

# Behavioral Problems and Classroom Management Approaches among Junior and Senior High School Teachers in Mt. Province: A Mixed-Method Study

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## Abstract

Behavioral problems among adolescents remain a persistent challenge in secondary education, significantly affecting teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. This study examined the behavioral problems encountered by junior and senior high school teachers, the classroom management approaches they employ, and the level of effectiveness of these approaches. Using an exploratory sequential mixed-method design, qualitative data were first gathered through interviews and content analysis to identify prevalent behavioral issues and management strategies. These findings informed the development of a quantitative instrument administered to 45 teachers across three secondary schools in Mt. Province. Results revealed that common behavioral problems include disruptive behavior, defiance, academic dishonesty, absenteeism, poor work habits, rule violations, and improper use of technology. Teachers employed various classroom management approaches, including assertive, business-academic, behavioral modification, group managerial, group guidance, acceptance, and success approaches. Findings indicate that these approaches are generally highly effective (overall mean = 3.56), particularly those emphasizing structured routines, positive reinforcement, student engagement, and supportive communication. The study underscores the importance of integrating discipline with student-centered and developmentally appropriate strategies.

**Keywords:** Behavioral Problems, Classroom Management, Adolescents, Mixed-Method

## 1. Introduction

Education is recognized globally as a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of sustainable development, particularly emphasized in global frameworks promoting inclusive and equitable quality education. Effective classroom management is essential in achieving this goal, as it directly influences student engagement and academic success (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015; Evertson & Weinstein, 2013). Behavioral problems such as disruption, disengagement, and defiance significantly hinder instructional effectiveness and negatively affect classroom climate (Evans & Burke, 2024; McDoniel & Bierman, 2023). In Asian educational contexts, these challenges are further influenced by cultural diversity and evolving educational expectations (Asif et al., 2025; Buagas & Cabrera, 2025).

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage characterized by emotional, cognitive, and social transitions, making students more susceptible to behavioral issues (Lochman et al., 2016). Peer influence, academic stress, and identity formation are key contributing factors to student misbehavior (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Pascoe et al., 2020). Studies have also identified the role of school environments and teacher-student relationships in shaping behavior. Poorly structured environments and weak relationships contribute to disengagement and misconduct (Grannäs & Stavem, 2021; Gökaş & Kaya, 2023).

Classroom management is therefore not merely about discipline but about creating an environment conducive to learning (Wong et al., 2014). Various approaches—including assertive discipline, behavioral modification, and student-centered strategies—have been shown to improve student behavior and engagement (Ornstein, 1990; Nevin & Mandell, 2017). This study aims to examine the behavioral problems encountered by teachers and the classroom management approaches they employ, as well as the effectiveness of these strategies in secondary schools in Mt. Province.

## 2. Material and methods

### 2.1 Research Design

This study employed an exploratory sequential mixed-method design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), wherein qualitative data were initially collected and analyzed to identify prevalent behavioral problems and classroom management approaches. The findings from the qualitative phase informed the development of a quantitative instrument used to measure the effectiveness of these approaches.

## **2.2 Locale of the Study**

The study was conducted in three selected public secondary schools in Mountain Province, Philippines. These schools were chosen to represent typical classroom settings where behavioral challenges among adolescents are commonly observed.

## **2.3 Respondents of the Study**

The respondents consisted of 45 junior and senior high school teachers currently employed in the selected schools. These teachers were directly involved in classroom instruction and had firsthand experience in managing student behavior.

## **2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure**

Purposive sampling was used in the qualitative phase to select key informants with relevant teaching experience. For the quantitative phase, total enumeration was employed, wherein all available teachers in the selected schools participated in the survey.

## **2.5 Research Instrument**

A researcher-developed questionnaire was utilized in the quantitative phase of the study. The instrument was based on themes generated from the qualitative findings and included items measuring classroom management approaches and their perceived effectiveness. The instrument underwent content validation by experts and reliability testing, yielding a high Cronbach's alpha coefficient, indicating strong internal consistency.

## **2.6 Data Gathering Procedure**

Data collection began with the qualitative phase, where interviews were conducted with selected participants. The responses were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key behavioral issues and management strategies. Subsequently, a survey questionnaire was administered to the respondents in the quantitative phase. Necessary permissions were secured from school authorities prior to data collection.

## **2.7 Data Analysis Techniques**

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and categories of behavioral problems and management approaches. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, and standard deviation, to determine the level of effectiveness of the identified strategies.

## **2.8 Ethical Considerations**

The study adhered to ethical research standards, including voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality of responses. Participants were assured that their identities would remain anonymous and that the data would be used solely for research purposes.

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## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1 Behavioral Problems Encountered by Teachers**

The findings revealed seven major categories of behavioral problems, highlighting the complexity of student behavior influenced by developmental, social, and environmental factors. Disruptive classroom behavior was the most prevalent issue, characterized by excessive talking and unnecessary movement. This aligns with studies indicating that disruptive behavior often reflects unmet cognitive and emotional needs rather than simple disobedience (Khasinah, 2017; Evans & Burke, 2024). Additionally, poorly structured classroom environments contribute to such disruptions (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015).

Defiance and disrespect toward authority were also commonly reported. This behavior is closely linked to adolescent developmental needs for autonomy and identity formation (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Furthermore, negative teacher-student relationships may intensify defiant behaviors (Göktaş & Kaya, 2023). Academic dishonesty emerged as a recurring concern, often driven by academic pressure and fear of failure (Rastgar et al., 2025). Students with low self-efficacy are more likely to engage in dishonest practices as coping mechanisms (Pascoe et al., 2020).

Absenteeism and tardiness disrupted instructional continuity and were associated with disengagement and external factors such as socio-economic challenges (McDoniel & Bierman, 2023). These behaviors may also reflect stress-related avoidance patterns (Pascoe et al., 2020).

Poor work habits and lack of participation indicated low motivation, supporting findings that student engagement is strongly influenced by instructional practices and teacher support (Rone et al., 2023; Lampi et al., 2025). Violations of school rules, including bullying and vandalism, were linked to school climate and peer influence (Horton, 2022; Havewala et al., 2021). These behaviors negatively impact both safety and academic performance. The improper use of technology

was identified as a growing concern, consistent with research showing that digital distractions reduce attention and learning efficiency (Li & Yang, 2024).

### **3.2 Classroom Management Approaches**

Teachers employed multiple classroom management strategies, each supported by existing literature. The assertive approach emphasized clear rules and consistency, which have been shown to improve classroom order (Liao, 2018; Karal et al., 2026). The business-academic approach promoted structured routines and engagement, reducing opportunities for misbehavior (Das et al., 2026).

Behavioral modification strategies highlighted the effectiveness of reinforcement in shaping student behavior (Nevin & Mandell, 2017; Apranita et al., 2025). Group managerial approaches emphasized shared responsibility and collective discipline (Wu, 2026), while group guidance approaches focused on emotional support and counseling (Cloutier et al., 2026). Acceptance and success approaches underscored the importance of respect, empathy, and student achievement in promoting positive behavior (Weinstein & James, 2021; Saman, 2024).

### **3.3 Effectiveness of Classroom Management Approaches**

All approaches were rated as highly effective, with an overall mean of 3.56. This finding supports previous studies indicating that structured routines, engagement, and positive reinforcement significantly improve student behavior (Apranita et al., 2025; Zhang & Hu, 2025). The results suggest that effective classroom management requires a combination of strategies rather than reliance on a single approach. This aligns with research emphasizing the integration of structure, engagement, and emotional support (Wong et al., 2014).

### **3.4 Overall Synthesis**

The findings confirm that behavioral problems are interconnected and context-dependent. Effective classroom management requires a multidimensional approach integrating discipline, engagement, emotional support, and positive reinforcement. These results are consistent with both global and local literature, reinforcing that classroom management is about creating an environment where students can thrive academically and socially.

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## **4. Conclusion & Recommendations**

The study concludes that behavioral problems among junior and senior high school students in Mt. Province are multifaceted and influenced by developmental, social, and environmental factors. Common issues such as disruptive behavior, defiance, academic dishonesty, absenteeism, and misuse of technology significantly affect classroom dynamics and instructional effectiveness. The findings further reveal that teachers employ a combination of classroom management approaches—including assertive, behavioral modification, and student-centered strategies—which are generally perceived as highly effective. Overall, effective classroom management is not dependent on a single strategy but on the integration of structure, engagement, emotional support, and positive reinforcement.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers adopt a balanced and flexible approach to classroom management that combines clear expectations with supportive and student-centered practices. Schools should strengthen professional development programs focusing on behavior management strategies, student engagement, and socio-emotional learning. Additionally, collaboration among teachers, parents, and school administrators should be enhanced to address behavioral concerns holistically. Future researchers may explore similar studies in different regions or include additional variables such as school leadership and policy implementation.

This study is limited by its relatively small sample size and its focus on selected schools in Mt. Province, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. The reliance on self-reported data may also introduce response bias. Furthermore, the study focused primarily on teachers' perspectives and did not include student or parent viewpoints, which could provide a more comprehensive understanding of behavioral issues.

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## **Compliance with ethical standards**

This study adhered to established ethical standards in research. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were strictly maintained, and all data were used solely for academic purposes. Permission to conduct the study was secured from relevant school authorities. The researcher declares no conflict of interest and assumes full responsibility for the integrity and accuracy of the data presented. All sources used in the study were properly acknowledged in accordance with academic and copyright standards.

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