

PREDICTORS OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE AS PERCEIVED BY SELECTED ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

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Abstract

This study explored the predictors of classroom disciplinary problems and their relationship to academic performance among elementary pupils in Zone IV, Division of Zambales during the school year 2014–2015. The main goal was to identify key factors that influence classroom discipline and examine how these relate to student academic outcomes. A descriptive research design was used, utilizing questionnaires and documentary analysis to gather data from 125 teacher-respondents. Data were analyzed using weighted means, t-tests, and correlation analysis. Findings revealed that disciplinary problems were perceived as “moderately serious,” with environmental factors being the most influential. The average academic performance was 84.92, interpreted as “approaching proficient.” Significant differences were noted in strategies to improve discipline when grouped by age and grade level, with a low positive correlation ($r = 0.359^{**}$) between discipline and academic performance. The study concluded that addressing discipline requires collaborative strategies involving teachers, parents, and schools, along with further in-depth research.

Keywords: Classroom discipline, academic performance, teacher perception, discipline factors;

Introduction

The teacher plays a vital role in the mental, physical, emotional and skills development of the students. The role of the mentor cannot be underestimated nor undermined that aside from ensuring all the cognitive development be taken into place, the teacher must maintain classroom discipline assuring all students should act accordingly demonstrating to be a good citizen and law-abiding students.

Inside the classroom, teachers face complex situations every day in dealing with different students of different cultures, behavior and set of values. At all costs, the teachers must deal with maximum level of tolerance, avoiding use of corporal punishment, verbal and physical means of discipline.

Every day, the students likewise deal with variety of experiences as they try to adapt and to be abreast to the modern world. Some are facing complex problems in dealing with friends, associates, teachers, media and environment which somehow influence or affect their personality. Time is at hand, to teach our young people to act and live in accordance with the rules and laws for them to contribute to the development and progress of our country.

Background of Study

Classroom disciplinary problems are considered as a century or a perennial problem which challenges the teacher's authority and the art of maintaining classroom discipline.

The academic performance is not sufficient as barometer to use in determining the effectiveness of the teacher. Classrooms with good discipline, harmonious relationships, demonstrating cooperative learning are indicators of a good teaching strategy, good classroom management and effective mentorship.

Based on recent records it shows the high percentage of elementary and high students, even college students who are facing disciplinary problems. Guidance personnel were tired-up on taking into accounts on the problems on tardiness, absenteeism, simple misconduct, cheating during examinations, stealing, forging teacher signature, cutting of classes or escape, bullying, betting or gambling, destroying school properties, sexual problems, and many negate behavioral problems.

The above cited problems affect classroom management leaving the responsibility to the teacher to take charge of instilling discipline.

It cannot be undermined by the bad and poor resulting behaviors such as drop-outs, early pregnancy, prostitution, drug addiction, poor study habits, poor academic performance and even early deaths.

School as a partner institution should look deeply at the emerging problems before it is too late where no single individual could be saved from misfortunes. The worth of a single soul is great in the sight of God. Before it is too late, everybody should work hand in hand looking for deeper reasons and causes for such behaviors, hence, this study.

Methodology

Research Design

In this study, the descriptive method of research was utilized to determine the factors and common disciplinary problems among school children.

The descriptive method does not merely accept the gathering of data and tabulation of results but also includes interpretation, and evaluation of what has been described in the questionnaire without analyzing relationships among variables.

Calmorin (2003) justified that a descriptive method signifies the gathering of data regarding the present situation.

Justification was likewise made by Sevilla (1993) when he said that the descriptive method includes data to test the hypothesis and the answer to the questions concerning the present status of the study.

Respondents and Location

The study used the quota sample of One Hundred fifty (125) from the 3 district: San Marcelino, Castillejos and Subic with a purpose sample of 40, 40, 45 from each district.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the teacher-respondents

Table 1

Distribution of the Teacher-Respondents

School	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Subic	45	36.00
Castillejos	40	32.00
San Marcelino	40	32.00
Total	125	100.00

This study was conducted among elementary schools in **Zone 4, Division of Zambales** covering **San Marcelino District**; Linasin ES, Laoag ES, San Guillermo ES, San Marcelino ES, **Castillejos District**: Pres. Magsaysay ES, Villaflor ES, San Agustin Integrated School, **Subic District**: Subic Central School, Manganvacca ES, Pamatawan ES.

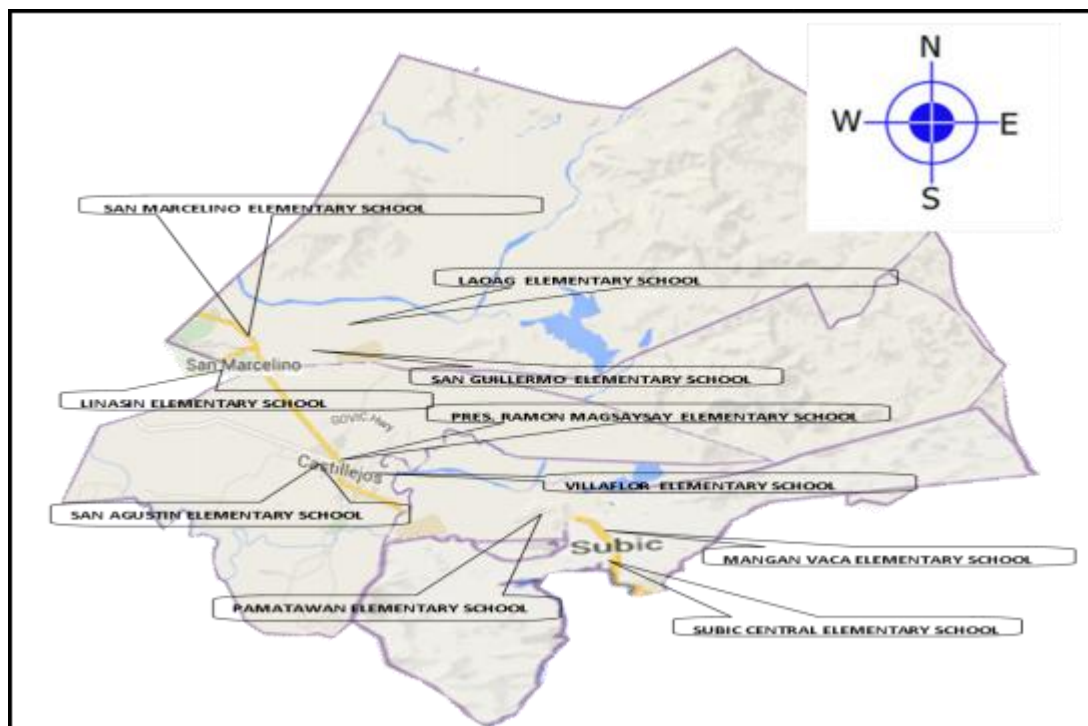


Figure 1. Map of the First District of Zambales

Instrument

The questionnaire was the main instrument used in gathering data for this study and supplemented with documentary analysis. The researcher had formulated the questionnaire based on his reading of books, magazines, teacher's journal, master's thesis and other related reading materials. It was constructed by the researcher after he had available materials to the topic and was submitted to the adviser for corrections and suggestions.

The first part of the questionnaire included the profile of the respondents which included the age, sex, civil status, grade level taught, position, and length of years in the service.

The second part dealt on the perception of common disciplinary problems prevalent among the school children. Part 3, dealt with the perceptions towards factors affecting classroom disciplinary problems as to teacher, family, environment, and school. Part 4 dealt with the suggested recommendations in solving or lessening classroom disciplinary problems.

Data Collection

Data collection involved distribution and retrieval of 125 questionnaires, facilitated with administrative permissions and peer assistance, achieving full retrieval within ten days.

Data Analysis

The statistical tools used in the study included **percentage**, which was applied to determine frequency distribution (Punzalan, 1992); **weighted mean**, used to evaluate the responses of the teacher-respondents (Calmorin & Calmorin, 2003); **ANOVA (F-test)**, employed to identify significant differences across groups; and the **Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (r)**, which was utilized to analyze the relationship between academic performance and the factors affecting classroom discipline (Calmorin, 2004).

Likert scales were applied to rate the seriousness of disciplinary issues and agreement on influencing factors. Academic performance was also categorized from *Beginning* to *Advanced* based on standard grading ranges.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Profile of Teacher Respondents

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	21	16.80
	Female	104	83.20
Age Group (years)	20-25	9	7.20
	26-30	18	14.40
	31-35	28	22.40
	36-40	29	23.20
	41-45	18	14.40
	46 and above	23	18.40
Grade Level Taught	1st Grade	22	17.60
	2nd Grade	16	12.80
	3rd Grade	23	18.40
	4th Grade	57	45.60
	5th Grade	4	3.20
	6th Grade	3	2.40

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Teaching Position	Teacher 1	86	68.80
	Teacher 2	20	16.00
	Teacher 3	4	3.20
	Master Teacher 1	9	7.20
	Master Teacher 2	6	4.80
Length of Service (years)	1-5	37	29.60
	6-10	26	20.80

The study involved 125 teacher respondents, with 16.8% males and 83.2% females. Their ages ranged mostly between 20 to over 46 years, with a mean age of 36.88 years. Most taught elementary grades, predominantly Fourth grade (45.6%), and held the Teacher 1 position (68.8%). The majority served between 1 to 20 years, averaging 12.4 years of service.

Table 2 for Perception of Common Disciplinary Problems based on your data:

Disciplinary Problem	Mean	Rank
Provoking loud noises disrupting classes	3.16	1
Regular absenteeism	3.15	2
Non-submission of projects and assignments on time	3.10	3
Gambling	2.28	Lowest
Smoking	2.28	Lowest
Coming to class under the influence of liquor	2.25	Lowest

Overall Weighted Mean: 2.66

Interpretation: Moderately Serious

Regarding disciplinary problems, teachers identified loud noises, absenteeism, and late submission of assignments as the most common issues, while gambling, smoking, and coming to class intoxicated were least frequent.

Table 3 for Perception of Factors Affecting Classroom Discipline divided into the four factors you mentioned, with their overall weighted means and qualitative interpretations:

Factor	Overall Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Teacher Factor	2.61	Moderately Agree
Family/Home Factor	3.09	Moderately Agree
Environmental Factor	3.79	Agree
School Factor	2.78	Moderately Agree

Factors influencing discipline included teacher authority, family values, environmental influences, and school resources, with respondents generally agreeing these contributed moderately to discipline problems.

Table 4 for Perception of Strategies to Improve Classroom Discipline based on the data you provided:

Strategy Indicator	Weighted Mean	Rank	Interpretation
Be fair and non-biased in implementing rules	4.66	1	Highly

Strategy Indicator	Weighted Mean	Rank	Interpretation
and policies			Recommended
Use of contingency contracts specifying sanctions	(last rank value)	Last	Highly Recommended
Commensurate sanctions (e.g., suspension, expulsion)	(last rank value)	Last	Highly Recommended

Overall Weighted Mean: 4.38
Overall Interpretation: Highly Recommended

Teachers highly recommended fair and consistent enforcement of rules and appropriate sanctions as strategies for improving classroom discipline. Students' academic performance averaged 84.92, interpreted as approaching proficient.

Table 5: Test of Significant Differences based on your provided info:

Variable	Perception on Common Disciplinary Problems	Perception on Factors Affecting Discipline	Perception on Strategies to Improve Discipline	Significant Difference?
Sex	p = 0.384 (No)	p = 0.642 (Teacher Factor, No)	p = 0.312 (No)	No significant difference
Age	p = 0.033 (Yes)	p = 0.117 (Teacher Factor, No)	p = 0.010 (Yes)	Significant difference in problems & strategies
Grade Level Taught	p = 0.222 (No)	p = 0.075 (Family Factor, No)	p = 0.002 (Yes)	Significant difference in strategies only
Teaching Position	p = 0.555 (No)	p = 0.823 (Teacher Factor, No)	p = 0.313 (No)	No significant difference
Length of Years	p = 0.737 (No)	p = 0.152 (Teacher Factor, No)	p = 0.7861 (No)	No significant difference

Note: p-values < 0.05 indicate significant differences.

Statistical tests showed no significant differences in perceptions of disciplinary problems based on sex, grade level taught, teaching position, or length of service, except for age, which showed significant variation. Similarly, no significant differences were found in factors affecting discipline across demographic groups.

Table 6: Test of Relationship based on your data:

Variables Tested	Correlation Coefficient (r)	t-test p-value	Significant?	Interpretation
Relationship between variables (specify)	0.359	0.000	Yes (p < 0.05)	Slight or low positive correlation; significant relationship

However, perceptions on discipline improvement strategies varied significantly by age and grade level. A low but significant correlation was found between certain variables, indicating some relationship exists.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the summary of findings, the researcher concluded that the typical respondent is a female in her middle adulthood, teaching fourth grade, holding the position of Teacher 1, and has served for more than ten years. The teacher respondents perceived common disciplinary problems as moderately serious. They moderately agreed that teacher, family, and school factors affect classroom discipline, while they agreed that environmental factors have a significant impact. The strategies proposed to improve classroom discipline were highly recommended. Pupils' academic performance was rated as "approaching proficient." There was a significant difference in perceptions toward factors affecting classroom disciplinary problems when respondents were grouped by age, but no significant difference was found based on sex, grade level taught, teaching position, or length of service. Similarly, no significant difference was observed in perceptions of disciplinary factors across the other profile variables. However, there was a significant difference in perceptions of strategies to improve classroom discipline when grouped by age and grade level taught. Lastly, a low correlation was found between academic performance and factors affecting classroom discipline.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends providing billboards and posters to remind students to maintain silence and good behavior during classes. Remedial classes should be conducted for students with justified absences. The school should seek sponsors to support financial needs for projects and activities. Trusted students could be assigned to report rule violations to the guidance office for appropriate action. Regular home visits are encouraged to monitor student progress, and parents should be advised to monitor their children's exposure to violent films. The school should provide adequate equipment and facilities to enhance the classroom environment and teaching process. Additionally, school activities should be carefully planned to avoid class disruptions. Finally, a follow-up study with a broader scope and deeper investigation into classroom discipline is recommended.

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