IGNATIAN
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH
www.icceph.com
ISSN 2984-9942

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH LEARNER BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN MULTIGRADE CLASSES: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY IN SIARGAO, PHILIPPINES

Christonie C. Gumanoy, Maria Teresa O. Ajos

Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc., Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Multigrade teaching presents instructional and classroom management challenges, particularly in geographically isolated communities with limited educational resources. This study examined classroom management strategies and their relationships with learner behavior and academic performance in multigrade classes in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte, Philippines, during the Academic Year 2025-2026. A mixed-methods approach incorporating descriptive-correlational analysis and qualitative inquiry was employed, involving nine multigrade teachers and 183 learners from nine public elementary schools. Data were gathered through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and qualitative analysis. Findings revealed favorable classroom management practices and learner behavior, with an overall teacher-reported behavioral mean of 4.33. Learner participation (M = 4.47) and social interaction (M = 4.44) received particularly high ratings. However, academic performance in English, Mathematics, and Science remained below expectations, with an overall mean percentage score of 61.51. Classroom management strategies demonstrated significant positive relationships with learner behavior ($r = .803$, $p = .009$) and academic performance ($r = .752$, $p = .019$). Qualitative findings highlighted differentiated instruction, structured routines, peer learning, and resource constraints. The study concluded that effective classroom management was associated with positive learner behavior but required complementary instructional support to address academic achievement gaps.

Keywords: *classroom management strategies, multigrade classes, learner behavior, academic performance, mixed-methods research, Siargao Division*

INTRODUCTION

Multigrade education plays a vital role in ensuring access to basic education in geographically isolated and disadvantaged communities. However, teaching learners from different grade levels within a single classroom presents considerable challenges, particularly in maintaining positive classroom behavior, sustaining learner engagement, and achieving satisfactory academic performance. Teachers must simultaneously address varying developmental characteristics, learning competencies, and instructional needs while managing limited time and resources. These conditions make classroom management an essential component of effective multigrade instruction. Lacre and Valle (2024) examined classroom management practices and academic performance among multigrade learners in Misamis Oriental, emphasizing the importance of organized classroom environments and appropriate management practices in supporting learning. Their study highlights the need to examine how classroom management strategies relate to learner behavior and academic achievement, particularly in schools operating under challenging educational conditions.

Classroom management strategies extend beyond maintaining discipline and establishing classroom rules. They involve teachers' instructional competence, professional behavior and attitudes, classroom structure and organization, management of instructional resources, and strategies that encourage learners' self-regulation and participation. In multigrade classrooms, these dimensions become particularly important because teachers must facilitate different learning activities simultaneously while ensuring that learners remain attentive and engaged. Bunga (2025) emphasized the importance of differentiated instruction in Philippine multigrade classrooms, particularly in instructional planning, lesson delivery, and classroom management. The study highlighted the need for teachers to demonstrate competencies that accommodate learners' diverse abilities and educational requirements. These findings suggest that effective classroom management requires flexible instructional approaches, appropriate learning activities, and organized classroom routines that respond to the complexities of multigrade teaching.

Teacher competence and classroom organization are also essential in developing positive learner behavior and maintaining productive learning environments. Teachers who establish consistent routines, encourage collaborative learning, and provide developmentally appropriate activities may be better positioned to promote learner participation, cooperation, attention, and self-discipline. However, implementing these strategies becomes more demanding when teachers handle several grade levels with different curricular requirements. Research involving multigrade teachers in geographically isolated Philippine schools identified contextualized teaching, differentiated instruction, and community participation as important practices for addressing instructional challenges (Maloloy-on & Apas, 2025). These findings indicate that classroom management must be responsive to learners' characteristics and the circumstances of their educational environment. They also reinforce the importance of examining learner behavior through attention and on-task engagement, participation in classroom activities, compliance and self-discipline, and social interaction.

Academic performance represents another important consideration in evaluating classroom management strategies. Although positive classroom behavior may contribute to favorable learning conditions, academic achievement also depends on instructional quality, learner readiness, assessment practices, and access to appropriate learning resources. In multigrade settings, teachers must distribute instructional time across different grade levels while ensuring that learners develop the competencies required in English, Mathematics, and Science. Baaten (2026) examined instructional practices and educational constraints among multigrade teachers in the Western Mountain Province and identified challenges affecting the implementation of instruction in resource-constrained settings. These findings underscore the importance of considering both classroom management practices and contextual limitations when examining learner achievement. Consequently, positive learner behavior should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of satisfactory academic performance, since these outcomes represent related but distinct dimensions of educational effectiveness.

Despite the importance of effective classroom management, multigrade teachers continue to experience challenges involving limited instructional materials, insufficient preparation time, diverse learner needs, and difficulties managing simultaneous classroom activities. These challenges are particularly relevant in island communities, where geographic isolation, transportation difficulties, and unpredictable weather conditions may further restrict access to educational resources and professional support. Dampilag (2026) identified time constraints, classroom management difficulties, learner diversity, and inadequate resources among the challenges experienced by multigrade teachers in Ifugao. The study also documented coping strategies involving differentiated instruction, peer teaching, flexible grouping, and collaboration with parents and colleagues. Such findings demonstrate that classroom management practices are influenced not only by teachers' competencies but also by the availability of institutional and community support.

In General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte, multigrade education serves learners in small and geographically dispersed island communities. The present study covered nine public elementary schools with nine multigrade teachers and 183 learners during School Year 2025–2026. Teachers in these schools managed learners from different grade levels within shared instructional spaces while addressing challenges involving limited resources, varied learning abilities, and environmental constraints. Although previous studies have investigated multigrade teaching practices and instructional challenges in other Philippine settings, localized evidence remains limited regarding the relationships between classroom management strategies, learner behavior, and academic performance in island-based multigrade schools. Furthermore, quantitative assessments alone may not fully explain the instructional difficulties and adaptive practices experienced by teachers and learners. This research gap highlights the need for an integrated investigation that considers both measurable classroom outcomes and the lived experiences of participants.

Therefore, this study examined classroom management strategies and their relationships with learner behavior and academic performance in multigrade classes in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte, Philippines. Specifically, it

assessed classroom management strategies in terms of teacher competence, teacher behavior and attitude, classroom structure and organization, management of available instructional resources, and learners' classroom management. It also examined learner behavior through attention and on-task engagement, classroom participation, compliance and self-discipline, and social interaction, alongside academic performance in English, Mathematics, and Science. Furthermore, the study determined the significant relationships among the variables, explored the lived experiences of teachers and learners, and integrated quantitative and qualitative findings to develop a proposed intervention program. Through a mixed-methods approach, the study sought to contribute context-specific evidence that could inform instructional improvement, teacher professional development, resource allocation, and educational support for multigrade schools in geographically isolated communities.

Research Questions

This study examined classroom management strategies and their relationships with learner behavior and academic performance in multigrade classes in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte, Philippines, during School Year 2025–2026.

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the multigrade teachers in terms of age, gender, training attended, years in service, and position?
2. What classroom management strategies are employed by multigrade teachers in terms of:
    - Teacher competence;
    - Teacher behavior and attitude;
    - Classroom structure and organization;
    - Management of available instructional resources; and
    - Learners' classroom management?
3. What is the level of learners' classroom behavior in terms of attention and on-task engagement, participation in classroom activities, compliance and self-discipline, and social interaction?
4. What is the academic performance of multigrade learners in English, Mathematics, and Science, as measured by their mean percentage scores (MPS)?
5. Is there a significant relationship between classroom management strategies and learners' classroom behavior and academic performance?
6. What are the lived experiences of teachers and learners regarding classroom management practices in multigrade classes?
7. How do the qualitative findings support, corroborate, or contradict the quantitative results?
8. What intervention program may be proposed to strengthen classroom management strategies and improve learner behavior and academic performance in multigrade classes?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach integrating descriptive-correlational quantitative analysis and qualitative inquiry to examine classroom management strategies and their relationships with learner behavior and academic performance in multigrade classes. The quantitative component described the classroom management practices employed by teachers, assessed learners' classroom behavior and academic performance, and determined the significant relationships among the study variables. The qualitative component explored the lived experiences of teachers and learners to provide a deeper understanding of classroom management practices, instructional challenges, and adaptive strategies in multigrade settings. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings provided a more comprehensive understanding of the educational conditions experienced in geographically isolated schools.

The study was conducted during School Year 2025–2026 in nine public elementary and primary schools in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte, Philippines. These schools were Anajawan Elementary School, Cabitoonan Elementary School, Corazon Elementary School, Daku Elementary School, Dao Primary School, La Januza Elementary School, Magsaysay Elementary School, Mam-on Primary School, and Tawin-Tawin Elementary School. The research locale was selected because of its island-based educational context, where multigrade classes are implemented to accommodate small learner populations and limited teacher deployment. The participating schools experienced geographical and logistical challenges, including transportation difficulties, inadequate instructional resources, and limited access to professional development opportunities.

The study involved nine multigrade teachers and 183 learners from the participating schools. Each school was represented by one teacher handling two or more grade levels within a single classroom, with learner populations ranging from 12 to 28 per school. Total enumeration was employed to include all nine multigrade teachers in the district, ensuring comprehensive representation of the classroom management practices across the identified schools. Teachers' demographic characteristics, including age, gender, training attended, years in service, and position, were gathered to describe their professional backgrounds. Teachers and learners also participated in the qualitative component through interviews and focus group discussions to provide firsthand accounts of their experiences in multigrade classrooms.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire and interview guide aligned with the study objectives. The questionnaire gathered information on teachers' demographic characteristics, classroom management strategies, perceived effects on learner behavior and academic performance, and challenges encountered in multigrade instruction. Classroom management was examined through teacher competence, teacher behavior and attitude, classroom structure and organization, management of available instructional resources, and learners' classroom management. Learner behavior was assessed in terms of attention and on-task engagement, participation in classroom activities, compliance and self-discipline, and social interaction. Academic performance was determined using mean percentage scores (MPS) in English,

Mathematics, and Science. Questionnaire responses were rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always). Interviews and classroom observations supplemented the quantitative data by documenting actual classroom practices, instructional difficulties, and participants' experiences.

The research instruments underwent expert validation and pilot testing before their administration. Three validators, consisting of a graduate-level research adviser, an education program supervisor specializing in curriculum development and multigrade instruction, and an experienced multigrade teacher, reviewed the instruments for content relevance, clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with the research objectives. Their recommendations were incorporated into the revised questionnaire and interview guide. Subsequently, the questionnaire was pilot-tested among ten multigrade teachers from a neighboring district who were not included in the actual study. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a reliability coefficient above .80, indicating satisfactory reliability for the study's quantitative instrument.

Data collection commenced after the researcher secured the necessary approvals from the Schools Division Superintendent, district supervisor, and participating school heads. The researcher personally visited the selected schools to explain the study objectives, distribute the validated questionnaires, and conduct the interviews and classroom observations. Respondents were given approximately one week to complete the questionnaires. Accomplished instruments were subsequently retrieved, checked for completeness, and encoded for statistical analysis. Interviews and focus group discussions provided qualitative accounts of classroom management practices and the challenges encountered by teachers and learners.

Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages to describe respondents' demographic characteristics and weighted means to determine the levels of classroom management strategies and learner behavior. Academic performance was summarized using mean percentage scores in English, Mathematics, and Science. Pearson's product–moment correlation coefficient was employed to determine the strength and direction of relationships between classroom management strategies and learner behavior and academic performance, with statistical significance evaluated at the .05 level. Ranking was also used to identify the most frequently encountered classroom management challenges. Qualitative responses from interviews and focus group discussions were examined to identify recurring experiences, practices, and challenges. The quantitative and qualitative findings were subsequently compared and integrated to determine areas of convergence and divergence and to provide a basis for developing a proposed classroom management intervention program.

RESULTS

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Multigrade Teachers (N = 9)

Characteristic	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
20–25 years	1	11.11
26–30 years	2	22.22
31 years and above	6	66.67
Gender		
Male	1	11.11
Female	8	88.89
Years in service		
0–3 years	1	11.11
4–7 years	2	22.22
8–15 years	3	33.33
16–25 years	3	33.33
26 years and above	0	0.00
Position		
Teacher I	3	33.33
Teacher II	2	22.22
Teacher III	4	44.44
Master Teacher	0	0.00

Note. Each demographic characteristic totals nine respondents (100%). The manuscript's separate table labeled "Trainings Attended" reports teacher-competence indicators rather than training frequencies; those indicators are included under Research Question 2.

Table 2

Classroom Management Strategies Employed by Multigrade Teachers

Dimension	Mean (M)	Descriptive equivalent
Teacher competence	4.56	Very High
Teacher behavior and attitude	4.62	Very High
Classroom structure and organization	4.47	Very High
Management of available instructional resources	4.43	Very High
Learners' classroom management	4.52	Very High

Note. Values are the category means reported in the manuscript's Tables 3.1–3.5. Scale: 4.21–5.00 = Very High; 3.41–4.20 = High; 2.61–3.40 = Moderate; 1.81–2.60 = Low; 1.00–1.80 = Very Low.

Table 3

Teacher-Reported Levels of Learners' Classroom Behavior

Behavioral dimension	Mean (M)	Descriptive equivalent
Attention and on-task behavior	4.21	Very High
Participation in classroom activities	4.47	Very High
Compliance and self-discipline	4.18	High
Social interaction	4.44	Very High
Overall mean	4.33	Very High

Note. Values are from the manuscript's Table 4.1.5.

Table 4

Quarterly Mean Percentage Scores of Multigrade Learners in English, Mathematics, and Science

Subject	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Average MPS	Performance level
English	63.98	56.85	63.27	67.31	62.85	Did Not Meet Expectations
Mathematics	58.85	56.06	57.03	61.30	58.31	Did Not Meet Expectations
Science	64.05	57.96	65.78	65.71	63.38	Did Not Meet Expectations
Overall	62.29	56.96	62.03	64.77	61.51	Did Not Meet Expectations

Note. MPS = mean percentage score.

Table 5

Pearson Correlations Between Classroom Management Strategies and Learner Outcomes

Variables	Pearson's r	p	Statistical result	Decision on H_0
Classroom management strategies and learner behavior	.803	.009	Significant	Reject
Classroom management strategies and academic performance	.752	.019	Significant	Reject

Note. Statistical significance was evaluated at α = .05.

Table 6

Themes Emerging from the Lived Experiences of Multigrade Teachers

Theme	Reported experiences
Adaptive and structured daily classroom management	Consistent routines, differentiated lesson preparation, strategic grouping, and independent learning activities
Use of differentiated instruction, grouping, and rotational teaching	Flexible grouping, adjusted tasks and assessments, rotational instruction, peer tutoring, and cooperative learning
Interconnected challenges in multigrade classroom management	Heavy workload, limited instructional time, inadequate materials, noise, transitions, and diverse learning needs
Gradual positive learner reactions and behavioral development	Increasing independence, responsibility, cooperation, and discipline through routines and assigned classroom roles
Impact of multigrade teaching on academic performance	Independent learning, repetition, peer support, and differentiated activities, alongside continuing time and resource limitations
Need for comprehensive and sustained support	Instructional materials, ICT resources, training, mentoring, improved facilities, transportation support, and community involvement

Table 7

Themes Emerging from the Lived Experiences of Multigrade Learners

Theme	Reported experiences
Importance of classroom rules and discipline	Listening attentively, following rules, respecting others, and completing independent tasks
Challenges in the multigrade learning environment	Limited teacher assistance, distractions, insufficient materials, varying learning paces, and difficulties with group work
Teacher support as a key factor in learning	Repeated explanations, demonstrations, reminders, encouragement, constructive feedback, and peer assistance
Desired improvements in the classroom	Additional books, activity sheets, visual aids, quieter classrooms, improved seating, and hands-on learning activities

Table 8

Joint Display of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Area	Quantitative findings	Qualitative findings	Integration
Classroom management effectiveness	Teacher competence: M = 4.56; classroom structure and organization: M = 4.47	Structured routines, differentiated instruction, rotational teaching, and peer tutoring	Convergence
Instructional resources	Resource management: M = 4.43	Material shortages, improvisation, limited ICT access, and shared learning materials	Complementarity
Learner behavior	Teacher-reported behavior: M = 4.33; learner-reported behavior: M = 4.45	Classroom rules, cooperation, peer support, and gradual behavioral development	Convergence
Academic performance	Overall MPS = 61.51; r = .752, p = .019	Limited instructional time, varied learner readiness, repeated explanations, and insufficient resources	Complementarity
Classroom management challenges	Significant relationships between classroom management and learner outcomes	Instructional overload, time constraints, noise, and limited institutional support	Complementarity
Basis for intervention	Favorable classroom management and behavior ratings; academic performance below expectations	Need for teacher training, instructional materials, and sustained support	Convergence of identified needs

Note. M = mean; MPS = mean percentage score.

Table 9

Proposed Intervention Program for Multigrade Teaching

Program component	Proposed activity or target	Target period
Teacher instructional competence	Improve multigrade teaching strategies through professional development, mentoring, and Learning Action Cell activities	September 2026

Instructional resource development	Develop appropriate instructional and learning materials	August 2026
ICT integration	Integrate ICT into multigrade teaching and learning	October 2026
Classroom environment	Improve classroom organization and learning conditions	July 2026
Institutional and community support	Strengthen school-level support systems and stakeholder participation	Throughout the school year

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide insights into classroom management strategies and their relationships with learner behavior and academic performance in multigrade classes in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte. The results revealed highly rated classroom management practices and favorable learner behavior, but academic achievement remained below expectations. The significant positive relationships between classroom management strategies and learner outcomes further highlighted the importance of organized instruction, teacher competence, and supportive classroom environments. The qualitative findings provided additional explanations of these patterns by identifying adaptive instructional practices, resource limitations, and the challenges associated with teaching multiple grade levels simultaneously.

Demographic Characteristics of Multigrade Teachers

The demographic findings revealed that most multigrade teachers were female, aged 31 years and above, and held Teacher III positions. The respondents also represented varying lengths of teaching experience, with most having served for at least eight years. These characteristics suggest that multigrade instruction in the participating schools was primarily undertaken by teachers with established professional experience. However, teaching experience alone does not necessarily ensure adequate preparation for the simultaneous management of different grade levels. Teachers must continually adapt their instructional practices to accommodate differences in learner readiness, curriculum requirements, and classroom conditions.

Jimenez (2025), in a qualitative study involving multigrade teachers in Cervantes, Ilocos Sur, identified instructional practices, professional experiences, and training needs as important dimensions of multigrade teaching. This supports the importance of examining teachers' professional backgrounds alongside their actual classroom experiences. The findings of the present study suggest that professional development programs should recognize differences in teachers' experience and instructional responsibilities rather than assuming that all multigrade teachers require identical forms of support.

Classroom Management Strategies Employed by Multigrade Teachers

The findings indicated that all five dimensions of classroom management were rated very high. Teacher behavior and attitude obtained the highest mean (M = 4.62), followed by teacher competence (M = 4.56), learners' classroom management (M = 4.52), classroom structure and organization (M = 4.47), and management of available instructional resources (M = 4.43). These results indicate that teachers reported consistently employing classroom management practices despite the challenges of handling learners from different grade levels.

The highest rating for teacher behavior and attitude suggests the importance of maintaining positive relationships, patience, responsiveness, and professional commitment in multigrade classrooms. Teacher competence and learners' classroom management also received favorable ratings, indicating the reported use of instructional organization and behavioral guidance. Although instructional resource management received the lowest mean, it remained within the very high category. This distinction suggests that teachers perceived themselves as effectively managing available materials even when the actual supply of resources was limited.

Ares-Ferreirós et al. (2025), in a systematic review of international multigrade education studies, identified differentiated instruction, classroom organization, teacher preparation, and contextual adaptation as important aspects of effective multigrade teaching. Their review also highlighted persistent challenges involving resources and professional support. These findings are consistent with the present study's evidence that teachers employed adaptive classroom management practices while operating under constrained educational conditions. Accordingly, favorable ratings of classroom management should be understood alongside the practical difficulties experienced in implementing these strategies.

Learners' Classroom Behavior

The results revealed a very high overall level of teacher-reported learner behavior (M = 4.33). Participation in classroom activities received the highest rating (M = 4.47), followed by social interaction (M = 4.44), attention and on-task behavior (M = 4.21), and compliance and self-discipline (M = 4.18). These findings indicate that learners were generally perceived as actively participating in classroom activities, interacting positively with peers, and demonstrating appropriate classroom behavior.

The relatively higher ratings for participation and social interaction suggest that cooperative activities and peer-supported learning were prominent features of the multigrade environment. In classrooms where teachers simultaneously facilitate different grade levels, learner collaboration can provide opportunities for continued engagement while other groups receive direct instruction. However, compliance and self-discipline obtained the lowest behavioral rating, indicating that maintaining consistent behavioral regulation remained comparatively challenging.

Laduan (2026) examined behavioral management challenges among multigrade teachers in Bakun, Benguet, and highlighted the importance of context-responsive strategies and collaboration in addressing learner behavior. This supports the present finding that classroom behavior requires more than disciplinary enforcement. Structured routines, appropriate instructional activities, and positive teacher–learner relationships are also relevant to maintaining engagement and cooperation. The results therefore suggest that multigrade classroom management should promote both active participation and the gradual development of learner independence and self-discipline.

Academic Performance of Multigrade Learners

Despite favorable classroom management and behavioral ratings, the academic performance of multigrade learners remained below expectations. The overall mean percentage score was 61.51, with Science obtaining the highest subject mean (MPS = 63.38), followed by English (MPS = 62.85) and Mathematics (MPS = 58.31). All three learning areas were classified as Did Not Meet Expectations. The quarterly results also showed fluctuations in achievement, with the lowest overall performance recorded during the second quarter (MPS = 56.96).

These findings demonstrate that positive classroom behavior and favorable teacher-reported management practices did not necessarily correspond to satisfactory academic achievement. Mathematics recorded the lowest subject performance, suggesting a need for greater instructional attention to numeracy competencies. Similarly, the below-expectation results in English and Science indicate that learners continued to experience difficulties acquiring the assessed competencies.

The findings can be understood through the inclusive education perspective presented by Parfitt et al. (2025), who examined multigrade teaching and learning as a setting involving diverse learner needs and pedagogical arrangements. Their work emphasizes the importance of understanding instructional practices within the complexities of mixed-grade classrooms. In the present study, teachers' simultaneous responsibility for different grade levels may have limited opportunities for individualized instruction, sustained practice, and timely assessment. However, these possible explanations should be considered alongside other factors, including learner readiness, attendance, instructional resources, and home learning conditions. The findings indicate that effective classroom management provides a supportive learning environment but is not, by itself, sufficient to ensure satisfactory academic achievement.

Relationships Between Classroom Management Strategies and Learner Outcomes

The correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between classroom management strategies and learner behavior ($r = .803$, $p = .009$) and between classroom management strategies and academic performance ($r = .752$, $p = .019$). Both relationships were statistically significant at the .05 level, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis. The stronger correlation with learner behavior suggests that classroom

management practices were more closely associated with behavioral outcomes than with academic achievement in the participating schools.

These findings indicate that higher classroom management ratings were associated with more favorable learner behavior and academic performance. Organized classroom routines, responsive teaching practices, and effective management of learning activities may help establish conditions that support learner participation and achievement. Nevertheless, the significant correlations do not establish that classroom management strategies directly caused improvements in either outcome.

Castino (2026), in a study involving public elementary schools in Rodriguez, Rizal, similarly reported significant relationships between classroom management practices, pupils' learning behaviors, and academic performance. The study found a moderate positive relationship between classroom management and academic performance ($r = .637$, $p < .05$). This supports the direction of the relationships identified in the present investigation, although differences in research settings, respondents, and measurement procedures limit direct comparison of correlation magnitudes. Collectively, these findings indicate that classroom management is an important correlate of learner outcomes while reinforcing the need to examine additional instructional and contextual factors.

Lived Experiences of Multigrade Teachers and Learners

The qualitative findings revealed that teachers relied on structured routines, differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, rotational teaching, independent activities, and peer tutoring to manage learners from different grade levels. These practices allowed teachers to organize simultaneous learning activities and provide instructional assistance according to learners' needs. Teachers also described challenges involving heavy workloads, limited instructional time, inadequate materials, classroom noise, and difficulties addressing different learning competencies within a shared instructional space.

Learners similarly emphasized the importance of classroom rules, teacher guidance, peer assistance, and organized learning activities. Their experiences indicated that clear instructions, repeated explanations, demonstrations, encouragement, and supportive interactions helped them participate in classroom activities. However, they also reported distractions, limited teacher assistance, insufficient learning materials, and difficulties completing certain tasks independently.

These experiences are consistent with the challenges and opportunities documented by Ares-Ferreirós et al. (2025), whose systematic review identified the simultaneous demands of curriculum differentiation, instructional organization, and resource management in multigrade education. The findings of the present study further demonstrate that teachers' classroom management strategies were shaped by the educational realities of island communities. They also indicate that effective multigrade instruction depends on teachers' adaptability and the availability of appropriate institutional support.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The integration of findings revealed areas of convergence and complementarity. The very high ratings for teacher competence and classroom organization were supported by qualitative accounts describing structured routines, differentiated instruction, rotational teaching, and peer-assisted learning. Similarly, favorable learner behavior ratings were consistent with participants' descriptions of classroom cooperation, active participation, and the development of learner responsibility.

However, the qualitative findings provided additional context for understanding the quantitative results. Although instructional resource management received a very high rating, teachers and learners continued to report shortages of instructional materials and limited access to technology. This suggests that favorable resource-management ratings may reflect teachers' ability to maximize available materials rather than the adequacy of those materials.

The integration also highlighted the distinction between classroom management effectiveness and academic achievement. Despite highly rated management strategies and positive behavioral outcomes, the overall academic performance remained below expectations. The qualitative accounts of insufficient instructional time, varied learner readiness, and resource constraints offered possible explanations for this pattern. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting classroom management and academic performance as related but distinct educational outcomes. The integrated evidence therefore provides a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and continuing needs of multigrade classrooms.

Proposed Intervention Program

The proposed intervention program was developed in response to the study's quantitative and qualitative findings. Its major components included strengthening teachers' instructional competence, developing appropriate learning materials, integrating educational technology, improving classroom environments, and enhancing institutional and community support. These components addressed the instructional challenges identified by participants and the continuing need to improve learners' academic performance.

The intervention priorities are consistent with Jimenez (2025), who documented the professional learning needs and instructional experiences of multigrade teachers in rural Philippine schools. The findings indicate that professional development should emphasize practical classroom applications, including differentiated lesson planning, instructional scheduling, formative assessment, peer-assisted learning, and classroom organization. Likewise, instructional materials and school-level support should be responsive to the actual conditions of geographically isolated schools.

The proposed intervention should therefore be implemented through coordinated teacher development, instructional resource provision, and continuous monitoring of

learner progress. Particular attention should be given to improving achievement in Mathematics, English, and Science while sustaining positive learner behavior and classroom engagement. Its effectiveness, however, would need to be established through subsequent implementation and evaluation rather than assumed from the present findings.

Overall, the study demonstrated that multigrade teachers in General Luna District reported highly favorable classroom management practices, which were significantly associated with learner behavior and academic performance. Nevertheless, the persistence of below-expectation academic achievement indicates that effective classroom management must be complemented by targeted instructional interventions, adequate learning resources, sustained professional development, and context-responsive institutional support. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings contributes localized evidence on the complexities of multigrade education in island communities and provides a basis for improving instructional practices and learner outcomes.

Conclusions

The study concluded that classroom management strategies were highly practiced by multigrade teachers in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte, and were significantly and positively associated with learners' classroom behavior and academic performance. Teacher behavior and attitude emerged as the highest-rated dimension of classroom management, followed by teacher competence, learners' classroom management, classroom structure and organization, and management of instructional resources. Learners demonstrated favorable classroom behavior, particularly in participation and social interaction. However, academic performance in English, Mathematics, and Science remained below expectations, with Mathematics recording the lowest mean percentage score. These findings established that favorable classroom management practices and positive learner behavior did not necessarily correspond to satisfactory academic achievement.

The significant positive relationships between classroom management strategies and learner behavior ($r = .803$, $p = .009$) and academic performance ($r = .752$, $p = .019$) indicated that stronger classroom management practices were associated with more favorable learner outcomes. Nevertheless, these relationships did not establish causation. The qualitative findings further revealed that teachers employed differentiated instruction, structured routines, rotational teaching, and peer-assisted learning to address the complexities of multigrade classrooms. Despite these adaptive practices, limited instructional time, inadequate learning materials, heavy workloads, and geographical constraints continued to affect teaching and learning. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings demonstrated that effective classroom management depended not only on teachers' competencies and commitment but also on adequate instructional resources and institutional support.

Overall, the study concluded that effective classroom management was an important component of multigrade education but was insufficient on its own to address persistent academic achievement gaps. Improving learner outcomes in geographically isolated schools requires a comprehensive approach that combines responsive classroom management, differentiated instruction, targeted academic interventions, sustained teacher professional development, and strengthened school and community support. The findings provide a context-specific basis for developing and evaluating an intervention program intended to improve classroom management practices and educational outcomes in multigrade settings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, it is recommended that multigrade teachers sustain effective classroom management practices while strengthening differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and targeted remediation to address learners' academic difficulties. Particular attention should be given to Mathematics, which recorded the lowest mean percentage score, without neglecting the identified learning gaps in English and Science. Teachers should continue implementing structured classroom routines, flexible grouping, rotational teaching, and peer-assisted learning while providing additional support to learners who demonstrate difficulties in attention, self-discipline, and independent learning.

School heads and educational administrators should prioritize the provision of adequate instructional materials, age-appropriate learning resources, and accessible educational technology to support simultaneous instruction across grade levels. Regular school-based professional development activities, particularly Learning Action Cell sessions, mentoring, and instructional coaching, should focus on practical strategies for multigrade lesson planning, classroom organization, learner assessment, and remediation. Furthermore, the Schools Division Office, in coordination with local government units and community stakeholders, should strengthen institutional support for geographically isolated schools by addressing resource shortages, instructional challenges, and limitations in access to professional development opportunities.

It is further recommended that the proposed intervention program be implemented and systematically evaluated using measurable indicators of classroom management practices, learner behavior, and academic achievement. Baseline assessments, periodic monitoring, and post-intervention evaluations should be conducted to determine its effectiveness and guide necessary improvements. Future researchers may replicate the study using larger samples across different districts, employ longitudinal or intervention-based research designs, and incorporate classroom observations and objective measures of learner performance to further examine the relationships among classroom management, learner behavior, and academic achievement. These efforts may contribute to the development of evidence-based, context-responsive strategies for improving the quality of multigrade education in geographically isolated communities.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The study observed ethical principles throughout the research process, including respect for persons, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and responsible handling of research data. Permission to conduct the study was sought from the appropriate educational authorities and participating school administrators in General Luna District, Siargao Division, Surigao del Norte. Participants were informed of the study's objectives, procedures, and intended use of the collected information. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured that they could withdraw without adverse consequences. For learner participants who were minors, parental or guardian consent and age-appropriate learner assent were required. The identities of teachers, learners, and participating schools were protected through confidential data handling and the presentation of findings in aggregated or anonymized form. Information obtained through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations was used exclusively for academic and research purposes. The researcher maintained objectivity in data analysis and reporting, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected the information collected from participants.

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APA Citation:

Gumanoy, C. C., & Ajos, M. T. O. (2026). CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH LEARNER BEHAVIOR AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN MULTIGRADE CLASSES: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY IN SIARGAO, PHILIPPINES. Ignatian International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research, 4(11), 223–241. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23942684

Corresponding author: *christoniegumanoy@gmail.com*