

COMFORT-CENTERED LEARNING APPROACH: FRAMEWORK FOR CONTEMPORARY CLASSROOMS

Regidor T. Carale.

College of Teacher Education, ²Negros Oriental State University, Kagawasan Avenue,
Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Philippines,
09559103232, regidor76@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This study explores Comfort-Centered Learning approaches, a comprehensive framework that identifies student comfort as the foundation of effective teaching and learning. The framework suggests seven interconnected components that together promote emotional security, cognitive engagement, and social inclusion: the teacher's empathetic approach, dynamic and lively instruction, approachable classroom climate, convenient learning environment, classroom harmony, emollient yet firm discipline, and mutual respect and enthusiasm. The CCL approach, which has its roots in psychological, sociocultural, and constructivist educational paradigms, contends that comfort is a motivator for academic risk-taking, creativity, and personal development rather than being the same as easy. This study aims to investigate how these aspects appear in real-world classroom environments, how they affect student performance, and what methods teachers might use to apply the framework methodically. This study intends to validate the framework's applicability in modern education by providing useful insights into how emotionally intelligent teaching practices can turn classrooms into inclusive, empowering learning environments through a qualitative analysis involving of 60 student perspectives from two esteemed universities in Dumaguete City.

Keywords: Comfortability-Centered Learning Approach, Emotional Well-being

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary learners navigate an increasingly complex world where the quest for belonging, affection, and validation profoundly shapes educational engagement. Maslow's hierarchy positions belongingness and love needs immediately after physiological and safety needs, underscoring emotional security as fundamental to learning motivation. However, many students enter classrooms deprived of consistent emotional support due to socioeconomic pressures, parental work stress, and broader social inequalities—factors often leading to disengagement, anxiety, and diminished well-being. Studies show that diminished parental presence and communication correlate with reduced psychological health and social adjustment, leaving schools to assume a critical role as emotional sanctuaries that nurture care, trust, and belonging.

In this context, teachers must integrate empathy and relational warmth into pedagogy, treating comfort as a prerequisite for intellectual risk-taking and deeper learning rather than a sign of leniency. While academic success, emotional health, and engagement are increasingly recognized as interdependent foundations of effective education [1], many classrooms remain performance-driven, neglecting students' socioemotional needs. Schonert-Reichl [2] highlights how such imbalances can erode motivation and behavioral regulation by overlooking the emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of learning.

Carale's **Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA)** responds to this gap through a holistic framework that defines comfort as essential to academic flourishing. It integrates seven interrelated dimensions—teacher's sympathetic approach, lively instruction, caring environment, physical convenience, classroom harmony, gentle discipline, and mutual respect and enthusiasm—rooted in **Universal Design for Learning** [3], **Sociocultural Theory** [4], and **Maslow's hierarchy of needs** [5]. Research consistently links emotional safety with enhanced relationships, reduced anxiety, and higher achievement [6][7], while Ryan and Deci

[8] affirm that inclusive, supportive environments promote intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy.

Despite its theoretical promise, empirical studies on CCLA remain scarce. This study bridges that gap by exploring how students from two higher education institutions in Dumaguete City perceive and experience comfort in learning. It further examines how comfort-centered teaching influences engagement, participation, and emotional well-being. Ultimately, the research affirms CCLA's potential to guide educators in cultivating emotionally intelligent, inclusive, and human-centered classrooms—spaces that serve as wells of comfort and resilience amid life's uncertainties.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Student well-being is increasingly recognized as central to academic success, yet many classrooms remain focused on performance metrics, neglecting emotional and social dimensions of learning. The **Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA)** addresses this gap by redefining comfort as a catalyst for engagement, resilience, and intellectual growth rather than as leniency. Grounded in constructivist, humanistic, and sociocultural theories, CCLA integrates seven interconnected elements—teacher empathy, classroom harmony, respectful discipline, varied instruction, and supportive environments—to foster inclusion and psychological safety.

Despite its theoretical promise, empirical research on CCLA is scarce. Understanding how these comfort-centered principles shape student experiences and learning outcomes remains essential. This study explores the perceptions of 215 students from two Dumaguete City institutions to evaluate CCLA's applicability in real-world settings. Findings aim to guide educators in developing emotionally intelligent, inclusive pedagogies that enhance both academic achievement and holistic student well-being.

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

While the significance of student well-being in academic success is increasingly acknowledged, many classrooms still prioritize performance outcomes over emotional and psychological comfort. Traditional pedagogies often overlook

the complex emotional, relational, and contextual factors that shape engagement, participation, and learning. The **Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA)** offers a transformative framework that positions comfort as a foundation for achievement rather than complacency. However, limited empirical research exists on how its seven dimensions—teacher empathy, classroom harmony, engaging instruction, and respectful discipline—manifest and impact actual learning environments. Understanding how these elements influence students' experiences and behaviors, and how teachers can cultivate comfort-centered conditions, remains essential. Without empirical validation, CCLA's potential to enhance teaching practices and student outcomes may remain unrealized. Thus, this study will answer the following questions:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the thoughts and feelings of students regarding comfort in the classroom?
2. In what ways does the implementation of comfort-centered learning approach influence student engagement, participation, and emotional well-being?
3. What challenges can educators encounter, and how can they best include comfortability into their lesson plans?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to contemporary educational theory by empirically examining the **Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA)** as a framework for enhancing student engagement, emotional well-being, and academic success. At a time when schools often prioritize performance over psychological safety, this research provides evidence-based support for comfort as a pedagogical necessity.

For **educators**, it offers practical strategies to cultivate inclusive, emotionally intelligent, and trauma-informed classrooms that foster motivation and risk-taking. For **educational leaders and policymakers**, it underscores the need to integrate environmental and emotional comfort into curriculum design, teacher training, and institutional policies. For **students**, it highlights the centrality of respect, safety, and belonging in achieving holistic growth. Lastly, for **researchers**, it expands the discourse on learner-centered pedagogy, encouraging further inquiry into classroom comfort across diverse educational contexts.

Ultimately, this study reinforces comfort as a catalyst for both academic excellence and human flourishing.

PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS

The **Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA)** is grounded in the philosophical traditions of **humanism**, **constructivism**, **pragmatism**, and **phenomenology**, each emphasizing the centrality of human experience in education. **Humanism**, as advanced by **Maslow [5]** and **Rogers [9]**, underscores the holistic development of learners—cognitive, emotional, social, and spiritual. CCLA reflects this by promoting empathy, trust, and belonging as essential to self-actualization and meaningful learning.

Aligned with **constructivism**, the approach views knowledge as constructed through experience and social interaction. **Vygotsky [4]** emphasized learning through collaboration, while **Piaget [10]** highlighted active engagement. CCLA

enables this by reducing anxiety and fostering curiosity in supportive classroom environments.

Drawing from **Dewey's [11] pragmatism**, the study values experience and reflection, translating comfort-centered strategies into practical methods that enhance both engagement and well-being.

Finally, grounded in **phenomenology (Husserl [12]; van Manen [13])**, the study prioritizes students' lived experiences to interpret what it means to feel "comfortable" in learning spaces. Collectively, these traditions position CCLA as a human-centered paradigm that integrates emotion, identity, and relational meaning into the educational process.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Recent educational discourse increasingly acknowledges the interconnection between **student well-being, engagement, and academic success**. Traditional pedagogy's emphasis on cognitive performance often overlooks emotional and social dimensions critical to learning. According to Jennings and Greenberg [14], emotional safety and social-emotional learning (SEL) are fundamental to engagement, while Zins et al. [15] link psychological wellness to resilience and interpersonal competence. Immordino-Yang and Damasio [16] further demonstrate that emotional states significantly influence brain processes related to learning, reinforcing Schonert-Reichl's [17] claim that neglecting socio-emotional needs undermines educational effectiveness.

Carale's Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA) reframes comfort as a catalyst for academic risk-taking and emotional resilience rather than indulgence. Rooted in **Maslow's [5] hierarchy of needs**, **Vygotsky's [4] sociocultural theory**, and the **Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework [3]**, it highlights teacher empathy, classroom harmony, and instructional flexibility as foundations for meaningful learning. Empirical studies support this link between comfort and achievement. Ryan and Deci's [8] Self-Determination Theory posits that autonomy, competence, and belonging foster intrinsic motivation. Similarly, Zins et al. [18] found that emotionally safe classrooms reduce anxiety and increase participation. Teacher empathy also emerges as a key variable—Baker et al. [19] and Pianta [20] confirm that warm, responsive teacher-student relationships predict engagement and performance. In practice, comfort-based instruction aligns with trauma-informed and SEL approaches that prioritize inclusive, supportive environments [22].

However, challenges such as overcrowding, limited training, and performance pressures persist [23]. Overall, literature affirms that emotional safety, respect, and empathy are not ancillary to learning but central to it. **Carale's CCLA** synthesizes these insights into a holistic framework that unites well-being and academic excellence, underscoring the need for classrooms where students thrive both intellectually and emotionally.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological design anchored in Carale's Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA) to explore students' lived experiences of comfort within classroom environments, emphasizing how emotional, social, and physical factors shape engagement and well-

being. Conducted in two universities in Dumaguete City, Philippines, the research involved 215 purposively selected undergraduate students who met specific inclusion criteria such as being enrolled, aged 18 and above, and capable of articulating classroom experiences. Data were gathered using a semi-structured interview guide developed from three grand tour questions addressing perceptions, impacts, and challenges of comfort-centered teaching. Following ethical clearance, participants were recruited voluntarily, and interviews were conducted face-to-face or online, recorded with consent, and supplemented by field notes. Data underwent thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke's [24] six-phase framework, progressing from familiarization to theme generation, review, and interpretation in line with the CCLA framework. Trustworthiness was ensured through credibility (member checking, peer debriefing), transferability (thick descriptions), dependability (audit trail), and confirmability (researcher reflexivity and direct quotations). Ethical standards—including voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and emotional sensitivity—were rigorously observed. Collectively, this methodology provided a robust framework for capturing authentic, meaningful insights into how comfort-centered pedagogy shapes students' learning and emotional experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Question 1: How do students perceive and experience comfort within their learning environments?

These emergent themes emphasizes that comfort is the foundational pillar of a thriving learning environment. This framework posits that **student comfort** significantly influences **engagement, participation, academic performance, and emotional well-being**. It underscores **seven interrelated elements**, each contributing uniquely to a harmonious, inclusive, and effective educational setting.

Elements of Comfort	Description / Core Idea	Key Insights from Participants	Educational / Theoretical Implications
1. Teacher's Sympathetic Approach	A teacher's empathy fosters emotional security, confidence, and openness to learning. Sympathy is strategic emotional responsiveness, not permissiveness.	- Students feel comfortable when teachers show concern, avoid pressure, and listen (P1, P5). - Constructive, non-judgmental feedback builds trust (P7, P11). - Teachers who take time to know students create emotional safety (P8).	Aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs — safety and belonging precede learning. Emotional safety enhances academic risk-taking and growth.
2. Energetic and Lively Classroom through Varied Teaching Approaches	Teaching variety and creativity enhance engagement and motivation. Active, interactive methods sustain student curiosity.	- Students enjoy lively, activity-based learning (P31). - Humor and curiosity boost engagement (P26). - Group activities promote familiarity and participation (P13,	Supports Multiple Intelligences and Differentiated Instruction . Varied strategies sustain attention and accommodate diverse learning styles.

		P22, P24).	
3. Approachable, Caring, and Friendly Environment	A climate of warmth, mutual respect, and open communication creates belonging and trust.	- Respectful communication fosters confidence and participation (P16). - Fun, cooperative atmosphere enhances comfort (P37). - Friendly, approachable teachers encourage learning (P15, P25, P8).	Reflects Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) principles—care and respect increase emotional intelligence and resilience. Students thrive when seen as holistic individuals.
4. Convenient Learning Environment	Comfort emerges from both physical and social accessibility—interactive lessons, peer collaboration, and trustful dynamics.	- Interactive lessons deepen thinking (P4). - Feedback builds confidence (P8). - Peer trust and openness strengthen engagement (P9, P14, P19, P35).	Emphasizes learning accessibility and collaborative engagement . Peer and teacher support transform learning into a shared journey.
5. Harmony in the Class	Harmony is the result of inclusivity, cooperation, and mutual understanding. It sustains engagement and group cohesion.	- Group work promotes comfort and connection (P22, P24). - Open discussions encourage confidence and creativity (P13). - Supportive peers enhance trust and safety.	Resonates with Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory —learning is socially mediated. Harmony accelerates both emotional and cognitive development.
6. Emollient but Conforming Approach in Discipline	Discipline is warm yet structured—non-punitive but firm in expectations. Encourages self-regulation without fear.	- Students prefer non-pressuring, relaxed teachers (P30, P3, P33). - Fun and humor reduce anxiety (P20). - Supportive instruction motivates engagement (P32).	Reflects Restorative Discipline Models —balance empathy and structure to promote responsibility, autonomy, and well-being.
7. Respect and Enthusiasm	Respect and enthusiasm are reciprocal. Feeling valued increases motivation, engagement, and collaboration.	- Students feel safe and confident when respected and heard (P7, P27, P8). - Respectful, encouraging interactions foster belonging and active learning.	Connected to Learner-Centered and Constructivist Theories —respect and enthusiasm fuel intrinsic motivation and meaningful participation.
Synthesis: Comfort-Centered Learning Approach	Comfort is the foundation of an inclusive, emotionally intelligent learning ecosystem. The seven elements are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.	Comfort empowers students to take risks, collaborate, and engage authentically. A comfortable learner is confident, motivated, and participatory.	Integrates Maslow, SEL, and Constructivism —comfort is not complacency but a catalyst for deep learning, equity, and engagement.

Emergent Framework

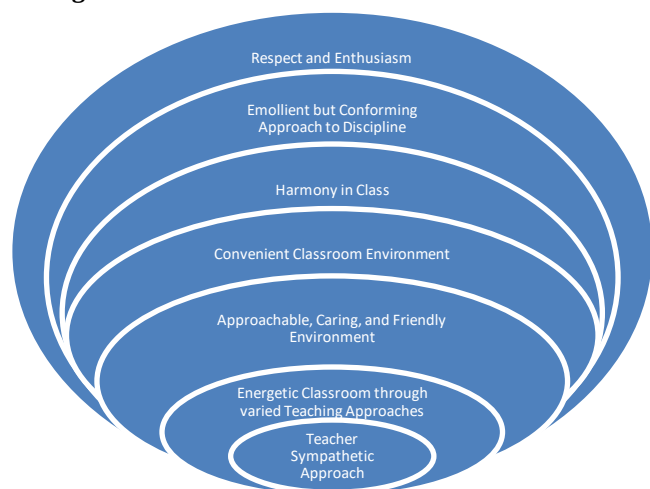


Figure 1: Seven Elements of Comfort

The Seven Elements of Comfort

The Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA) underscores that comfort is not indulgence but a catalyst for engagement, confidence, and holistic learning. The findings reveal seven interdependent elements that shape an inclusive, emotionally intelligent classroom environment.

1. **Teacher's Sympathetic Approach.** Students emphasized that empathy, understanding, and nonjudgmental communication foster psychological safety and trust. When teachers demonstrate care and patience, learners feel valued and are more willing to take intellectual risks, aligning with Maslow's concept of safety and belonging as precursors to growth.
2. **Energetic and Lively Classroom through Varied Teaching Approaches.** Comfort thrives in dynamic, interactive, and hands-on learning environments. Participants highlighted that diverse strategies, humor, and collaborative activities sustain motivation and deepen understanding, reflecting multiple intelligences and differentiated instruction principles.
3. **Approachable, Caring, and Friendly Environment.** A classroom grounded in mutual respect and openness enhances belonging and participation. Students reported that approachable teachers who balance professionalism with warmth encourage communication, cooperation, and self-expression—key elements of socio-emotional learning (SEL).
4. **Convenient Learning Environment.** Comfort extends to physical and relational accessibility. Supportive peer relationships, interactive lessons, and inclusive classroom layouts foster cognitive focus and social connection, transforming learning into a shared experience rather than an isolated task.
5. **Harmony in the Class.** Harmony emerges from collaboration and mutual understanding. Students noted that group work, peer support, and nonjudgmental dialogue cultivate inclusivity and trust—echoing

Vygotsky's sociocultural view that learning is socially mediated.

6. **Emollient but Conforming Approach in Discipline.** Students valued teachers who balanced kindness with consistency. Non-punitive, reflective discipline reduced anxiety and encouraged self-regulation and accountability, aligning with restorative practices and psychological safety.
7. **Respect and Enthusiasm.** Mutual respect and teacher enthusiasm were identified as motivational forces that enhance student confidence, participation, and a sense of belonging. When respect and passion are modeled, they become contagious, fostering vibrant classroom communities.

Overall, the CCLA weaves emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions into a unified framework. It demonstrates that comfort, when intentionally cultivated, empowers students to engage meaningfully, think critically, and thrive both academically and emotionally.

Comfort Centered Learning Approach is a holistic, weaving together emotional, relational, cognitive, and environmental threads. It resonates strongly with established educational frameworks including Maslow's needs theory, SEL, learner-centered approaches, and constructivist models. The seven elements form an interdependent ecosystem where one enhances the other. For example, sympathetic teaching boosts harmony, varied instruction fosters respect, and convenient environments nurture enthusiasm. Ultimately, this theory asserts that comfort is not complacency—it is a catalyst. A comfortable student is not passive but empowered, confident, and collaborative. When comfort is deliberately cultivated through these seven dimensions, classrooms transform into engaged, equitable, and emotionally intelligent learning communities.

Question 2: In what ways does the implementation of comfort-centered teaching practices influence student engagement, participation, and emotional well-being?

Students perceive and experience comfortability—through **physical, emotional, social, cognitive, cultural, spiritual, and digital comfort**—as critical components of their overall learning experience. These dimensions interact to influence how safe, supported, and motivated students feel within educational settings.

Dimension / Element (T-E-A-C-H-E-R Framework)	Associated Comfort	Description of Teaching Practice	Impact on Engagement, Participation, and Emotional Well-Being	Theoretical Link / Educational Implication
Teacher's Sympathetic Approach	Emotional Comfort	Teachers show empathy, patience, and responsiveness to students' emotions. Builds psychological safety and trust.	Students feel emotionally secure, confident, and willing to engage in class activities without fear or anxiety.	Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs – Meeting psychological and safety needs builds a foundation for self-esteem and active participation.

E – Energetic Classroom through Varied Teaching Approaches	Digital Comfort	Teachers use dynamic, tech-integrated, and varied teaching strategies to enhance engagement.	Students participate more actively and confidently in digital and interactive learning settings.	Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – Flexible, technology-supported environments ensure equal participation and accessibility.
A – Approachable, Caring, and Friendly Environment	Spiritual Comfort	Teachers cultivate an inspiring and value-aligned atmosphere through respect and compassion.	Students experience purpose, belonging, and moral alignment with learning values, promoting intrinsic motivation.	Constructivist Learning Theory – Learning thrives in meaningful, value-driven environments that encourage reflection and purpose.
C – Convenient Learning Environment	Physical Comfort	Focuses on classroom ergonomics, accessibility, and conducive settings (lighting, space, ventilation).	Reduces fatigue and distraction, improving concentration and task persistence.	Maslow’s Basic Needs Principle – Physical comfort enhances readiness to learn and sustain focus.
H – Harmony in the Class	Cultural Comfort	Emphasizes inclusion, mutual respect, and acknowledgment of diverse cultural identities.	Encourages collaboration and open participation among culturally diverse learners.	Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory – Learning is mediated by culture and social interaction; harmony promotes cooperative learning.
E – Emollient but Conforming Approach in Discipline	Cognitive Comfort	Implements gentle yet structured discipline emphasizing accountability and empathy.	Reduces anxiety and mental stress, creating a cognitively safe and focused environment.	Restorative Discipline Model – Discipline that is compassionate supports self-regulation and reflective learning.
R – Respect and Enthusiasm	Social Comfort	Promotes mutual respect, encouragement, and enthusiasm between teachers and peers.	Builds belongingness and confidence; enhances peer interaction and collaborative participation.	Social Constructivism & SEL – Respect and social interaction enhance emotional well-being and community learning.
Synthesis: Comfort-Centered Teaching Practices	Holistic Comfort (Emotional, Digital, Spiritual, Physical, Cultural, Cognitive, Social)	Integrating all seven comfort dimensions transforms classrooms into safe, inclusive, and engaging communities.	Promotes engagement, participation, and well-being through empathy, inclusivity, and learner-centered pedagogy.	UDL + Maslow + Constructivism Hybrid Framework – Comfort as a catalyst for participation, growth, and self-actualization.

- **Emotional comfort** arises from feeling psychologically safe. Students value teachers who show empathy, patience, and responsiveness to emotional cues (*Teacher’s Sympathetic Approach*).
- **Digital comfort** refers to students’ ease with educational technologies. Proficiency and access influence participation, especially in tech-integrated or remote settings (*Energetic Classroom through Varied Teaching Approaches*).
- **Spiritual comfort**, while more nuanced, pertains to a sense of purpose or connection to values within the learning

context. Students may experience this through reflective activities or value-aligned learning content (*Approachable, Caring and Friendly Environment*).

- **Physical comfort** relates to the classroom’s physical environment, including seating, lighting, and temperature. When these needs are met, students report improved concentration and reduced fatigue (*Convenient Learning Environment*).
- **Cultural comfort** is reflected in environments that affirm students’ cultural identities. Recognition of cultural backgrounds fosters inclusivity and respect (*Harmony in the Class*).
- **Cognitive comfort** involves intellectual clarity and manageable academic demands. Students feel most at ease when expectations are clear and aligned with their skill levels (*Emollient but Conforming Approach in Discipline*).
- **Social comfort** is associated with peer interactions. Positive group dynamics and respectful communication enhance students’ sense of belonging and willingness to collaborate (*Respect and Enthusiasm*).

Collectively, these dimensions shape how students experience learning, contributing to academic engagement and emotional safety. Simply applying these elements in the classroom will promote the feeling of emotional safety and encouragement. When teachers show empathetic approach in teaching, students develop emotional security. Emotional security will in turn drives the student to engage in the class through varied teaching approaches highlighting the integration of technology. When engagement is inherent, it will transform the environment into a more approachable, caring and friendly which dictates a more convenient learning that creates a more inclusive and untied environment where discipline is not impose but is carried out through personal discipline, respect, and accountability..

Impact of Comfort-Centered Teaching Practices on Engagement, Participation, and Well-Being

Implementing comfort-centered teaching practices significantly enhances student engagement, participation, and emotional well-being. When educators intentionally design learning environments that consider each dimension of comfort:

- **Engagement increases**, as students are more likely to participate when they feel both intellectually and emotionally secure.
- **Participation broadens**, particularly among students who might otherwise be marginalized or hesitant. Comfort-centered practices encourage all voices to be heard, fostering inclusivity.
- **Emotional well-being improves**, with reduced anxiety, increased trust in educators, and a greater sense of agency in the learning process. Students report higher satisfaction and resilience when they feel valued and respected.

These outcomes suggest that addressing comfort holistically can act as a catalyst for positive academic and psychosocial development.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs – Addressing Both Basic and Psychological Needs. In the classroom, addressing students’

basic needs (such as safety, comfort, and belonging) alongside their psychological needs (such as self-esteem and self-fulfillment) is essential for fostering a productive learning environment. A *Conforming Approach in Discipline*, when applied with empathy, acts like an “emollient” that smooths and eases classroom interactions, promoting acceptance and satisfaction.

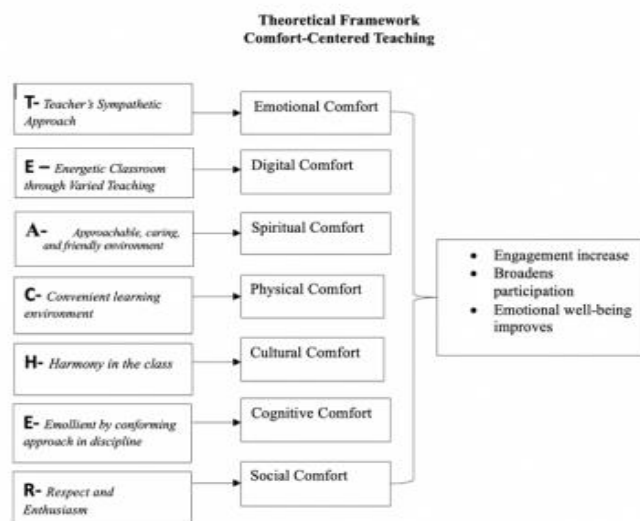


Figure No. 2 The Theoretical Framework

Framework Overview: The TEACHER Acronym

Letter	Strategy Description	Associated Comfort
T	Teacher's Sympathetic Approach	<i>Emotional Comfort</i>
E	Energetic Classroom through Varied Teaching	<i>Digital Comfort</i>
A	Approachable, Caring, and Friendly Environment	<i>Spiritual Comfort</i>
C	Convenient Learning Environment	<i>Physical Comfort</i>
H	Harmony in the Class	<i>Cultural Comfort</i>
E	Emollient by Conforming Approach in Discipline	<i>Cognitive Comfort</i>
R	Respect and Enthusiasm	<i>Social Comfort</i>

When students feel secure, respected, and valued, they are more likely to engage actively and take personal responsibility for their learning. This satisfaction cultivates positive attitudes, which in turn fuels an Energetic Classroom atmosphere. Such an environment thrives when teachers use varied teaching approaches—differentiating instruction, integrating collaborative activities, and recognizing individual achievements—to meet the diverse needs of learners at different levels. By aligning classroom management strategies with Maslow's principle, teachers not only maintain order but also create conditions where students can progress from meeting their foundational needs toward achieving their highest potential for self-actualization.

Constructivist Learning Theory – Emphasizing Comfort as a Foundation for Active Learning. In the constructivist view, learning is most effective when students feel safe, comfortable, and respected. A **convenient and supportive**

learning environment not only reduces anxiety but also strengthens personal accountability and discipline. When students are at ease, they are more willing to participate, take risks in their learning, and reflect critically on their progress. Such an environment encourages learners to **identify and build upon their strengths**, while gradually transforming weaknesses into areas of growth. Through collaboration and peer support, students recognize that challenges are not obstacles but opportunities to learn. **Respect and enthusiasm** flourish when each student values their own capabilities and acknowledges the need for others' contributions. In this way, the classroom becomes a community where difficulties are shared, solutions are co-created, and collective growth is celebrated—perfectly embodying the constructivist principle that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and personal engagement.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – Advocating Flexible, Inclusive Learning Environments. The Universal Design for Learning framework promotes classrooms that adapt to the diverse needs of all learners, ensuring equal access to participation, engagement, and success. A flexible and inclusive environment can be nurtured through Comfort-Centered Learning Approaches (CCLA) that are approachable, caring, and grounded in a genuinely friendly atmosphere. When teachers and students interact without hesitation or barriers, mutual trust and empathy flourish. In such an environment, every member of the class is ready to support one another through both achievements and challenges, acknowledging that individual weaknesses and difficulties are part of the shared human experience. This climate of acceptance often begins with the Teacher's Sympathetic Approach—a management style that models understanding, patience, and encouragement. Positivity becomes contagious, influencing the entire classroom culture until harmony is not only maintained but actively co-created. Through UDL principles, such harmony ensures that instruction is accessible, adaptable, and meaningful for learners at every level.

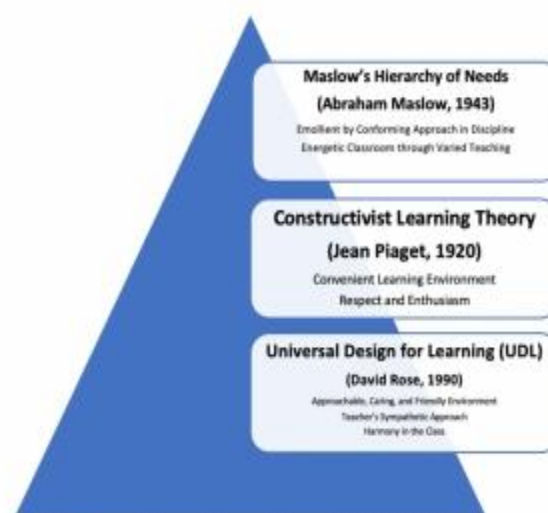


Figure No. 3: Theoretical Implications and Relevance

Dimensions of Comfort:

- **Emotional Comfort:** Created through empathy, active listening, and trust-building, leading to reduced anxiety and improved classroom climate.
- **Digital Comfort:** Promoted through engaging and accessible use of technology, fostering confidence in digital environments.
- **Spiritual Comfort:** Achieved by creating a meaningful and value-aligned atmosphere that inspires purpose and belonging.
- **Physical Comfort:** Ensures environmental factors (lighting, seating, temperature) are optimized for concentration and well-being.
- **Cultural Comfort:** Encourages inclusivity and diversity, making students from all backgrounds feel accepted and understood.
- **Cognitive Comfort:** Built through consistent, compassionate discipline and clarity, reducing mental stress and promoting focus.
- **Social Comfort:** Facilitated by mutual respect and enthusiasm, enabling collaboration and positive peer relationships.

Outcomes of Comfort-Centered Teaching

- **Engagement Increase:** Comfort boosts motivation and active participation in learning.
- **Broadens Participation:** Inclusive practices ensure that all students feel able and encouraged to contribute.
- **Emotional Well-Being Improves:** A supportive environment enhances students' overall happiness and reduces school-related stress.

Breakdown of Pedagogical Approaches: T-E-A-C-H-E-R
T – Teacher’s Sympathetic Approach → Emotional Comfort

- A teacher’s ability to understand, empathize, and respond to students’ emotional needs fosters emotional comfort.
- This includes being approachable, showing care, and actively listening to students.
- Emotional comfort leads to reduced anxiety, improved sense of safety, and trust-building between teacher and student.

E – Energetic Classroom through Varied Teaching → Digital Comfort

- “Energetic” and “varied teaching” suggests the use of dynamic and engaging digital tools.
- Digital comfort reflects how well students adapt to and feel secure using technology-enhanced learning platforms.
- This includes interactive multimedia, blended learning, and minimizing technological barriers.

A – Approachable, Caring, and Friendly Environment → Spiritual Comfort

- Creating a learning space where students feel valued, respected, and inspired helps cultivate spiritual comfort.
- This is about instilling a sense of purpose, belonging, and alignment with inner values.
- A nurturing environment can support intrinsic motivation and self-actualization.

- **C – Convenient Learning Environment → Physical Comfort**
- Addresses classroom ergonomics, seating arrangements, temperature, lighting, and accessibility.
- A physically comfortable setting supports attention span, concentration, and overall learning effectiveness.

H – Harmony in the Class → Cultural Comfort

- Promotes inclusion, respect for diversity, and cultural awareness.
- Cultural comfort is achieved when students feel their backgrounds and identities are acknowledged and respected.
- Encourages participation by reducing feelings of alienation or cultural mismatch.

E – Emollient by Conforming Approach in Discipline → Cognitive Comfort

- “Emollient” implies a softening, gentle approach to discipline—consistent yet compassionate.
- Reduces mental stress, creating a stable cognitive environment.
- Fosters clarity, focus, and freedom from fear of punishment, supporting active learning.

R – Respect and Enthusiasm → Social Comfort

- Mutual respect and positive energy build interpersonal trust and group cohesion.
- Students feel socially accepted, confident, and more willing to collaborate or speak up.
- Leads to a stronger sense of belonging and community in the classroom.

QUESTION 3: What strategies can educators adopt to effectively integrate the Comfort-Centered Learning Approach into classroom practices, and what challenges might arise in doing so?

Dimension / Strategy	Description of Strategy	Potential Challenges in Implementation	Educational Implications / Outcomes
Physical Adjustments	Create a conducive learning environment through flexible seating, ergonomic arrangements, lighting, and ventilation control.	Limited classroom space and budget constraints may hinder physical redesign.	Promotes concentration, reduces fatigue, and improves learner focus and engagement.
	Build trauma-informed, empathetic classrooms through affirming language, teacher responsiveness, and emotional check-ins.	Teachers may experience emotional fatigue or lack proper training in trauma-sensitive practices.	Increases students’ emotional safety, confidence, and willingness to participate.

Social Dynamics	Encourage collaboration and cooperative learning; establish group norms and mediate interpersonal conflicts.	Group imbalance and dominant personalities can disrupt equitable participation.	Strengthens peer relationships, communication skills, and classroom harmony.
Cognitive Scaffolding	Implement differentiated instruction, provide academic support, and align workload with student capacity.	Time-intensive to prepare individualized lessons and materials.	Enhances comprehension, fosters mastery learning, and reduces academic anxiety.
Cultural Responsiveness	Integrate culturally relevant materials, celebrate diversity, and allow students to express cultural identity.	Potential bias or lack of cultural knowledge among educators.	Fosters inclusion, respect, and cultural awareness; promotes equitable learning spaces.
Spiritual Engagement	Introduce reflective practices (journaling, service-learning, value-based activities) to instill purpose and belonging.	Sensitive topics or differing belief systems may require careful facilitation.	Deepens personal meaning in learning and encourages value-based growth.
Digital Equity	Provide equal access to technology, reliable internet, and training on digital literacy.	Economic disparities and inconsistent connectivity can cause inequity.	Promotes participation in online and hybrid learning environments, ensuring inclusivity.
Synthesis: Integrated Comfort-Centered Practice	Combine all seven comfort dimensions to build a holistic, inclusive, and learner-centered classroom ecosystem.	Requires teacher adaptability, institutional support, and ongoing professional development.	Encourages engagement, emotional well-being, and lifelong learning aligned with UDL and constructivist principles.

Strategies for Integrating the Comfort-Centered Learning Approach into Classroom Practice and Associated Challenges

A. Recommended Strategies:

Educators can integrate the Comfortability Theory into classroom practices through:

- **Physical adjustments:** Providing flexible seating, temperature control, and accessible room layouts.
- **Emotional support:** Creating trauma-informed environments, using affirming language, and responding to student affect.
- **Social dynamics:** Encouraging cooperative learning, setting group norms, and actively mediating conflicts.
- **Cognitive scaffolding:** Offering differentiated instruction, adjusting workload, and incorporating varied teaching strategies.
- **Cultural responsiveness:** Reflecting student cultures in content and pedagogy, and fostering open dialogue about identity.
- **Spiritual engagement:** Incorporating reflective journaling, service learning, or value-driven discussions.
- **Digital equity:** Ensuring access to devices and Wi-Fi, teaching digital literacy, and using inclusive platforms.

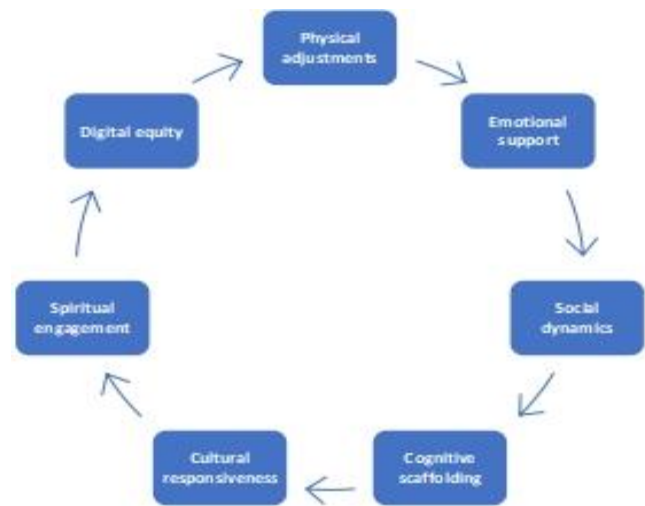


Figure 4: On Recommended Strategies to Strengthen Comfort-Centered Learning

Teaching Strategies using Comfort-centered Learning Approaches to support learning

1. Physical Adjustments. Create a classroom space that meets learners' physical needs:

- Flexible seating arrangements.** *Description:* Offer different seating types to suit comfort and learning preferences. *Example:* Provide bean bags, floor cushions, and standing desks so students can choose where they work best during reading time.
- Adjustable lighting.** *Description:* Modify light levels to reduce eye strain and create a calmer environment. *Example:* Use dimmable lamps instead of harsh overhead lights during quiet study sessions.
- Classroom temperature control.** *Description:* Maintain a comfortable temperature to prevent distraction from being too hot or cold. *Example:* Use a small fan or heater in areas where students feel uncomfortable, with teacher monitoring.
- Quiet zones or calming corners.** *Description:* Provide a low-stimulation area where students can self-regulate.

Example: Set up a corner with soft seating, noise-canceling headphones, and a small shelf of calming activities.

- e. **Organized, clutter-free environment.** *Description:* Reduce unnecessary visual and physical distractions for better focus. *Example:* Use labeled bins and shelves so materials are stored neatly and out of sight when not in use.
 - f. **Accessible layouts.** *Description:* Arrange furniture to ensure easy movement and access for all learners, including those with mobility or sensory needs. *Example:* Keep pathways wide and place commonly used supplies within easy reach for students in wheelchairs.
 - g. **Aromatherapy options.** *Description:* Use calming or energizing scents to influence mood and focus. *Example:* Diffuse lavender essential oil during mindfulness exercises or peppermint during test preparation.
 - h. **Use of fidget tools or sensory objects.** *Description:* Provide small objects to channel excess energy without disrupting others. *Example:* Offer stress balls, textured putty, or fidget cubes for students to use quietly during lessons.
 - i. **Multiple seating formats.** *Description:* Have spaces for both collaboration and independent work. *Example:* Arrange tables for group activities and a few isolated desks for students who need solo focus time.
 - j. **Physical movement integration.** *Description:* Incorporate short activity breaks to refresh focus and energy. *Example:* Lead a two-minute stretch or movement game between math and reading lessons.
- 2. Emotional Support.** Support emotional well-being for safe learning:
- a. **Trauma-informed teaching practices.** *Description:* Create a predictable, non-punitive environment that minimizes triggers and fosters safety. *Example:* Use a daily schedule posted on the board so students know what's coming next, and address disruptions calmly without public shaming.
 - b. **Use of affirming and inclusive language.** *Description:* Speak in ways that validate identities, experiences, and perspectives. *Example:* Use students' correct names and pronouns, and avoid gendered assumptions when assigning groups or activities.
 - c. **Check-ins and mood meters.** *Description:* Give students tools to express and track their emotional state. *Example:* Have a color-coded mood chart at the door for students to place a magnet on when they arrive.
 - d. **Classroom norms that prioritize respect and empathy.** *Description:* Establish shared agreements on how to treat each other. *Example:* Co-create a "Respect & Kindness" charter with students and refer to it during conflicts.
 - e. **Modeling emotional regulation techniques.** *Description:* Show students healthy ways to manage stress and emotions. *Example:* Verbally narrate taking deep breaths when frustrated to demonstrate self-calming.
 - f. **Anonymous question boxes.** *Description:* Provide a safe outlet for questions or concerns students may not voice aloud. *Example:* Place a decorated box in the back of the

room where students can drop notes about topics they're unsure of or problems they're facing.

- g. **Mindfulness activities.** *Description:* Incorporate short practices to increase focus and reduce stress. *Example:* Lead a two-minute breathing exercise at the start of each day.
 - h. **Clear, consistent routines.** *Description:* Maintain predictable patterns that give students a sense of emotional security. *Example:* Always start class with a welcome message and end with a summary of what's next.
 - i. **Safe spaces or trusted adults.** *Description:* Ensure students know where and with whom they can seek support. *Example:* Post a small sign with photos of staff members students can approach if upset.
 - j. **Feedback focused on effort and growth.** *Description:* Emphasize progress and persistence over perfection. *Example:* Instead of "You got it wrong," say, "You're improving—let's look at what your next step could be."
- 3. Social Dynamics.** Foster positive interpersonal connections:
- a. **Cooperative learning groups with defined roles.** *Short description:* Students work together in small groups, each with a specific responsibility to ensure shared participation. *Example:* In a science project, one student is the "researcher," another the "recorder," another the "presenter," and another the "timekeeper."
 - b. **Peer mentoring and buddy systems.** *Short description:* Pairing students to provide academic or social support to each other. *Example:* A new student is paired with a "buddy" who shows them around school, introduces them to classmates, and helps them with class routines.
 - c. **Group norms and collaborative agreements.** *Short description:* Students and teachers co-create expectations for respectful and effective group work. *Example:* The class makes a "collaboration contract" stating rules like "listen without interrupting" and "share airtime equally."
 - e. **Restorative justice circles for conflict resolution.** *Short description:* A structured discussion format where participants share feelings and work toward repairing harm. *Example:* After a disagreement, students sit in a circle, each gets a turn to speak without interruption, and together they agree on how to move forward respectfully.
 - e. **Team-building exercises.** *Short description:* Activities designed to build trust, communication, and collaboration skills. *Example:* Students work together to build the tallest tower possible using only spaghetti and marshmallows.
 - f. **Role-playing empathy and perspective-taking.** *Short description:* Students act out scenarios to understand different points of view. *Example:* In a role-play, one student plays a person being excluded, and others brainstorm inclusive responses.
 - g. **Social stories or scripts for appropriate behavior.** *Short description:* Short, clear narratives that teach expected social interactions. *Example:* A story describes how to join a game at recess: watch first, ask politely, and accept the group's answer.
 - h. **Public praise for teamwork,** not just individual achievement. *Short description:* Recognizing and celebrating

collaborative efforts in front of peers. *Example:* The teacher announces, “I loved how Group B listened to each other and built on everyone’s ideas—great teamwork!”

i. **Inclusive classroom discussions** that value all voices *Short description:* Structuring discussions so every student can contribute meaningfully. *Example:* Using a “talking stick,” each student has a turn to speak before anyone can comment again.

j. **Conflict mediation protocols led by students or staff** *Short description:* Step-by-step processes for resolving disputes fairly, often involving trained mediators. *Example:* Two students meet with a peer mediator who helps them share their perspectives and agree on a solution.

4. Cognitive Scaffolding. Support mental effort and learning structure:

a. **Differentiated instruction** (content, process, product) *Short description:* Adapting what is taught, how it’s taught, or how learning is shown to meet different needs. *Example:* In a history unit, advanced students analyze primary sources, while others use simplified summaries; all share findings in different formats (essay, poster, slideshow).

b. **Tiered assignments based on readiness.** *Short description:* Same learning goal, but tasks vary in complexity to match student levels. *Example:* For a math concept, one group solves basic problems, another works on word problems, and a third applies the concept to real-life scenarios.

c. **Graphic organizers and visual aids.** *Short description:* Tools to help students organize and connect information. *Example:* Using a Venn diagram to compare and contrast two characters in a novel.

d. **Chunking content into manageable parts.** *Short description:* Breaking complex material into smaller, easier-to-process steps. *Example:* Teaching essay writing one part at a time—first brainstorming, then drafting a thesis, then building paragraphs.

e. **Advance organizers or overviews before instruction.** *Short description:* Providing a roadmap so students know what to expect and how concepts connect. *Example:* Before a biology unit, giving students a concept map showing how cells, tissues, and organs are related.

f. **Guided practice with fading support.** *Short description:* Teacher models a task, students practice with help, then gradually work independently. *Example:* In math, the teacher solves the first few problems with the class, then students complete the rest on their own.

g. **Socratic questioning and inquiry-based learning** *Short description:* Using open-ended questions to guide critical thinking and deeper understanding. *Example:* In a literature class, instead of explaining a theme, the teacher asks, “What evidence from the text suggests the character is conflicted?”

h. **Multiple representation formats** (audio, video, text) *Short description:* Presenting content in different ways to support diverse learning styles. *Example:* A science lesson includes a short video, a diagram, and a written summary of the water cycle.

i. **Formative assessments to guide pacing** *Short description:* Ongoing checks for understanding to

adjust teaching speed or focus. *Example:* Giving a quick online quiz mid-unit and reteaching concepts students struggled with.

j. **Choice in assignments to encourage autonomy** *Short description:* Allowing students to select how they demonstrate learning. *Example:* For a history project, students can create a documentary video, write a research paper, or design a museum exhibit.

5. Cultural Responsiveness. Celebrate and validate student identities:

a. **Culturally relevant curriculum materials.** *Short description:* Use texts, examples, and topics that connect to students’ cultural backgrounds. *Example:* In a literature unit, include novels by authors from students’ communities alongside classics.

b. **Inclusion of student home languages in displays/materials.** *Short description:* Make the classroom physically reflect linguistic diversity. *Example:* Post classroom labels, welcome signs, and bulletin boards in English and students’ home languages.

c. **Highlighting diverse perspectives in subject matter** *Short description:* Incorporate voices and experiences from multiple cultures into lessons. *Example:* When teaching U.S. history, include Native American, African American, Latino, and immigrant perspectives.

d. **Inviting community members as guest speakers** *Short description:* Bring in role models from students’ own cultural or linguistic backgrounds. *Example:* A local elder shares traditional storytelling during a social studies unit.

e. **Celebrating cultural holidays and traditions** *Short description:* Recognize important events from students’ cultures in the classroom. *Example:* Create a multicultural calendar and invite students to present about upcoming celebrations.

f. **Encouraging students to share about their backgrounds**

Short description: Give students space to bring personal experiences into learning. *Example:* During a geography unit, students share family migration stories or favorite dishes from home.

g. **Creating a class culture of curiosity about differences** *Short description:* Normalize respectful questions and learning about other cultures. *Example:* Have a weekly “culture spotlight” where a student introduces a tradition, song, or artifact.

h. **Critical discussions about equity and justice** *Short description:* Encourage students to examine fairness and representation in society. *Example:* Discuss media representation of different groups and explore how it shapes perceptions.

i. **Storytelling that includes varied identities** *Short description:* Share stories in which characters reflect a wide range of cultures, abilities, and experiences. *Example:* Read picture books featuring protagonists from multiple cultural backgrounds.

j. **Acknowledging and addressing bias and stereotypes** *Short description:* Teach students to recognize and challenge unfair generalizations. *Example:* When a stereotype comes up

in class discussion, guide students to question its accuracy and origin.

6. Spiritual Engagement. Encourage reflection and values-based education:

a. **Reflective journaling or meditation practices.** *Short description:* Provide time for quiet self-reflection to build self-awareness. *Example:* Students spend 5 minutes at the end of class writing about what they learned and how it connects to their life.

b. **Exploring personal values in discussions.** *Short description:* Encourage students to articulate and examine what matters to them. *Example:* In a debate about environmental policy, students reflect on how their values influence their stance.

c. **Ethical dilemmas in case studies.** *Short description:* Present scenarios that require moral reasoning and empathy. *Example:* Discuss a story about a lost wallet and ask students how they would respond and why.

d. **Service-learning opportunities.** *Short description:* Connect classroom learning to meaningful community service. *Example:* Science students partner with a local park to test water quality and share results with the community.

e. **Goal-setting with personal purpose alignment.** *Short description:* Help students link academic goals to their deeper motivations. *Example:* A student sets a goal to improve in writing because they want to share stories from their culture.

f. **Incorporating student voice in rule-making.** *Short description:* Involve students in creating class expectations to foster ownership and fairness. *Example:* The class holds a meeting to agree on rules for respectful discussion.

g. **Using literature and art for inner exploration.** *Short description:* Engage students with creative works that prompt self-reflection. *Example:* After reading a poem about resilience, students create their own art expressing a time they overcame challenges.

h. **Vision boards and gratitude exercises.** *Short description:* Use creative tools to focus on goals and appreciation. *Example:* Students make a collage of images representing their hopes for the future, and share one thing they're grateful for weekly.

i. **Peace education or character education programs.** *Short description:* Teach skills for conflict resolution, empathy, and ethical decision-making. *Example:* Use a curriculum that includes role-play to practice resolving disagreements peacefully.

j. **Connecting learning to broader humanistic values** *Short description:* Link academic subjects to universal themes like compassion, justice, and responsibility. *Example:* In a history lesson, discuss how past leaders promoted human rights and how those values apply today.

7. Digital Equity. Bridge digital divides and support tech inclusion:

a. **Providing devices for all students.** *Short description:* Ensure every learner has the hardware needed for digital participation. *Example:* A school issues Chromebooks to all students for home and classroom use.

b. **Free or subsidized Wi-Fi programs.** *Short description:* Remove internet access barriers for students without reliable

service. *Example:* Partnering with local providers to give low-income families free hotspot devices.

c. **Digital literacy training for students and families.** *Short description:* Teach essential tech skills for learning and daily life. *Example:* Offering evening workshops on email, document creation, and safe browsing.

d. **Multiple submission methods** (video, audio, written) *Short description:* Allow students to demonstrate learning in varied formats. *Example:* For a book report, a student can turn in a written essay, record a podcast, or create a video review.

e. **Use of closed captions and screen readers.** *Short description:* Ensure digital content is accessible to students with hearing or vision needs. *Example:* All class videos include captions, and reading materials are compatible with screen readers.

f. **Training on responsible tech use and safety.** *Short description:* Promote digital citizenship and online security. *Example:* Lessons on recognizing phishing emails and protecting personal data.

g. **Virtual classroom platforms with accessible UI** *Short description:* Choose tools that are easy to navigate and work with assistive tech. *Example:* Using a learning management system that supports keyboard navigation and voice commands.

h. **Offline access to content** (printables, USB drives) *Short description:* Provide learning materials for students without consistent internet. *Example:* Weekly lesson packets are saved on USB drives for students to work on at home.

i. **Tech support hotlines or help desks.** *Short description:* Offer ongoing troubleshooting help for students and families. *Example:* A school-run helpline answers calls about device setup and login issues.

j. **Student-created tutorials to empower peers.** *Short description:* Let students teach others how to use tech tools. *Example:* A group of students makes a video series on using Google Docs and uploads it to the school site.

Challenges: Despite its promise, several barriers may hinder full integration:

- **Institutional constraints**, such as large class sizes or inflexible curricula, can limit individualized support.
- **Professional development gaps** may leave educators unequipped to address complex emotional, cultural, or digital comfort needs.
- **Resource limitations**, especially in underfunded schools, restrict improvements to physical or technological comfort.
- **Resistance to change** from staff or administration may inhibit adoption of comfort-centered models.

To overcome these challenges, schools must commit to holistic support systems, collaborative policy development, and ongoing educator training.

CONCLUSION:

At the heart of this study lies the mantra: "Love is the Lesson, and Comfort is the Classroom." Love, in this context, is not only an abstract value but a lived pedagogical practice that centers care, empathy, and respect in the learning process. Comfort, meanwhile, becomes the tangible environment

where students feel safe to learn, connect, and grow holistically. Together, love and comfort establish the foundation for student well-being and academic success.

Imagine, however, the lived realities of many learners: when students experience genuine love at home but struggle to find the same love in school, their enthusiasm for learning often weakens. Even more heartbreaking are those students who cannot find love at home—due to parental stress, absence, or neglect—and then enter classrooms where teachers also fail to provide the love and care they need. In such scenarios, schools risk perpetuating emotional emptiness rather than serving as sanctuaries of growth. It is precisely here that Carale's Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA) becomes essential.

CCLA offers a comprehensive, holistic framework that emphasizes the importance of creating multidimensional comfort within educational environments to enhance student engagement, emotional well-being, and learning outcomes. The theory identifies seven interconnected dimensions of comfort—physical, emotional, social, cognitive, cultural, spiritual, and digital—as essential elements that collectively shape students' overall educational experiences:

- Physical comfort: classroom conditions such as seating, lighting, and temperature that support focus and stamina.
- Emotional comfort: psychological safety built through empathy, patience, and responsiveness to learners' needs.
- Social comfort: positive peer interactions and respectful communication that cultivate belonging.
- Cognitive comfort: intellectual clarity, achievable expectations, and support that reduce stress and build confidence.
- Cultural comfort: inclusive practices affirming students' identities, values, and representation in learning.
- Spiritual comfort: fostering meaning, purpose, and ethical grounding in academic content.
- Digital comfort: supporting learners' access to and confidence with technology in today's digital learning spaces.

When teachers intentionally weave these seven dimensions into practice, students report greater participation, deeper engagement, and enhanced socioemotional well-being. Despite this promise, challenges to implementing CCLA persist, including institutional constraints, insufficient resources, and resistance to pedagogical change. Addressing these barriers requires systemic commitment to teacher training, resource support, and policy reform that prioritizes students' holistic growth.

Ultimately, Carale's CCLA framework provides schools with a model for becoming the wellspring of love and comfort that students can turn to, even when home or society falls short. By embracing the mantra "*Love is the Lesson, and Comfort is the Classroom*," teachers not only elevate academic outcomes but also answer the deeper human need for belonging and care.

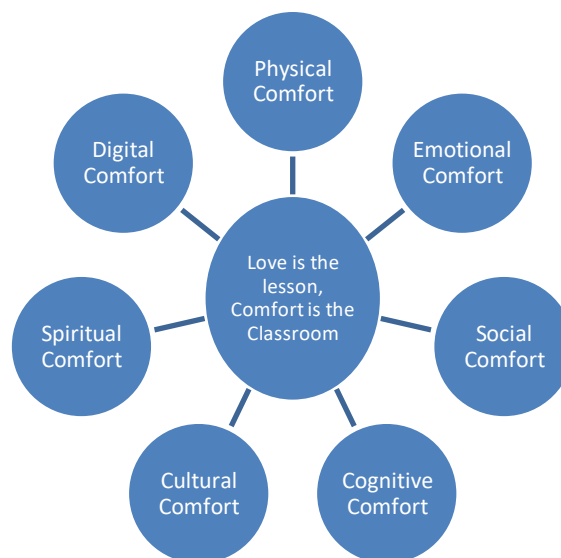


Figure 5. Conceptual Framework of CCLA (Carale, 2025)

The impact of Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (Carale, 2025), aims to improve the educational experience in modern classrooms. Specifically, on the following:

- **Holistic Framework:** A *holistic framework* suggests that the approach considers multiple interconnected aspects of students' well-being. It looks beyond just academic achievement and integrates emotional, social, and psychological factors to enhance the learning experience.
- **Enhancing Student Engagement:** This component refers to strategies or practices designed to increase students' involvement, interest, and participation in their learning process.
- **Emotional Well-Being:** Emotional well-being focuses on students' mental health, self-esteem, and overall emotional stability, which is essential for fostering a positive learning environment.
- **Learning Outcomes:** This relates to the academic results or achievements that are expected from students. The theory likely aims to improve how well students perform academically, including comprehension, critical thinking, and retention.
- **Contemporary Classrooms:** This refers to modern educational settings, which could include traditional classrooms as well as more flexible, technology-enhanced learning environments.

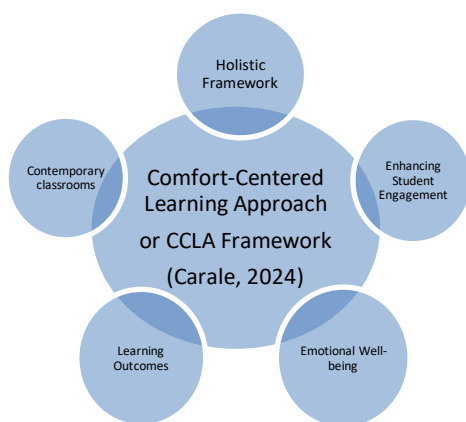


Figure No. 6 Learning Outcomes Framework

Recommendations for Enhancing Comfort in Learning Environments

1. Emotionally Attuned Teaching

- Train teachers in empathy, emotional intelligence, and trauma-informed practices.
- Use active listening, reflective teaching, and regular emotional check-ins to build trust and psychological safety.

2. Varied and Engaging Instruction

- Employ diverse teaching strategies (e.g., project-based learning, group work, technology integration).
- Integrate interactive digital tools and ensure equitable tech access.
- Adapt methods to students' learning preferences and foster real-world relevance.

3. Supportive and Value-Driven Climate

- Build strong teacher-student relationships rooted in respect and care.
- Incorporate reflective and values-based activities (e.g., journaling, discussions).
- Validate student identities and promote a sense of purpose.

4. Physically and Socially Inclusive Spaces

- Design classrooms for physical comfort (e.g., flexible seating, optimal lighting).
- Involve students in managing their learning space.
- Foster collaboration through peer support and group work.

5. Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Practices

- Implement culturally affirming curriculum and celebrate diversity.
- Use cooperative structures, restorative practices, and inclusive norms.
- Support student voice and storytelling to enhance belonging.

6. Balanced and Compassionate Discipline

Replace punitive approaches with restorative, growth-oriented discipline.

- Clearly communicate expectations and use positive reinforcement.

- Create a safe environment where mistakes are treated as learning opportunities.

7. Respect and Enthusiasm as Core Values

- Model enthusiasm and empathy in all interactions.
- Celebrate student contributions and foster mutual respect.
- Promote collaborative learning and empathetic communication.

8. Institutional and Policy-Level Recommendations

- Embed comfort principles in curriculum and teacher evaluation frameworks.
- Provide continuous professional development on comfort-centered pedagogy.
- Establish school-wide SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) and Maslow-aligned models.
- Encourage teacher mentorship and gather regular student feedback on comfort.
- Invest in classroom infrastructure and engage families in reinforcing comfort at home.

This framework positions comfort not as a luxury, but as a **foundational pillar of effective learning**—highlighting the importance of environments that are emotionally supportive, culturally inclusive, and pedagogically dynamic. At its heart, it is about love. If parents can earn their children's respect by giving them unconditional love—despite weaknesses and frailties—why should teachers not do the same? Within the classroom walls, students long for the same care and acceptance they receive, or wish to receive, at home. We often say, *"School is a second home."* With this truth comes a profound responsibility: to extend to students the same love and affection that families provide. Students are not sent to school merely to absorb academic content—they come to experience the **warmth, acceptance, and compassion that love imparts**. It is our duty to ensure that every child entrusted to us feels this genuine love. Love costs nothing, yet it's worth is beyond measure. And while it is freely available to give, it must also be given **intentionally, consistently, and abundantly**. As educators, our highest calling is to cultivate learning environments rooted in love—places where every child feels safe, valued, and supported.

"Kids that are loved at home, come to school to learn. Kids that aren't, come to school to be loved." **Dr. Andy McHazzlett**

This statement by Dr. Andy McHazzlett encapsulates the ethical and emotional foundation of education. It reminds educators that for many learners, school is not merely a site of cognitive development but a sanctuary of care and belonging. The quote profoundly aligns with the Comfort-Centered Learning Approach (CCLA), which positions love, empathy, and psychological safety as essential conditions for meaningful learning and holistic growth.

REFERENCES:

- [1] Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). *The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes*. Review of Educational Research, **79**(1), 491–525.

- [2] Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2017). *Social and emotional learning and teachers*. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 137–155.
- [3] CAST. (2018). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.2*. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>
- [4] Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press.
- [5] Maslow, A. H. (1943). *A theory of human motivation*. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396.
- [6] Zins, J. E., Weissberg, R. P., Wang, M. C., & Walberg, H. J. (2004). *Building academic success on social and emotional learning: What does the research say?* Teachers College Press.
- [7] Immordino-Yang, M. H., & Damasio, A. (2007). *We feel, therefore we learn: The relevance of affective and social neuroscience to education*. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 1(1), 3–10.
- [8] Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). *Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being*. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78.
- [9] Rogers, C. R. (1969). *Freedom to Learn*. Columbus, OH: Merrill Publishing Company.
- [10] Piaget, J. (1972). *The psychology of the child*. New York: Basic Books.
- [11] Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education*. New York: Macmillan.
- [12] Husserl, E. (1970). *The crisis of European sciences and transcendental phenomenology*. Northwestern University Press.
- [13] van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. SUNY Press.
- [14] Jennings, P. A., & Greenberg, M. T. (2009). The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research*, 79(1), 491–525. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654308325693>
- [15] Zins, J. E., Weissberg, R. P., Wang, M. C., & Walberg, H. J. (2004). *Building academic success on social and emotional learning: What does the research say?* Teachers College Press.
- [16] Immordino-Yang, M. H., & Damasio, A. (2007). We feel, therefore we learn: The relevance of affective and social neuroscience to education. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 1(1), 3–10. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-228X.2007.00004.x>
- [17] Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2017). Social and emotional learning and teachers. *The Future of Children*, 27(1), 137–155.
- [18] Zins, J. E., Bloodworth, M. R., Weissberg, R. P., & Walberg, H. J. (2004). The scientific base linking social and emotional learning to school success. In J. E.
- [19] Baker, J. A., Grant, S. R., & Morlock, L. (2006). The Teacher-Student Relationship as a Developmental Context for Children with Internalizing or Externalizing Behavior Problems. *School Psychology Review*, 35(3), 425–441.
- [20] Pianta, R. C. (1999). Enhancing Relationships Between Children and Teachers. *American Psychological Association*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10300-000>
- [21] Schneider, M., & Phelps, D. (2020). Building a Positive Classroom Climate for Student Success. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 112(3), 438–455. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000392>
- [22] Perry, B. D. (2006). The Neurobiology of Children's Traumatic Stress Responses and Implications for the Classroom. *Child Development*, 77(5), 1209–1218. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2006.00923.x>
- [23] Gillespie, L. S. (2016). Understanding the Importance of Teacher-Student Relationships in the Context of Trauma-Informed Education. *Journal of Trauma and Learning*, 5(2), 45–58.