

Classroom Management Issues for Social Studies Teachers: Navigating Learners' Behavior and Participation in General Santos City

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Abstract

Effective classroom management is vital in Social Studies education as it fosters critical thinking, active engagement, and collaborative learning. This study explored the classroom management challenges faced by Social Studies teachers in the GSC South District of General Santos City Division, utilizing a descriptive and correlational research design. The respondents included 262 Social Studies teachers and learners, with data analyzed using the mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r). Findings indicate that teachers experience moderate challenges, particularly with lesson interruptions, task transitions, and time management. While disruptive behaviors occur, they are not severe, and electronic device misuse is minimal. Teachers sometimes struggle with enforcing rules consistently and handling behavioral issues due to limited training. Despite

these challenges, learners generally exhibit positive behavior, including respect, self-control, punctuality, and rule compliance. They actively participate in class, collaborate well with peers, and take responsibility for their learning. Notably, no significant correlation was found between classroom management issues and learner behavior or participation, suggesting that other factors, such as teaching strategies, peer influence, and motivation, may have a stronger impact on engagement. To enhance classroom management and learner participation, schools should provide ongoing professional development, implement clear policies, utilize diverse teaching strategies, and foster a positive learning environment. Further research is recommended to explore additional factors influencing learner engagement and discipline.

Keywords: Classroom Management Issues, Social Studies Teachers, Learners' Behavior and Participation

I. Introduction

Classroom management is crucial in Social Studies education, where fostering critical thinking, active participation, and collaboration is essential. In the South District of General Santos City Division, Social Studies teachers often struggle with managing disruptive behaviors such as inattentiveness, talking out of turn, and lack of discipline. These challenges, coupled with low learner participation due to lack of interest or motivation, disrupt the learning environment and hinder meaningful engagement in a subject reliant on discussion and interaction.

Effective classroom management practices, including clear rules, consistent routines, and positive reinforcement, have been shown to reduce behavioral issues and enhance participation (Nisar, Khan, & Khan, 2019; Tran & Nguyen, 2021). Classrooms with well-defined management foster a sense of security, enabling learners to focus and actively participate (Chalak & Fallah, 2019). Authoritative approaches, which balance structure and support, further boost motivation and engagement (Tran & Nguyen, 2021).

However, Social Studies teachers face unique challenges due to diverse classrooms characterized by varying cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and large class sizes. While strategies like child-friendly rules and motivational techniques are employed, they are not always enough to overcome barriers to participation and academic success (Andrin et al., 2021). Additionally, gaps remain in understanding how classroom management affects long-term academic performance and social development. Research also calls for exploring hybrid approaches and integrating innovative strategies like socio-emotional learning into management practices (Corcelles et al., 2020). Addressing these gaps is essential to fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

1.1 Objective of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to explore and analyze the classroom management challenges faced by Social Studies teachers in navigating learners' behavior and participation in schools across the GSC South District of General Santos City Division. Specifically, this study had the following aims (1) explore the level of classroom management issues of the social studies teachers such as frequent disruptions, difficulty in transitioning, inconsistent enforcement of rules, insecure incidence of behavioral issues, and time management problems, (2) examine the level of the learners' behavior relative to engagement, respectfulness, self-control, punctuality, and compliance (3) discover the level of the learners' participation relative to involvement, collaboration, completion, initiative, and responsibility, and (4) investigate the relationship between classroom management issues and learner's behavior and participation.

II. Methods

To obtain the necessary data needed for the study, quantitative research was utilized. Vaidya (2018) defined it as a method of research that relies on measuring variables using a numerical system, analyzing these measurements using any of a variety of statistical models, and reporting relationships and associations among the studied variables.

Likewise, descriptive- correlational research design was employed by the researcher, as its main purpose is to determine the significant relationship between classroom management issues and learner's behavior and learner's participation. In one hand, the use of descriptive research involves measuring a variable as it exists naturally while regression research involves examining and describing the relationships between two or more independent variables to one dependent variable (Gravetter & Forzano, 2018). Through the utilization of these methodologies, the researcher sought to answer the relationship between classroom management issues and learner's behavior and participation.

For the sampling technique, purposive sampling technique was used in this study. As explained by Palinkas et al., (2015), it is a type of non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on specific characteristics that align with the research objectives. This method enables researchers to focus on a targeted subset of the population, ensuring that participants possess the qualities needed to address the research question. By intentionally selecting learners from the South District of General Santos City who have direct experience with the classroom management challenges under investigation, the study aims to gather rich, relevant data that reflects the local context. This focused approach allows for a deeper understanding of the issues being studied, particularly regarding classroom management, learner behavior, and participation. Purposive sampling also ensures that the study captures a range of perspectives, enhancing the validity and comprehensiveness of the findings.

In this study, the respondents included Social Studies teachers and their learners from selected schools in the South District of General Santos City, totaling 262 participants. The selection criteria for Social Studies teachers were designed to ensure the collection of relevant and reliable data. To be eligible, teachers had to be full-time Social Studies instructors currently employed in the selected schools. Additionally, they were required to have at least one year of teaching experience in Social Studies, as this experience ensured that they encountered classroom management challenges and could provide valuable insights. Participation in the study was voluntary, and teachers were required to provide informed consent and complete a survey questionnaire to be included.

Statistical tools such as weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson r were used for the analysis of data and interpretation of results.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1

The Level of Classroom Management Issues of Social Studies Teachers

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Frequent Disruptions	3.35	0.92	Moderately Agree
Difficulty in Transitioning	3.48	0.74	Agree
Inconsistent Enforcement of Rules	3.37	0.81	Moderately Agree
Insecure Incidence of Behavioral Issues	3.18	0.83	Moderately Agree
Time Management Problems	3.47	0.80	Agree
Mean	3.37	0.82	Moderately Agree

Table 1 presents the challenges Social Studies teachers face in managing their classrooms. The overall mean score of 3.37 (SD=0.82) suggests that teachers moderately agree with the presence of classroom management issues, such as frequent disruptions (m=3.35, SD=0.92), difficulty in transitioning between activities (m=3.48, SD=0.74), and inconsistent enforcement of rules (m=3.37, SD=0.81). Studies by Emmer and Evertson (2016) emphasize that frequent disruptions can negatively impact learner engagement and academic performance, while Marzano et al. (2003) argue that structured transitions help maintain learner focus. Additionally, inconsistency in rule enforcement, as noted by Weinstein and Romano (2015), can lead to confusion and reduced discipline in the classroom. The findings also highlight concerns regarding behavioral issues (m=3.18, SD=0.83) and time management problems (m=3.47, SD=0.80), which align with Simonsen et al.'s (2008) research on the importance of behavioral interventions and Stronge's (2018) findings on the impact of structured lesson plans.

Overall, these findings underscore the importance of integrating responsibility-focused activities in the classroom, such as reflective exercises, peer accountability systems, and leadership roles, to further strengthen learners' sense of ownership and accountability in their academic journey.

Table 2

The Level of Learners' Behavior

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Engagement	3.96	0.88	Agree
Respectfulness	4.10+	0.84	Agree
Self-control	4.00	0.86	Agree
Punctuality	3.86	0.9	Agree

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Compliance	3.84	0.88	Agree
Mean	3.95	0.87	Agree

Table 2 focuses on learners' behavior, with an overall mean of 3.95 (SD=0.87), interpreted as "Agree." This suggests that learners generally exhibit positive behaviors in the classroom. Indicators such as engagement (m=3.96, SD=0.88), respectfulness (m=4.10, SD=0.84), and self-control (m=4.00, SD=0.86) play a crucial role in fostering a conducive learning environment. Research by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) highlights that learner engagement is essential for academic success, while Pianta et al. (2012) stress that teacher-learner relationships contribute to respectfulness and cooperation. Moreover, Duckworth and Seligman (2005) suggest that self-control is a stronger predictor of academic achievement than intelligence. Punctuality (m=3.86, SD=0.90) and compliance (m=3.84, SD=0.88) also contribute to positive classroom behavior, as supported by studies such as Gottfried (2010), which links punctuality to better academic performance, and Skinner's (1953) behaviorist theory, which underscores reinforcement strategies for encouraging compliance.

Table 3
The Level of Learners' Participation

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Involvement	3.94	0.86	Agree
Collaboration	3.96	0.9	Agree
Completion	3.8	0.92	Agree
Initiative	3.98	0.86	Agree
Responsibility	4.0	0.88	Agree
Mean	3.93	0.88	Agree

Table 3 examines the level of learners' participation, with an overall mean of 3.93 (SD=0.88), interpreted as "Agree." This indicates that learners actively participate in learning activities, as evidenced by indicators such as involvement (m=3.94, SD=0.86), collaboration (m=3.96, SD=0.90), and completion of tasks (m=3.80, SD=0.92). Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory supports the idea that social interaction enhances learning, while Johnson and Johnson (1999) found that collaborative learning improves both academic performance and social skills. Furthermore, learners who take initiative (m=3.98, SD=0.86) and responsibility (m=4.00, SD=0.88) are more likely to be independent learners, as explained by Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory and Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory, which emphasize autonomy as a driver of motivation and responsibility.

Table 4
The Relationship Between Classroom Management Issues and Learner's Behavior

	N	Mean	SD	r	p-value	Interpretation
Classroom Management Issue	50	3.38	0.40	0.09	0.522	No Significant Correlation
The Level of Learner's Behavior	212	3.95	0.47	3		

.05 level of Significance (2 tailed)

The results in Table 4 indicate that there is no significant relationship between classroom management issues and learners' behavior ($r = .093$, $p = .522$). This finding suggests that the level of classroom management issues experienced by teachers does not directly influence learners' behavior in a statistically meaningful way. Given that the p-value (.522) is much higher than the standard significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis—that classroom management issues do not significantly affect learner behavior—cannot be rejected.

This result contrasts with previous studies that emphasize the role of effective classroom management in shaping learner behavior. For instance, Marzano et al. (2023) argue that well-structured classroom environments contribute to positive learner conduct and engagement. However, the current findings suggest that other factors, such as individual learner motivation, socio-emotional development, and external influences, might play a more significant role in determining behavior than classroom management alone (Wang & Degol, 2023).

Moreover, the relatively high mean for learners' behavior ($M = 3.95$, $SD = 0.47$) indicates that learners generally exhibit positive behavioral traits regardless of classroom management challenges. This aligns with the findings of Sun and Shek (2023), who suggest that learner resilience and intrinsic motivation contribute significantly to behavioral consistency in educational settings.

The lack of a significant correlation may also reflect the adaptability of both teachers and learners. According to Jones and Doolittle (2023), even when classroom management challenges arise, teachers often implement intervention strategies—such as positive reinforcement and conflict resolution—that mitigate potential behavioral disruptions. This could explain why classroom management issues do not significantly influence learner behavior in this study.

In its entirety, while classroom management remains an essential component of effective teaching, the findings suggest that it may not be the sole determinant of learners' behavior. Future research could explore other influencing factors, such as learner engagement strategies, peer interactions, and family support, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what shapes learner behavior.

Table 5

The Relationship Between Classroom Management Issues and Learner's Participation

	N	Mean	SD	r	p-value	Interpretation
Classroom Management Issue	50	3.38	0.40	0.149	0.301	No Significant Correlation
The Level of Learner's Participation	212	3.93	0.53			

.05 level of Significance (2 tailed)

The results in Table 17 indicate that there is no significant relationship between classroom management issues and learners' participation ($r = .149$, $p = .301$). Since the p-value (.301) is higher than the standard significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. This suggests that classroom management issues do not have a statistically meaningful impact on learners' participation in class activities.

This finding contrasts with previous research suggesting that well-managed classrooms contribute to higher learner engagement (Marzano et al., 2023). However, the relatively high mean for learner participation ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.53$) suggests that learners remain actively involved in learning activities despite potential classroom management challenges. This aligns with the argument by Wang and Eccles (2023), who suggest that learner participation is influenced more by intrinsic motivation, peer interactions, and instructional quality rather than classroom discipline alone.

Furthermore, Skinner and Pitzer (2023) highlight that learner participation is often sustained through supportive learning environments, regardless of minor disruptions. Similarly, Ryan and Deci's (2023) Self-Determination Theory suggest that when learners experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom, they are more likely to participate actively, independent of external factors such as teacher control or classroom discipline issues.

The absence of a significant correlation could also reflect the adaptability of learners and teachers. According to Jones and Doolittle (2023), even in classrooms with management difficulties, teachers often implement strategies such as collaborative learning and learner-led discussions to maintain engagement. This may explain why classroom management issues do not significantly impact learner participation in this study.

Thus, while effective classroom management remains important for maintaining order and focus, the findings suggest that learners' participation is not solely dependent on the presence or absence of management issues. Future studies could explore other factors influencing participation, such as instructional design, learner motivation, and peer support, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of learner engagement.

IV. Conclusion and Recommendation

The research focused on exploring and analyzing the classroom management challenges faced by Social Studies teachers in the GSC South District of General Santos City Division, specifically examining issues such as frequent disruptions, difficulties in transitioning, inconsistent enforcement of rules, behavioral concerns, and time management problems. It also assessed learners' behaviors in terms of engagement, respectfulness, self-control, punctuality, and compliance, as well as their participation through involvement, collaboration, responsibility, initiative, and overall engagement. Additionally, the study investigated whether there were significant relationships between classroom management issues and learner behavior or participation.

The findings revealed that teachers moderately agree they experience frequent disruptions, primarily due to behaviors that hinder lesson flow and affect transitions, though electronic device misuse was not a significant concern. Teachers also reported that transitioning between tasks is challenging, with learners struggling to shift smoothly and requiring frequent reminders, which disrupts lesson continuity. While teachers acknowledged difficulties in enforcing rules consistently and expressed uncertainty in managing behavioral issues—primarily due to gaps in training, they did not consider severe behavioral challenges to be a major problem. Time management emerged as a significant concern, with teachers struggling to allocate time effectively and often exceeding scheduled durations. Despite these issues, teachers generally observed that learners demonstrate respectful behavior, exhibit self-control, arrive punctually, and follow classroom rules, contributing to a positive classroom environment. Learners actively participate, collaborate effectively, complete tasks responsibly, and show initiative and accountability, which enhances their learning experiences.

Statistical analysis indicated no significant correlation between classroom management challenges and learner behavior or participation, suggesting that even with management difficulties, learners maintain positive conduct and engagement levels. Overall, the study concludes that classroom management issues are present but not overwhelmingly severe and do not significantly impact learner behavior and participation.

Moreover, it is recommended that teachers undergo targeted professional development focused on effective classroom management strategies, especially in facilitating smooth transitions and enforcing rules consistently. Implementing structured routines and signals can help improve lesson flow, while behavioral support programs and training can bolster teachers' confidence in managing behavioral issues. Additionally, adopting better time management techniques and lesson planning strategies can help address scheduling concerns. Emphasizing the cultivation of positive behaviors and active participation among learners should continue, leveraging their demonstrated strengths. Future research could explore other factors influencing learner behavior and engagement to develop more comprehensive strategies for creating conducive learning environments.

Therefore, despite classroom management challenges, learners remain engaged and well-behaved, reflecting the strength of a positive classroom culture; with targeted professional development and consistent strategies, teachers can further enhance classroom management and sustain an environment where both teaching and learning thrive.

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