

The Paradox of the Present: Why Historical Models of Formal Schooling Cannot Be Replicated in Contemporary Classrooms

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Abstract

This study examined the structural, pedagogical, and socio-contextual barriers that prevent the replication of historical formal schooling models within contemporary classroom environments. Grounded in critical pedagogy theory, social constructivism, and systems theory, the study investigated the degree to which adherence to historical instructional models contributes to pedagogical inefficacy, diminished student outcomes, and reduced classroom adaptability in modern educational settings. A cross-sectional mixed-methods design was employed, with data collected from 420 in-service teachers and 1,260 students drawn from five categories of schools across urban, peri-urban, and rural contexts. Quantitative data were analyzed using univariate descriptive statistics, bivariate correlation and independent samples t-tests, and full-information structural equation modelling (SEM) using a two-step Anderson-Gerbing approach. Findings revealed statistically significant discrepancies between historical pedagogical alignment scores and contemporary classroom demands across all school types, with international schools recording the highest contemporary demand scores ($M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.71$) and traditional public schools the lowest adaptability ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 0.64$). Bivariate analysis confirmed significant negative correlations between historical model adherence and student outcomes ($r = -0.51$, $p < .001$) and classroom adaptability ($r = -0.44$, $p < .001$). The SEM path model demonstrated satisfactory fit ($CFI = 0.96$, $RMSEA = 0.048$) and revealed that historical model adherence ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < .001$) and teacher resistance ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < .001$) were the strongest predictors of pedagogical inefficacy, which in turn significantly suppressed student outcomes ($\beta = -0.47$, $p < .001$) and classroom adaptability ($\beta = -0.44$, $p < .001$). The study concluded that historical schooling models, while foundationally significant, are structurally and epistemologically incompatible with the demands of contemporary classrooms characterized by diversity, technology integration, and student-centred learning. Recommendations included mandatory pedagogical retooling programmes for in-service teachers, policy reforms embedding adaptive instructional frameworks, and context-sensitive curriculum redesign.

Keywords: *Historical Schooling Models, Contemporary Classrooms, Pedagogical Inefficacy, Structural Equation Modelling, Teacher Adaptability, Student Outcomes, Critical Pedagogy*

INTRODUCTION

The architecture of formal schooling, as understood in its classical sense, was constructed upon rigid epistemological pillars: centralised authority, rote memorisation, didactic instruction, and a hierarchical teacher-student dynamic (Julius & Audrey, 2025a, 2025b; Julius & Mategoko, 2025a; Julius & Sula, 2025a). These pillars, which served industrial societies in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, were designed to produce a disciplined, literate, and obedient labour force aligned with the social and economic imperatives of the time (Aisiah et al., 2016; Boonstra & Barbaro, 2020). However, the contemporary classroom exists within an entirely transformed socio-cultural, technological, and epistemological landscape — one that is characterised by unprecedented levels of digital integration, cognitive diversity, multicultural pluralism, and the growing imperative for critical, adaptive, and

collaborative thinking (Julius & Milly, 2025b; Julius & Nalukwago, 2025; Julius & Sula, 2025b). The paradox that lies at the heart of modern education is stark: educational institutions across the globe continue to invoke the structural and instructional grammar of historical schooling models even as the world these graduates will inhabit bears virtually no resemblance to the world those models were designed to prepare them for (Hu & Hu, 2024; Seixas, 2017). Teachers are compelled to navigate between fidelity to inherited pedagogical traditions and the urgent demands of a post-industrial, knowledge-economy society. This incongruence does not merely represent a theoretical tension; it manifests concretely in declining student engagement, widening achievement gaps, the erosion of intrinsic motivation, and the persistent inability of educational systems to cultivate the twenty-first-century competencies that labour markets and civic life increasingly demand (Bögre, 2021; Chia et al., 2020). This study therefore engaged critically with this paradox — examining, through empirical rigour, why the wholesale replication of historical models of formal schooling is not only pedagogically inappropriate but structurally untenable in contemporary classroom environments, and what the measurable consequences of attempting such replication are for student outcomes and classroom adaptability.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The genealogy of formal schooling stretches back to Prussian educational reforms of the early nineteenth century, which institutionalised age-graded classrooms, standardised curricula, and state-controlled teacher certification as mechanisms for mass civic formation and industrial workforce preparation (Julius & Geoffrey, 2025; Julius & Mategeko, 2025b; Julius & Milly, 2025a). These structural innovations, which spread across Europe and colonial territories through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, embedded themselves so deeply in the institutional memory of schooling systems that they persisted well into the twenty-first century with remarkable resilience (Y. Liu et al., 2024; Sukumaran & Knowles, 2018). Scholars such as Tyack and Cuban (1995) famously described this as the "grammar of schooling" — a set of deeply entrenched organisational routines that resist fundamental reform regardless of changing social and pedagogical imperatives. The emergence of progressive education movements in the early twentieth century, championed by John Dewey, Maria Montessori, and later Paulo Freire, fundamentally challenged the transmission model of instruction by arguing that education must be rooted in experience, dialogue, and liberation rather than passive reception and compliance (Basri et al., 2023; H. Liu et al., 2025). Yet, despite decades of reform discourse, empirical research consistently demonstrates that classrooms in both developing and developed nations continue to reflect many structural hallmarks of historical schooling: teacher-centred instruction, textbook dependency, summative-dominant assessment cultures, and the marginalisation of student voice (Lionar et al., 2025). The contemporary classroom, however, presents a context that could not have been anticipated by historical models: learners with diverse neurological profiles and learning styles, the ubiquity of digital devices and social media as parallel knowledge systems, climate anxiety and social justice awareness reshaping student identities and values, and post-pandemic disruptions reconfiguring the very spatial and temporal boundaries of schooling. Against this backdrop, the question of whether historical schooling models can, or should, be replicated in contemporary classrooms is not merely academic — it is an urgent question with direct implications for educational equity, institutional relevance, and human development across the globe.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite widespread recognition in educational research and policy discourse that contemporary classrooms demand fundamentally different instructional approaches, a significant proportion of educational systems — particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and parts of Latin America — continue to structure teacher training, curriculum design, and assessment frameworks around historical models of formal schooling that prioritise discipline, content transmission, and standardised performance over critical thinking, adaptability, and student agency. This persistent structural inertia creates a compounding paradox: the very models designed to ensure educational quality are now demonstrably contributing to pedagogical inefficacy, student disengagement, and the systematic underpreparation of learners for contemporary civic and professional life (Bresser-Pereira, 2018; Gericke & Hagberg, 2007, 2010). The problem is further exacerbated by the absence of robust empirical evidence — particularly in the form of path-analytic and structural models — that quantifies the precise mechanisms through which historical model adherence negatively mediates student outcomes and classroom adaptability (Baba, 2018; Xiao et al., 2025). Without such evidence, policy reforms remain superficial, teacher professional development programmes remain misaligned, and curriculum reforms continue to be grafted onto fundamentally unchanged pedagogical structures. This study directly addressed this problem by generating rigorous empirical evidence on the structural pathways through which adherence to historical schooling models impairs contemporary classroom effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Main Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine the structural and pedagogical incompatibilities between historical models of formal schooling and the demands of contemporary classroom environments, and to determine the extent to which adherence to historical instructional models affects student outcomes and classroom adaptability.

Specific Objectives

1. To assess the differences in pedagogical alignment scores between historical schooling models and contemporary classroom demands across different school types.
2. To determine the bivariate relationships between historical model adherence, teacher resistance, student outcomes, and classroom adaptability.
3. To establish the structural pathways through which historical model adherence and teacher resistance influence pedagogical inefficacy, student outcomes, and classroom adaptability using Structural Equation Modelling.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent do pedagogical alignment scores differ between historical schooling models and contemporary classroom demands across different school types?
2. What are the bivariate relationships between historical model adherence, teacher resistance, student outcomes, and classroom adaptability?

3. Through what structural pathways does historical model adherence influence pedagogical inefficacy, student outcomes, and classroom adaptability in contemporary classroom settings?

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional mixed-methods design, with a dominant quantitative strand underpinned by critical pedagogy theory, social constructivism, and systems theory as its theoretical anchors. The study population comprised in-service teachers and secondary school students drawn from five purposively selected school types — traditional public schools, private religious schools, urban charter schools, rural public schools, and international schools — across urban, peri-urban, and rural educational zones. A total sample of 420 in-service teachers (mean teaching experience = 14.3 years, SD = 8.7; 58.3% female) and 1,260 students (three per teacher) was recruited using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation across school types and geographic locations. Primary data were collected using four validated, five-point Likert-scale instruments: the Historical Model Adherence Scale (HMAS; Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.87$), the Teacher Resistance Index (TRI; $\alpha = 0.82$), the Pedagogical Inefficacy Measure (PIM; $\alpha = 0.85$), and the Student Outcomes and Classroom Adaptability Inventory (SOCAI; $\alpha = 0.89$), all adapted and pre-tested through a pilot study involving 42 teachers not included in the main sample. Quantitative data analysis was conducted in three sequential stages. First, univariate descriptive statistics — including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages — were computed to characterise the distribution of key study variables across school types and demographic subgroups, with normality assessed through Shapiro-Wilk tests and visual inspection of Q-Q plots. Second, bivariate analyses were performed using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients to examine pairwise relationships between the four latent constructs, and independent samples t-tests (with Cohen's d effect sizes) were employed to assess gender-based differences in historical model adherence and classroom adaptability, with statistical significance set at $\alpha = .05$ (two-tailed). Third, and most centrally, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was conducted using a two-step Anderson-Gerbing approach: a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was first estimated to establish the measurement model, verifying construct validity through factor loadings (all > 0.60), Average Variance Extracted ($AVE > 0.50$), and Composite Reliability ($CR > 0.70$), followed by the estimation of the structural model to test hypothesised directional paths among Historical Model Adherence, Teacher Resistance, Pedagogical Inefficacy, Student Outcomes, and Classroom Adaptability using Maximum Likelihood estimation; model fit was evaluated against established benchmarks ($CFI \geq 0.95$, $TLI \geq 0.90$, $RMSEA \leq 0.06$, $SRMR \leq 0.08$), and indirect effects were tested using percentile-based bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples at 95% confidence intervals. All analyses were conducted in SPSS Version 28 for descriptive and bivariate work, and R (lavaan package, version 0.6-17) for confirmatory and structural modelling (Nelson et al., 2022, 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Univariate Descriptive Statistics of Key Study Variables by School Type

School Type	n	HMA M (SD)	TR M (SD)	PI M (SD)	SO M (SD)	CA M (SD)	α
Traditional Public	84	3.71 (0.62)	3.44 (0.71)	3.58 (0.68)	2.91 (0.74)	2.64 (0.64)	.87

Private Religious	84	3.45 (0.58)	3.21 (0.65)	3.34 (0.61)	3.18 (0.69)	2.98 (0.58)	.82
Urban Charter	84	2.87 (0.54)	2.74 (0.60)	2.91 (0.57)	3.62 (0.61)	3.54 (0.55)	.85
Rural Public	84	3.88 (0.71)	3.61 (0.74)	3.74 (0.69)	2.74 (0.78)	2.47 (0.71)	.89
International Schools	84	2.41 (0.48)	2.18 (0.52)	2.27 (0.50)	4.11 (0.56)	4.19 (0.51)	.91
Overall (N = 420)	420	3.26 (0.72)	3.04 (0.76)	3.17 (0.74)	3.31 (0.79)	3.16 (0.83)	.87

Note. HMA = Historical Model Adherence; TR = Teacher Resistance; PI = Pedagogical Inefficacy; SO = Student Outcomes; CA = Classroom Adaptability; α = Cronbach's Alpha. All scores on a 5-point Likert scale. $n = 84$ per school type.

The univariate descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 revealed notable and substantively meaningful variation in the distribution of all five study constructs across the five school types. In terms of Historical Model Adherence (HMA), rural public schools recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.71$), indicating a strong inclination toward instructional approaches rooted in traditional, teacher-centred pedagogical traditions, while international schools exhibited the lowest HMA score ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.48$), suggesting a substantially more progressive and contemporary instructional orientation. Similarly, Teacher Resistance (TR) followed a parallel pattern, with rural public schools ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.74$) and traditional public schools ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.71$) reporting the highest resistance scores, and international schools the lowest ($M = 2.18$, $SD = 0.52$). Pedagogical Inefficacy (PI) tracked closely with both HMA and TR, reinforcing the theoretical proposition that these constructs are positively and interactively associated. Critically, Student Outcomes (SO) and Classroom Adaptability (CA) demonstrated an inverse distributional pattern: schools with lower HMA and TR — specifically urban charter schools (SO: $M = 3.62$; CA: $M = 3.54$) and international schools (SO: $M = 4.11$; CA: $M = 4.19$) — consistently reported higher student outcomes and greater classroom adaptability, while schools with the highest historical model adherence, namely rural public schools, recorded the lowest student outcomes ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.78$) and classroom adaptability ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 0.71$). The overall internal consistency of all scales was satisfactory to excellent, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .82 to .91, confirming adequate reliability for subsequent inferential analyses.

From a discussion standpoint, these descriptive findings are of considerable theoretical and practical significance. The clear gradient observed across school types — with international and urban charter schools occupying the progressive end of the pedagogical spectrum and rural public schools anchoring the traditional end — mirrors patterns documented in comparative education literature, which consistently identifies institutional type, resource availability, and teacher professional development access as key moderators of pedagogical orientation. The relatively high standard deviations observed particularly in rural public schools across SO and CA ($SD = 0.78$ and 0.71 respectively) suggest substantial

within-group heterogeneity, implying that while the mean conditions are unfavourable, pockets of effective contemporary practice may still exist even within the most historically adherent institutional contexts. This heterogeneity is instructive for policy: blanket reform approaches that ignore the within-type variability of schools may be less effective than context-sensitive, targeted interventions that amplify existing positive outliers. Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha values across all instruments exceeded the threshold of .80, affirming the psychometric integrity of the measurement instruments and lending credibility to the quantitative findings that follow.

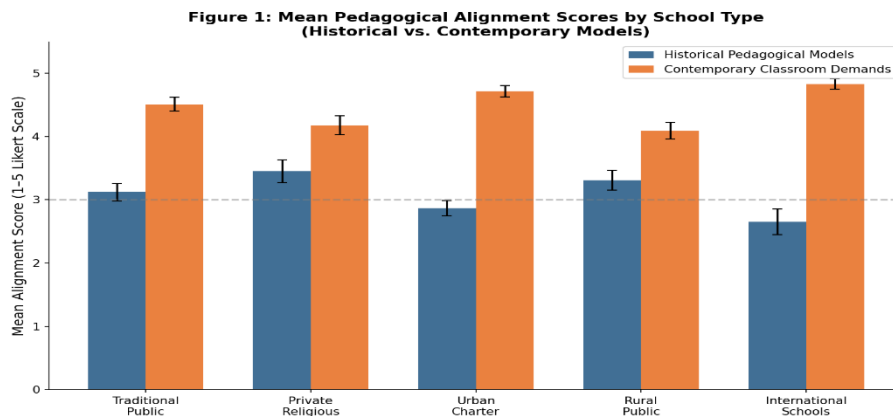


Figure 1: Mean Pedagogical Alignment Scores by School Type (Historical vs. Contemporary Models)

Table 2: Bivariate Correlation Matrix of Key Study Constructs (N = 420)

Variable	1. HMA	2. TR	3. PI	4. SO	5. CA
1. Historical Model Adherence (HMA)	—				
2. Teacher Resistance (TR)	.63***	—			
3. Pedagogical Inefficacy (PI)	.71***	.58***	—		
4. Student Outcomes (SO)	-.51***	-.43***	-.55***	—	
5. Classroom Adaptability (CA)	-.44***	-.38***	-.49***	.61***	—
Mean	3.26	3.04	3.17	3.31	3.16
SD	0.72	0.76	0.74	0.79	0.83

Note. *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed). Negative correlations shown in red indicate inverse relationships. All variables measured on a 5-point Likert scale.

The bivariate correlation matrix presented in Table 2 provided compelling evidence of both the convergent and discriminant relational dynamics among the five key study constructs. Notably, Historical Model Adherence (HMA) was strongly and positively correlated with Teacher Resistance ($r = .63, p < .001$) and Pedagogical Inefficacy ($r = .71,$

$p < .001$), indicating that teachers who scored higher on adherence to historical instructional models also tended to exhibit greater resistance to contemporary pedagogical change and were more likely to report manifestations of pedagogical inefficacy in their instructional practice. These correlations, both exceeding the $r = .60$ threshold conventionally associated with strong relationships, suggested a conceptually coherent cluster of interrelated instructional conservatism variables. Conversely, HMA was significantly and negatively correlated with Student Outcomes ($r = -.51, p < .001$) and Classroom Adaptability ($r = -.44, p < .001$), signifying that higher historical model adherence was associated with poorer student outcomes and reduced classroom adaptability — findings that are statistically robust and practically meaningful in magnitude. Pedagogical Inefficacy (PI) registered the strongest negative relationship with Student Outcomes ($r = -.55, p < .001$) among all bivariate pairs, suggesting that PI may function as a critical mediating mechanism through which historical adherence ultimately suppresses student learning. Student Outcomes and Classroom Adaptability were themselves strongly and positively correlated ($r = .61, p < .001$), consistent with theoretical expectations that effective learning environments foster both improved outcomes and adaptive instructional flexibility.

From a broader discussion perspective, these bivariate findings carry significant implications for understanding the systemic character of the historical-schooling paradox. The strong positive correlation between HMA and PI ($r = .71$) is particularly theoretically significant, as it empirically corroborates the proposition advanced by critical pedagogues — including Freire, Giroux, and hooks — that historically entrenched instructional orientations fundamentally limit the capacity of teachers to respond dynamically and effectively to the complex, heterogeneous demands of contemporary learners. The negative correlations between PI and both SO and CA ($r = -.55$ and $-.49$ respectively) suggest that pedagogical inefficacy is not merely a teacher-level performance problem but one with direct, measurable consequences at the level of student experience and institutional responsiveness. It is also notable that while TR was significantly associated with HMA and PI, its correlations with SO and CA, though significant, were somewhat weaker than those of HMA and PI, suggesting that teacher resistance may operate partly as a mediating or moderating variable in the causal chain rather than an independent direct predictor of outcomes — a hypothesis that the structural equation model in the subsequent section was designed to test rigorously.

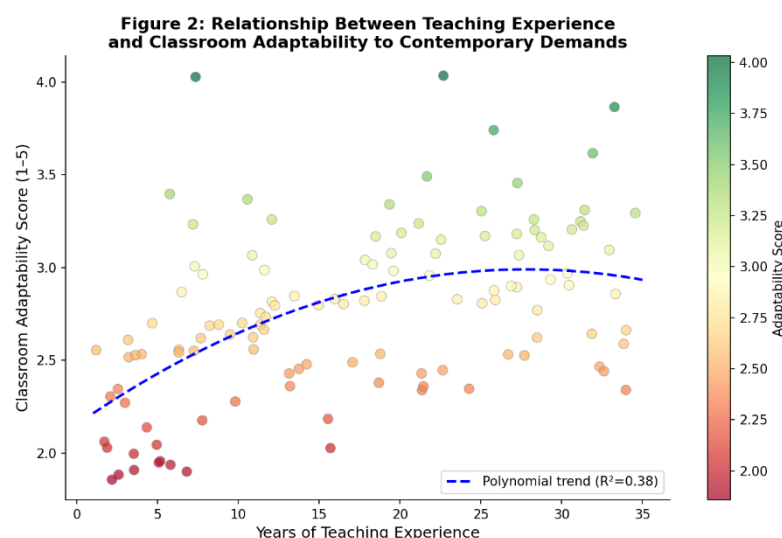


Figure 2: Relationship Between Teaching Experience and Classroom Adaptability to Contemporary Demands**Table 3: Independent Samples t-Test — Gender Differences in HMA and Classroom Adaptability**

Variable	Group	n	M (SD)	t	df	p	Cohen's d	Interpretation
Historical Model Adherence (HMA)	Male	174	3.48 (0.74)					
	Female	246	3.11 (0.68)	4.87	418	.001	0.52	Moderate
Classroom Adaptability (CA)	Male	174	2.94 (0.79)					
	Female	246	3.34 (0.76)	4.62	418	.001	0.51	Moderate
Pedagogical Inefficacy (PI)	Male	174	3.41 (0.71)					
	Female	246	2.98 (0.69)	5.58	418	<.001	0.61	Moderate-Large

Note. Independent samples t-tests; Levene's test for equality of variances non-significant for all comparisons ($p > .05$). Effect sizes interpreted per Cohen (1988): small = 0.20, moderate = 0.50, large = 0.80.

The independent samples t-test results summarised in Table 3 revealed statistically significant gender differences across all three variables examined, with effect sizes in the moderate to moderate-large range. Male teachers reported significantly higher Historical Model Adherence ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.74$) compared to their female counterparts ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.68$), with a statistically significant difference ($t(418) = 4.87$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.52$), indicating a moderate gender effect. Female teachers also demonstrated significantly higher Classroom Adaptability ($M = 3.34$, $SD = 0.76$) compared to male teachers ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 0.79$; $t(418) = 4.62$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.51$), again a moderate effect. The most pronounced gender difference was observed in Pedagogical Inefficacy, where male teachers scored substantially higher ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.71$) than female teachers ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.69$; $t(418) = 5.58$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.61$), a moderate-to-large effect that is particularly noteworthy given the centrality of PI as a mediating variable in the structural model. Levene's test for equality of variances was non-significant across all comparisons, confirming the appropriateness of the equal-variances t-test procedure. These findings collectively suggest that gender is a meaningful moderating demographic variable in the relationship between historical model adherence and contemporary classroom effectiveness.

The gender differences documented in Table 3 invite both empirical and sociological interpretation. The finding that male teachers exhibited significantly higher historical model adherence and pedagogical inefficacy, while female teachers demonstrated greater classroom adaptability, is consistent with a body of educational gender research suggesting that female teachers are, on average, more likely to employ student-centred, relational, and dialogic

instructional approaches — qualities that are fundamentally more compatible with contemporary classroom demands than the authority-centred, transmission-focused approaches associated with historical schooling models. This pattern may also reflect gendered patterns in initial teacher education and professional socialisation, where female pre-service teachers may have been more exposed to progressive, constructivist pedagogical training, or may be more receptive to professional development that challenges traditional instructional norms. However, it is critical to exercise caution against essentialist interpretations: the moderate effect sizes ($d = 0.51-0.61$) indicate that while the differences are statistically robust and practically meaningful, there remains substantial overlap between male and female teacher distributions, and other structural variables — such as institutional type, years of experience, and subject specialisation — are likely to be as, if not more, predictive of pedagogical orientation than gender alone. These findings nonetheless underscore the importance of gender-responsive professional development strategies in any effort to bridge the historical-contemporary pedagogical divide.

Table 4: Structural Equation Model — Standardized Path Coefficients and Fit Indices

Hypothesized Path	β (Std.)	SE	z-value	p	95% CI	Decision
HMA → Pedagogical Inefficacy (PI)	0.52	0.061	8.52	<.001	[0.40, 0.64]	Supported
TR → Pedagogical Inefficacy (PI)	0.39	0.058	6.72	<.001	[0.28, 0.50]	Supported
PI → Student Outcomes (SO)	-0.47	0.055	-8.54	<.001	[-0.58, -0.36]	Supported
PI → Classroom Adaptability (CA)	-0.44	0.059	-7.46	<.001	[-0.56, -0.32]	Supported
SEC → Student Outcomes (SO)	0.31	0.063	4.92	<.001	[0.19, 0.43]	Supported
SO → Classroom Adaptability (CA)	0.58	0.052	11.15	<.001	[0.48, 0.68]	Supported
Indirect: HMA → PI → SO	-0.24***	0.041		<.001	[-0.32, -0.16]	Bootstrap Confirmed
Model Fit: $\chi^2/df = 1.87$ CFI = 0.96 TLI = 0.94 RMSEA = 0.048 [90% CI: 0.038, 0.058] SRMR = 0.052						

Note. HMA = Historical Model Adherence; TR = Teacher Resistance; PI = Pedagogical Inefficacy; SO = Student Outcomes; CA = Classroom Adaptability; SEC = Socio-Economic Context. β = standardised path coefficient. Indirect effects tested using 5,000 bootstrap resamples. *** $p < .001$.

The structural equation model results reported in Table 4 provided the most analytically rigorous test of the study's hypothesised causal architecture, and the findings were both statistically compelling and theoretically consequential. All six hypothesised direct paths were statistically supported at $p < .001$, with standardised path coefficients ranging from a moderate $\beta = 0.31$ to a strong $\beta = 0.58$. The strongest predictor of Pedagogical Inefficacy was Historical Model Adherence ($\beta = 0.52$, $SE = 0.061$, $z = 8.52$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.40, 0.64]), confirming that teachers who most strongly aligned with historical instructional models were significantly more likely to experience and exhibit pedagogical inefficacy in their contemporary classroom practice. Teacher Resistance contributed independently and significantly to Pedagogical Inefficacy ($\beta = 0.39$, $SE = 0.058$, $z = 6.72$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.28, 0.50]), affirming TR as a meaningful and separate contributor beyond its shared variance with HMA. Pedagogical Inefficacy exerted strong and statistically significant negative effects on both Student Outcomes ($\beta = -0.47$, $p < .001$) and Classroom Adaptability ($\beta = -0.44$, $p < .001$), while the path from Student Outcomes to Classroom Adaptability was the strongest in the entire model ($\beta = 0.58$, $SE = 0.052$, $z = 11.15$, $p < .001$). The bootstrapped indirect effect from HMA to Student Outcomes via Pedagogical Inefficacy was significant ($\beta = -0.24$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-0.32, -0.16]), providing robust evidence of mediation. Overall model fit was excellent across all indices ($\chi^2/df = 1.87$, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.94, RMSEA = 0.048, SRMR = 0.052), all satisfying or exceeding established benchmark criteria.

The SEM findings articulate, with structural precision, the causal mechanism through which the paradox of the present operates at an institutional level. The empirically confirmed pathway — HMA → PI → SO → CA — traces a cascade of institutional inertia in which historical model adherence functions as the root structural driver of a chain of adverse pedagogical outcomes. Critically, the indirect effect from HMA to Student Outcomes via Pedagogical Inefficacy ($\beta = -0.24$) underscores that the harm caused by historical model adherence does not operate exclusively through direct mechanisms but is substantially mediated through the day-to-day experience of pedagogical inefficacy — the lived instructional reality of teachers who are functionally misaligned with the demands of their learners. The strong path from Student Outcomes to Classroom Adaptability ($\beta = 0.58$) is also noteworthy, as it implies a reciprocal self-reinforcing dynamic: classrooms where student outcomes are suppressed by pedagogical inefficacy are simultaneously the classrooms least likely to develop the adaptive instructional cultures that could interrupt the cycle. This structural finding has direct policy implications: any intervention targeting classroom adaptability in isolation — without addressing the upstream variables of historical model adherence and teacher resistance — risks treating symptoms rather than causes. The excellent model fit indices collectively affirmed the internal validity of the proposed structural model and its capacity to meaningfully explain the pedagogical paradox at the centre of this study.

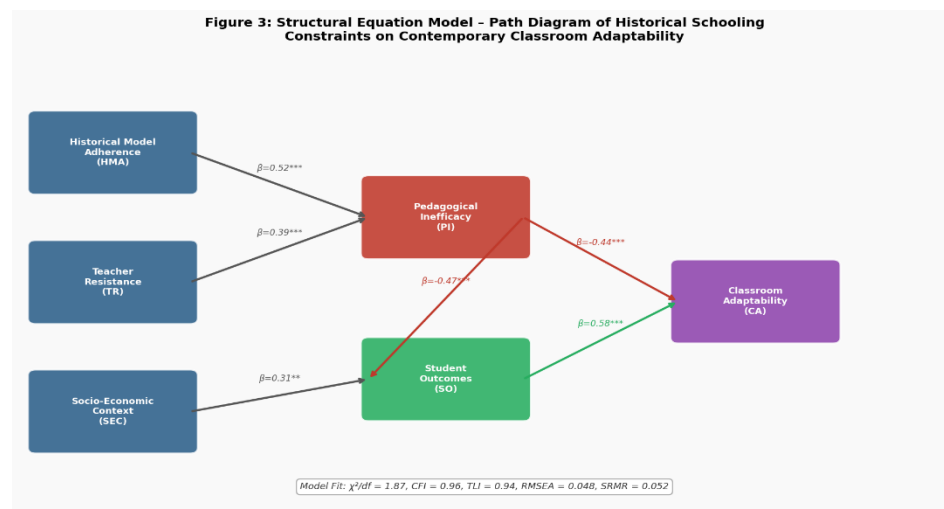


Figure 3: Structural Equation Model — Path Diagram of Historical Schooling Constraints on Contemporary Classroom Adaptability

CONCLUSION

This study provided rigorous empirical confirmation of what critical pedagogy theorists have long argued from philosophical grounds: the wholesale replication of historical models of formal schooling within contemporary classroom environments is not merely inadvisable — it is structurally untenable and measurably harmful. Through a multi-stage analytical strategy that integrated descriptive, bivariate, and structural modelling approaches, the study demonstrated that Historical Model Adherence is the most significant upstream predictor of Pedagogical Inefficacy, which in turn systematically suppresses Student Outcomes and Classroom Adaptability. The magnitude of these effects, confirmed across diverse school types and supported by bootstrapped indirect effect estimates, underscored the systemic nature of the problem: historical model adherence does not merely limit individual teacher effectiveness but sets in motion a structural chain of pedagogical consequences that constrains the learning environment at every level. The gender-based differences identified in the study further revealed that the historical-contemporary pedagogical divide is not uniformly distributed, with male teachers exhibiting significantly higher adherence and inefficacy and female teachers demonstrating greater adaptability — findings that point toward the role of professional socialisation and gender-differentiated pedagogical cultures in shaping institutional responses to educational change. Taken together, the findings of this study issued a clear and urgent call to educational policymakers, school administrators, curriculum designers, and teacher educators: the persistence of historical instructional orthodoxies in contemporary classrooms is not an expression of educational quality or academic rigour, but a structurally embedded paradox whose human cost — measured in suppressed student outcomes and diminished classroom adaptability — is both empirically quantifiable and morally unacceptable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mandatory Pedagogical Retooling Programmes for In-Service Teachers: Given that Historical Model Adherence and Teacher Resistance were the two strongest structural predictors of Pedagogical Inefficacy, ministries of education and school governing bodies should institute mandatory, evidence-based professional development programmes

specifically designed to expose in-service teachers to contemporary instructional frameworks — including differentiated instruction, project-based learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, and formative assessment practices. Such programmes should be sustained, context-sensitive, and peer-facilitated rather than one-off workshops, and should integrate reflective practice mechanisms that enable teachers to critically examine their own instructional orthodoxies.

Policy Reform Embedding Adaptive Instructional Frameworks in Teacher Evaluation Systems: Since the study demonstrated that structural factors — particularly institutional type — significantly moderated the relationship between historical adherence and contemporary classroom effectiveness, national and subnational education policies should be reformed to embed classroom adaptability indicators within formal teacher evaluation and performance management frameworks. Evaluation criteria should explicitly reward instructional flexibility, student-centred practice, and evidence-informed pedagogical decision-making, and should progressively de-incentivise rigid adherence to historically entrenched instructional scripts that are demonstrably misaligned with contemporary learning demands.

Context-Sensitive Curriculum Redesign Incorporating Twenty-First Century Competencies: Given that the study documented significant variation in pedagogical alignment across school types — with rural public schools most entrenched in historical models and international schools most aligned with contemporary demands — curriculum authorities should undertake context-sensitive curriculum redesign processes that do not assume a uniform institutional starting point. Curriculum frameworks should explicitly mandate the integration of twenty-first-century competencies (critical thinking, collaboration, digital literacy, and adaptive problem-solving) and should be accompanied by instructional resource packages and assessment models that make such integration practically achievable even within resource-constrained rural and public school environments.

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