Significant correlation	0.02	Significant correlation	0.06	Not significant
Essentialism (Es)	ρ	0.33	Weak	0.09	Very weak	0.44	Moderate	0.72	Strong	0.59	Moderate
	Sig	0.17	Not significant	0.70	Not significant	0.06	Not significant	0.001	Significant correlation	0.01	Significant correlation
Progressivism (Pr)	ρ	0.39	Weak	0.18	Very weak	0.46	Moderate	0.32	Weak	0.29	Weak

	Sig	0.10	Not significant	0.05	Significant correlation	0.05	Significant correlation	0.18	Not significant	0.23	Not significant
Reconstructionism (Re)	ρ	0.48	Moderate	0.03	Very weak	0.33	Weak	0.10	Very weak	0.12	Very weak
	Sig	0.04	Significant correlation	0.90	Not significant	0.17	Not significant	0.69	Not significant	0.64	Not significant
Information Processing (IP)	ρ	0.48	Moderate	0.12	Very weak	0.44	Moderate	0.32	Weak	0.26	Weak
	Sig	0.04	Significant correlation	0.06	Not significant	0.06	Not significant	0.19	Not significant	0.28	Not significant
Behaviorism (Be)	ρ	0.36	Weak	0.05	Very weak	0.47	Moderate	0.26	Weak	0.32	Weak
	Sig	0.13	Not significant	0.84	Not significant	0.04	Significant correlation	0.28	Not significant	0.18	Not significant
Humanism (Hu)	ρ	0.50	Moderate	0.34	Weak	0.36	Weak	0.12	Very weak	0.04	Very weak
	Sig	0.03	Significant correlation	0.16	Not significant	0.13	Not significant	0.61	Not significant	0.87	Significant correlation
Constructivism/ Cognitivism (CC)	ρ	0.36	Weak	0.34	Weak	0.35	Weak	0.29	Weak	0.18	Very weak
	Sig	0.16	Not significant	0.16	Not significant	0.14	Not significant	0.22	Not significant	0.46	Not significant

N=19 for all of the above variables

Table XIII shows the result of the Spearman's rank correlation. The Spearman's rank correlation analysis reveals varying relationships between teaching philosophies and dimensions of teacher autonomy. Perennialism (Pe) shows weak to moderate positive correlations with autonomy variables, though only Principal/Administrator Relationship (PAR) ($\rho = .53$, $p = .02$) and Professionalism and Empowerment (PaE) ($\rho = .53$, $p = .02$) are statistically significant. It indicates that teachers with perennialist orientations lean towards administrative support and professionalism and empowerment that complement traditional education value (Web et al., 2025).

Essentialism (Es) shows the largest correlation with Professionalism and Empowerment (PaE) ($\rho = .72$, $p = .001$), reflecting a strong monotonic association. This indicates that essentialist teachers connect professional freedom to systematic, standardized procedures (Technology Networks, 2024). Professionalism and Empowerment (PaE) shows only moderate correlations with Progressivism (Pr) ($\rho = .46$, $p = .05$) and Curriculum Autonomy ($\rho = .18$, $p = .05$), emphasizing progressive teachers' dependence on institutional support and curricular openness.

Reconstructionism (Re) and Information Processing (IP) have moderate correlation with Instructional Autonomy ($\rho = .48$, $p = .04$), suggesting that these philosophies lead to decision-making at the level of classrooms. On the other hand, Humanism (Hu) and Constructivism/Cognitivism (CC) have predominantly weak or non-significant correlations with the respective variables (Simplilearn, 2024), indicating that these approaches may not align intuitively with the autonomy dimensions for this population.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The respondents' profile shows a relatively young and diverse faculty at the College of Teacher Education at Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College. Most are in their early to mid-twenties, and a few more of these instructors are female. Most have bachelor's degrees, and a smaller portion master's degree. Only the Teacher Experience is extremely biased towards early-career professionals with over 50% of teaching less than 2 years. Your instruction specialization is diverse but the most common are English followed by Science, Mathematics and Filipino. Such a profile indicates that the faculty are relatively pre-occupied with other tasks during their formative years and will be approaching teaching rather differently. This might mean that the faculty is quite young and diverse, which would influence their philosophies of teaching and outlook on the autonomy, thus leading to some innovative and adaptable practices.

Findings showed that based on the teaching philosophy of the instructors at the College of Teacher Education of Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College, it is evident that there is diversity in the philosophy of teaching towards modern philosophy, which is rooted in the progressive and idealism philosophies. Progressivism became the leading philosophy, implying complete dedication to active learning, problem-based learning, and experiential education. Following Constructivism/Cognitivism and Information Processing, a strong commitment was shown, both demonstrating an emphasis on learning through constructing knowledge, cognitive development, and the information-processing models by which students are said to process and retain information. Humanism, Reconstructionism, and Behaviorism all posted very similar scores in terms of alignment, indicating that there may be a balancing act in terms of considering both individual potential and social reform as well as behavioral modification in any given approach to teaching one might be using. Your perennialism appointments showed alignment and emphasis on eternal truths and classical knowledge, while the essentialism weighted the lowest, highlighting less of a focus on a common core of essential knowledge. This distribution indicates a tendency in education toward progressive, constructivist and humanistic approaches and a conscious shift away from traditional essentialism. You have scores on progressivism and constructivism that are perceived as high do tell that you have been perusing about it as you have put students at the focal point of learning and have encouraged critical thinking and have held students regarding the matter of their learning.

Analysis of the data found moderate levels of general autonomy and curriculum autonomy in several dimensions of autonomy at Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College's College of Teacher Education. The Teachers have reported a moderate freedom in the decisions related to classroom instruction, which include the learning goals, activities, and methods. In terms of curriculum-related decisions, a moderate level of autonomy was similarly present, for instance around material selection and amending the curriculum to cater for student needs. Moderate to strong staff relations: Principals were generally supportive of teaching decisions and worked together with educators on educational policies. This finding aligns with the finding of moderate levels of perceived professional status and sense of agency to influence school decisions. Educational policies were found to moderately affect instructors' decision-making autonomy, indicating constraint, as well as providing opportunities to innovate. Although these results suggest that instructors enjoy an appropriate level of independence in disparate facets of their role, there seems to be space for improvement, especially in terms of curriculum design and policy impact. This indicates opportunities for both professional development and institution-level support in order to continue empowering instructors about their educational practices.

The Spearman's rank correlation analysis showed a four-fold structural interrelationship of teaching philosophies and dimensions of teacher autonomy of Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College, College of Teacher Education instructors. The researchers observed weak to moderate positive correlations between autonomy variables and perennialism, with particularly interesting relationships concerning administrative support and professionalism and empowerment. Essentialism showed the strongest association with professionalism and empowerment, indicating a strong link of this philosophy with teachers' sense of professional autonomy. Progressivism was expected to correlate moderately with administrative support and curriculum autonomy; Reconstructionism and Information Processing were expected to correlate moderately with instructional autonomy. Humanism and Constructivism/Cognitivism actually had weak or non-significant correlations with autonomy dimensions in most cases. These results imply that distinct philosophical orientations shape how teachers perceive and enact their freedom in diverse elements of their occupations. This highlights the importance of customized professional development opportunities and administrative help that can cater to the various teaching philosophies that exist in the classroom and among faculty members.

Conclusion

The results of this research indicate a definite faculty preference towards progressive and constructivist teaching philosophies which focus more on active learning, problem-solving, and experiential education ([53]). While such orientations are consistent with current education priorities, they also reveal the potential for sending these practices of integrating technology into instruction into overdrive ([22]). Although the instructors reported moderate levels of autonomy related to instruction and curriculum, faculty noted a lack of influence over policy-related decisions and systemic barriers that restrict their professional autonomy ([2],[28],[23]).

These findings imply the potential value of customized professional development initiatives centered around experiential learning practices and interdepartmental communication, which could position faculty to better connect their philosophical underpinnings with functional classroom freedom (Voukelatou, 2019). And there is scope for revising institutional policies to allow greater flexibility in curriculum design, whilst maintaining academic standards, providing a more supportive environment for innovative teaching practices.

Although these results provide some valuable insights regarding the relationship between teaching philosophies and autonomy, they must be viewed in light of the limitations of this study, including small sample size and cross-sectional design. Longitudinal studies that track changes in the teaching philosophy of educators and the perception of functionality over time in a variety of educational environments could enrich future research base ([7],[12],[20]).

Illuminating these dynamics will contribute to ongoing discourse regarding the need to empower educators through effective professional development, as well as institutional support, to ultimately lead to better outcomes for students.

Recommendations

As per the results of this study, the following recommendations can be proposed in order to foster educational experience and instructor professionalism in Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College.

This suggests that the college firstly ought to consider tailored professional development offerings aligning to the disparate teaching philosophies delineated among the constituents ([13]). So, trainings/workshops should be oriented towards progressive and constructivist approaches and that should lead to innovative and practical teaching techniques, student centered learning process, and experiential learning. It is also not surprising that the Information Processing philosophy was ranked very highly, as these programs should ideally also cover how technology is being integrated into today's classroom. Moreover, instructors should be supported in maintaining their philosophical orientation alongside practical classroom autonomy in their work in designing and implementing curricula.

Second, the institution needs to strive to create an environment in which instructors have greater autonomy, particularly related to those areas in which lower levels of autonomy were reported. Such changes may include revising policies to provide more flexibility in terms of curriculum development and instructional methods, while continuing to uphold appropriate academic standards ([22]). To balance institutional needs and individual instructor approaches, prompted interdisciplinary decision-making processes at the administrative and faculty level. Additionally, mentorship programs matching veteran educators with recent hires might give them insight on how to utilize autonomy successfully within the structure of the college ([19]).

Finally, additional studies should be used to examine how teaching philosophies and autonomy levels affect student achievement and the quality of education over time ([30]). These could include longitudinal studies assessing changes in instructors' philosophies and autonomy across time and their impacts on student achievement and satisfaction (DiLucchio & Leaman, 2022). It will also be important for the college to broaden its study to include a larger sample size, excluding only other higher education institutions in the region for comparative analysis ([31]). Therefore, this broad perspective could inform policy making and curriculum development on institutional and national level (Mohd Isa et al., 2020).

Limitations of the Study

Although this study offers useful insights into instructor educational philosophies and their perceived autonomy, the findings should be interpreted within a framework of the following limitations:

1. The study was a limited population study encompassing 19 instructors from the College of Teacher Education at Eduardo L. Joson Memorial College.
2. Out of a total population of 21, two instructors refused to participate in the study. This non-response may introduce bias if these individuals differ systematically from the participants.

3. Consequently, it is possible that its findings will be applicable to only one provincial tertiary institution and perhaps not directly transferable to other institutions of higher education in the Philippines or elsewhere.
4. This study's design was of a cross-sectional kind and does not enable analysis of shifts in teaching philosophies or autonomy perceptions over time.
5. The study used self-reported questionnaires, which can be subject to social desirability bias or inaccurate self-assessment.
6. Although correlations between teaching philosophies and autonomy dimensions were identified, the study cannot demonstrate that teaching philosophy causes changes in autonomy (or vice versa).

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicting interests to declare regarding the publication of this study. There are no financial or personal relationships that could have inappropriately influenced the conduct or evaluation of this research. Researcher objective and independence of the study from potential external influences on the decisions and analysis were maintained throughout.

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