

# Integrating Integrity in Teachers' Pedagogy

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**Abstract.** Integrity, recognized as a cornerstone of ethical behavior in education, is essential in fostering high teaching standards and student development. This study explores the integration of integrity into pedagogical practices among 202 secondary teachers in the District of Pontevedra, focusing on elements such as academic honesty, equality, ethical decision-making, preparation, delivery, and intention in teaching. Understanding the relationship between integrity and pedagogy is critical in ensuring ethical instruction, maintaining trust in the educational system, and reinforcing professionalism in teaching. The study examines the level of integrity and the degree of pedagogy among teachers, identifying variations based on age, sex, position, educational attainment, and length of service. Addressing overlooked aspects, such as student perspectives and institutional integration of integrity, this research fills a gap in understanding how educational institutions in the Philippines, particularly in Capiz, embed integrity within academic practices. Employing a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire validated by experts and pilot-tested with 30 non-participant teachers to ensure reliability. The analysis, conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26, applied statistical methods such as frequency, mean, t-test, f-test, and Pearson's correlation. Results revealed a very high level of integrity and pedagogy among teachers, with significant differences in integrity based on position and in pedagogy based on sex. The study underscores the strong relationship between integrity and pedagogy, highlighting specific areas where integrity enhances teaching effectiveness. It urges educational institutions and policymakers to support initiatives that cultivate integrity in teaching, reinforcing its role in upholding ethical standards and improving instructional quality.

**Keywords:** Academic honesty; Equality; Ethical decision-making; Integrity; Pedagogy.

## 1.0 Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of education, where the enduring goals of acquiring knowledge and honing essential skills persist, a growing imperative exists to emphasize the pivotal role of integrity in pursuing education and knowledge acquisition. The cornerstone of effective teaching and learning lies in academic integrity, a commitment to ethical conduct that applies to students and faculty (International Center for Academic Integrity [ICAI], 1992; Architects, 2011). Failing to uphold this commitment can result in academic dishonesty, posing a threat to educational goals crucial for intellectual, civic, and psychosocial development (Eshet & Margaliot, 2022). This universally valued concept is fundamental to human character and essential for societal trust (UNESCO, 2009).

Recognizing the significance of integrity, educational institutions worldwide acknowledge the need to cultivate a culture of honesty. In China, ethical challenges prompted proactive and systemic responses within academic institutions (Xhao, 2022). These challenges posed a risk to program credibility and threatened the ethical readiness

of graduates for the workforce. Consequently, institutions implemented integrity initiatives involving policy development, faculty training, and student education, fostering a deep understanding and application of integrity in professionalism, curricula, learner development, and organizational culture.

In the United States, teachers exhibit a profound grasp of academic integrity principles and genuine care for students' well-being and academic growth (Maguire et al., 2013). As demonstrated in the Philippine setting (Ressureccion, 2012), the classroom environment serves as a crucial space where these principles are imparted to students. However, existing research has often overlooked essential elements such as prioritizing student perspectives, effective instructional strategies, and cross-cultural dimensions within the educational framework. This research is a pivotal response to the evident weaknesses and inadequacies in current practices and research within the education field. Positioned as a timely, necessary, and innovative intervention, the study recognizes the imperative to emphasize the crucial role of integrity in education, particularly in the ever-evolving complexities of our globalized domain. Offering a groundbreaking solution, the research introduces a novel perspective on integrating integrity into pedagogy, advocating for a more standardized approach that addresses the limitations of existing well-intentioned yet fragmented efforts.

While the literature has discussed academic integrity and the dedication of educators, a distinguished gap exists in understanding how institutions weave integrity into academic honesty, equality, and ethical decision-making throughout their pedagogical practices in preparing, delivering, and intending to instill a culture of integrity throughout the educational process. The study innovatively proposes a new domain by emphasizing the significance of investigating how institutions navigate this gap within a broader landscape, thereby exploring a previously understudied phenomenon. Additionally, the research introduces a new methodology by systematically critiquing the gaps in existing practices, setting the stage for an improved approach that ensures a more effective and sustainable integration of integrity into pedagogy.

## **2.0 Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Design**

The study utilized the descriptive-correlational research design to analyze data and evaluate the integration of integrity in teachers' pedagogy (Creswell, 2014). This quantitative methodology allowed for examining relationships between variables and provided a structured approach to data collection and analysis.

### **2.2 Research Locale**

The study involved teachers from various institutions within the district, and it was carried out in the secondary schools of the District of Pontevedra.

### **2.3 Research Participants**

The total population of secondary school teaching personnel in the District of Pontevedra was two hundred forty-six (246). A sample of two hundred two (202) teachers was selected using simple random sampling through the draw lots method (Trochim, 2001). The sample size was determined using Slovin's (1960) formula, with a margin of error 0.03. Bourley's proportional allocation technique was employed to ensure appropriate representation of each subgroup within the population (Achon et al., 2019).

### **2.4 Research Instrument**

This study used a researcher-made questionnaire as the primary research instrument. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Part I gathered demographic information such as age, sex, position, educational attainment, and length of service. Part II assessed the level of integrity in terms of academic honesty, equality, and ethical decision-making, as well as the degree of pedagogy in terms of preparation, delivery, and intention. The instrument included seventy-three (73) Likert-type questions categorized into six (6) components: three (3) sub-components for integrity with thirty (30) items and three (3) sub-components for pedagogy with forty-three (43) items. Responses ranged from 1 (Very Low) to 5 (Very High). The questionnaire underwent content validation by a panel of experts, ensuring its relevance and reliability (Polit et al., 2007, as cited in Agapito & Vasquez, 2023). Pilot testing was conducted with thirty (30) non-participant teachers, and reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a coefficient of .965, indicating high reliability.

## 2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

This study followed systematic procedures for data collection. Approval was obtained from the School Division Superintendent and principals before data collection. Participants were briefed on the purpose and procedures of the study. Surveys were administered and collected within a specified timeframe, ensuring data accuracy and completeness.

## 2.6 Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the protection of participants. Anonymity and confidentiality were strictly maintained, and all data were used solely for research. Participation was voluntary, with respondents free to withdraw at any time. Ethical clearance and permission were secured before data collection (Creswell, 2014).

## 3.0 Results and Discussion

The data showed (see Table 1) that integrity in the District of Pontevedra achieved a "Very High" level, with a grand mean score of 4.71. Among the three components, Academic Honesty received the highest mean score of 4.87, followed closely by Equality (4.82) and Ethical Decision-Making (4.45), all of which were verbally interpreted as "Very High." These results highlight the strong ethical foundation among teachers in the district, particularly in maintaining honesty in academic practices.

**Table 1.** *Level of integrity of teachers in the District of Pontevedra as a whole*

| Indicators              | Mean        | Interpretation   |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Academic Honesty        | 4.87        | Very High        |
| Equality                | 4.82        | Very High        |
| Ethical Decision-making | 4.45        | Very High        |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>       | <b>4.71</b> | <b>Very High</b> |

The high score in Academic Honesty underscores the emphasis on trust, transparency, and respect for intellectual property, which are essential in fostering an ethical learning environment. The notable rating for Equality suggests that teachers demonstrate fairness and inclusivity in their pedagogical approaches, ensuring that all students receive equal opportunities for learning and development. However, the slightly lower score for Ethical Decision-Making (while still high) indicates potential challenges in navigating complex ethical dilemmas, suggesting areas where further training or professional development may enhance teachers' ability to make sound ethical judgments in challenging situations. These findings align with the studies of Bretag (2016), Danielson (2007), and Bernard & Keith-Spiegel (2002), which emphasize the commitment of teachers to uphold ethical principles and foster integrity. The results reinforce the critical role of educators in shaping a culture of integrity in education, ensuring that ethical values are consistently integrated into teaching practices and decision-making processes.

Table 2 shows the commendable level of pedagogy among teachers in the District of Pontevedra, with a grand mean score of 4.76, indicating a "Very High" degree of pedagogical competence. The consistently high ratings across key indicators—Preparation (Mean = 4.80), Delivery (Mean = 4.72), and Intention (Mean = 4.78)—demonstrate an unwavering commitment to effective teaching practices and student engagement. The highest rating in Preparation reflects teachers' diligence in designing well-structured lessons, setting clear objectives, and ensuring that instructional materials are well-prepared.

**Table 2.** *Degree of pedagogy among teachers in the District of Pontevedra as a whole*

| Indicators        | Mean        | Interpretation   |
|-------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Preparation       | 4.80        | Very High        |
| Intention         | 4.78        | Very High        |
| Delivery          | 4.72        | Very High        |
| <b>Grand Mean</b> | <b>4.76</b> | <b>Very High</b> |

The strong score in Delivery highlights their ability to present lessons effectively, use appropriate teaching strategies, and engage students in meaningful learning experiences. However, the slightly lower rating for Intention suggests that while teachers aim to align their teaching with educational goals, there may be areas for further enhancement, such as refining instructional objectives, improving student motivation, or strengthening assessment strategies to ensure desired learning outcomes. These findings align with the perspectives of Ball et al.

(2015) and Biggs & Tang (2007), who emphasize that teaching extends beyond content transmission, requiring continuous professional development and adaptability to diverse learning needs. The results reinforce that effective pedagogy involves a dynamic interplay of preparation, instructional execution, and intentional teaching strategies, all of which contribute to fostering an enriched and impactful learning environment.

Table 3 shows a notable difference in the level of integrity among teachers based on their position (2.636), with significant variations observed across different ranks within the educational system. This suggests that teachers in higher positions may have greater responsibilities and ethical expectations, leading to increased integrity levels compared to those in lower-ranked positions.

**Table 3.** *Differences in the level of integrity of teachers in the District of Pontevedra and some variables*

| Profile                | f/t-value | p    | Interpretation  |
|------------------------|-----------|------|-----------------|
| Sex                    | 1.83      | .068 | Not significant |
| Age                    | 0.21      | .887 | Not significant |
| Position               | 2.63      | .009 | Significant     |
| Length of Service      | 0.83      | .479 | Not significant |
| Educational Attainment | 1.18      | .320 | Not significant |

However, no significant differences were found based on age (0.213), sex (1.836), length of service (0.830), or educational attainment (1.181), indicating that these demographic factors do not have a substantial impact on teachers' integrity levels. This finding implies a consistent commitment to ethical conduct across various professional backgrounds, reinforcing the idea that organizational hierarchy rather than individual characteristics influence integrity. These results align with the studies of Etikan et al. (2016) and Satriawan & Satriawan (2022), which also found no significant differences in integrity levels based on sex and educational attainment. However, the findings contradict those of Dela Cruz (2017), which reported no relationship between integrity and position, and differ from the studies of Caldwell & Crain (2010) and Kane et al. (2013), which suggested a strong link between teacher experience, educational background, and integrity. These mixed findings highlight the need for further research to explore how institutional structures and professional roles influence ethical behavior in education.

As illustrated in Table 4, there is a significant difference in the degree of pedagogy among teachers in the District of Pontevedra, with sex being the only variable showing statistical significance (t-value = 2.004, p = 0.046). This suggests that male teachers exhibit higher levels of pedagogy than their female counterparts, potentially due to differences in instructional approaches, classroom management styles, or societal expectations regarding teaching roles.

**Table 4.** *Differences in the degree of pedagogy*

| Profile                | f/t-value | p    | Interpretation  |
|------------------------|-----------|------|-----------------|
| Sex                    | 2.00      | .046 | significant     |
| Age                    | 1.75      | .156 | Not significant |
| Position               | 0.79      | .428 | Not significant |
| Length of Service      | 1.10      | .349 | Not significant |
| Educational Attainment | 0.59      | .669 | Not significant |

However, age (t-value = 1.759, p = 0.156), position (t-value = 0.795, p = 0.428), length of service (t-value = 1.104, p = 0.349), and educational attainment (t-value = 0.592, p = 0.669) were found to have no significant impact on pedagogy levels. This indicates that experience, academic background, and rank do not necessarily determine teaching effectiveness, reinforcing that pedagogy is shaped by a combination of personal teaching philosophy, instructional strategies, and classroom engagement rather than demographic factors. These findings align with the research of Pabusa (2021), which suggests that male teachers tend to exhibit higher pedagogy levels. However, they contradict the study of Rodriguez and Gomez (2021) in the Philippines, which found no significant gender-based differences in pedagogical practices. Additionally, the results are consistent with the American Federation of Teachers (2022), which reported no significant age-related pedagogical differences. Furthermore, the findings support Hanushek & Rivkin (2016), who found minimal influence of teacher position on pedagogy, and Darling-Hammond et al. (2009), who highlighted consistency in pedagogical proficiency across different lengths of service. However, the results differ from those of Rivkin et al. (2015) and Chetty et al. (2014), who linked higher educational attainment to

superior teaching effectiveness. These mixed findings suggest the need for further investigation into the role of gender in shaping pedagogical approaches and the broader factors influencing teaching effectiveness.

As depicted in Table 5, there is a significant positive correlation between the level of integrity and the degree of pedagogy among teachers in the District of Pontevedra. The Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) is 0.734, and the  $p$ -value is 0.000, indicating strong statistical significance. This suggests a high positive relationship, meaning that as teachers' integrity increases, so does their pedagogical effectiveness, and vice versa.

**Table 5.** *Relationship between the level of integrity and the degree of pedagogy*

| Variable  | N   | Pearson's $r$ | $p$   | Interpretation |
|-----------|-----|---------------|-------|----------------|
| Integrity |     |               |       |                |
| Pedagogy  | 202 | .73           | <.001 | Significant    |

The rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that integrity is closely linked to pedagogical skills, emphasizing that teachers who demonstrate ethical behavior, fairness, and professionalism are likelier to exhibit strong instructional practices. This finding highlights the importance of integrity as a foundational element in effective teaching, reinforcing the role of ethics in fostering quality education. However, these results contradict the study of Gronlund et al. (2017), conducted in a large urban school district in the United States, which found no significant relationship between integrity and pedagogy. Their study suggested that teacher integrity may not directly impact pedagogical quality, whereas the current findings emphasize a strong connection between ethical conduct and teaching effectiveness. This contrast indicates the need for further research to explore how different educational systems and cultural contexts influence the relationship between integrity and pedagogy.

## 4.0 Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the positive and supportive culture of integrity among secondary teachers in the District of Pontevedra. These educators exhibit high proficiency in both the art and science of teaching, demonstrating a strong commitment to delivering quality education. Notably, Master Teachers (I-IV) display higher levels of integrity than those in Teacher I-III positions, suggesting that professional rank plays a role in ethical conduct. Additionally, the study revealed that female teachers demonstrate a higher degree of pedagogical proficiency than their male counterparts, indicating a significant relationship between gender and teaching effectiveness. More broadly, the results confirm that teachers with elevated levels of integrity are more likely to exhibit highly skilled teaching practices, reinforcing the synergistic relationship between integrity and pedagogy in educational settings.

This study contributes to understanding the role of integrity in shaping effective teaching practices by providing empirical evidence that ethical behavior is linked to pedagogical competence. It offers insights into how integrity varies across professional ranks and how gender influences teaching effectiveness, which can help inform teacher development programs and institutional policies. Additionally, this research establishes a framework for integrating integrity into pedagogy, serving as a valuable reference for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to enhance ethical teaching practices.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that schools implement regular professional development programs focused on ethical decision-making and integrity-driven teaching practices. Master Teachers should take a mentorship role in guiding early-career educators to uphold ethical teaching standards. Furthermore, gender-inclusive teaching strategies should be explored to ensure a balanced and practical instructional approach among educators. The Department of Education (DepEd) should consider incorporating integrity-based competencies into teacher evaluation frameworks and establish clear guidelines for ethical teaching. Future research should expand beyond Pontevedra to determine if similar trends exist in other educational districts and regions, allowing for a broader understanding of the relationship between integrity and pedagogy. Additionally, further studies should investigate the impact of teacher integrity on student outcomes, particularly in academic performance, engagement, and ethical development.

## 5.0 Contributions of Authors

The authors collaboratively contributed to all aspects of the research. The conceptualization and framework of the study were jointly developed, ensuring alignment with educational research standards. The methodology, including research design, sampling procedures, and data collection strategies, was carefully structured through collective efforts. Instrument validation, pilot testing, and statistical analysis were conducted with a shared responsibility to maintain accuracy and reliability. The interpretation of findings and formulation of recommendations were collectively undertaken to ensure meaningful contributions to the field. The authors also equally participated in drafting, reviewing, and finalizing the manuscript, ensuring clarity, coherence, and adherence to ethical research practices.

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## 7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest about the publication of this paper.

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