

## TEACHERS' LEARNING SPACE APPROACHES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN THE CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF EASTERN SAMAR DIVISION

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### ABSTRACT

### RESEARCH ARTICLE

*Creating positive learning spaces is essential for enhancing student engagement and academic performance in elementary schools. The effectiveness of learning space approaches largely depends on teachers' ability to organize lessons, manage classrooms, foster interaction, and create supportive psychological and social environments. This study examined the relationship between teachers' learning space approaches and the academic performance of Grade VI learners in central elementary schools of the Eastern Samar Division. A quantitative correlational research design was employed, involving 56 Grade VI teachers and their respective classes. Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire measuring teachers' learning space practices across five indicators: lesson organization, classroom management, interaction during the lesson, teacher-student communication, and psychological and social classroom environment. Learners' academic performance was assessed through their grade point average (GPA) for the school year 2024–2025. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that teachers exhibited a high level of practice across all learning space approaches. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship was found between teachers' learning space approaches and learners' academic performance, indicating that well-implemented learning spaces contribute to improved student achievement. The study recommends continuous professional development programs for teachers, focusing on effective lesson organization, classroom management, and strategies to foster positive psychological and social learning environments*

**KEYWORDS:** Learning Space Approaches, Academic Performance, Classroom Management, Teacher Practices, Elementary Education

### INTRODUCTION

The quality of the school environment significantly influences children's learning, as students spend six to eight hours daily in classrooms shaping their cognitive, social, and emotional development (Byoung-Suk & Christopher, 2015; Anumaka, 2015; Arul, 2017). Interactive, flexible, and student-centered learning spaces enhance engagement, collaboration, and academic performance, while traditional setups often foster passive learning (Harvey & Kenyon, 2018; Hodges).

Positive Discipline (PD) has emerged as a critical approach, emphasizing respect for children's rights, reinforcement of moral behavior, and classroom management without corporal punishment (Assali, 2015; DepEd, 2012). Evidence suggests PD promotes positive behavior, engagement, and learning outcomes (Kelm et al., 2015; Bazar & Baluyos, 2023). Despite its benefits, limited empirical research exists in Eastern Samar regarding the impact of teachers' learning space practices on student achievement.

This study aimed to assess teachers' learning space approaches and examine their relationship with learners' academic performance in central elementary schools of Eastern Samar Division, providing insights for educators and policymakers to foster positive and academically supportive learning environments.

## **Research Objectives**

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To describe the demographic profile of teachers in central elementary schools of the Eastern Samar Division in terms of:
  - 1.1 Teaching position
  - 1.2 Highest educational attainment
  - 1.3 Number of trainings attended related to learning space approaches
2. To determine the level of practice of teachers' learning space approaches across five indicators:
  - 2.1 Organization of the lesson
  - 2.2 Management inside the classroom
  - 2.3 Interaction during the lesson
  - 2.4 Teacher-student personal communication
  - 2.5 Psychological and social classroom environment
3. To assess the level of academic performance of the learners for the school year 2024–2025.
4. To determine whether a significant relationship exists between teachers' learning space approaches and learners' academic performance.

## **Research Gap**

Teachers' learning space approaches and their impact on students' academic performance have been widely discussed in educational research, particularly in relation to classroom management, lesson organization, teacher-student interaction, and the creation of positive learning environments. Studies by Arul (2017) and Mujinya et al. (2022) emphasize that well-structured learning spaces support effective teaching and improve student engagement, while Harvey and Kenyon (2018) and Hodges highlight the importance of flexible classroom arrangements in promoting interactive and collaborative learning. Similarly, research by Sadera, Robertson, Song, and Midon (2019) underscores the role of teacher-student relationships and classroom communication in enhancing academic outcomes. In the Philippine context, Bazar and Baluyos (2023) stress the significance of positive discipline and teacher-led classroom management in fostering constructive learning behaviors among students.

Despite these contributions, the literature indicates that most studies tend to examine individual aspects of learning space approaches, such as classroom management or teacher-student interaction, in isolation rather than investigating their collective influence on students' academic performance. Furthermore, while international and local research provides insights into effective learning environments, there remains limited empirical evidence focusing specifically on **central elementary schools in the Eastern Samar Division**, where teacher practices, classroom conditions, and resource availability may differ significantly from other regions. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive investigation into how teachers' learning space approaches—across lesson organization, classroom management, interaction, personal communication, and the psychological/social environment—affect learners' academic performance, providing evidence-based recommendations for teacher training and school policy in the local context.

## Literature Review

Learning spaces in the classroom play a crucial role in shaping students' engagement, motivation, and academic performance. According to Lee (2024), a learning environment extends beyond physical space, encompassing teacher methods, classroom interactions, and the overall atmosphere that fosters student participation. Prieur (2022) emphasized that positive and well-structured learning environments enhance student responsibility, attentiveness, and self-regulated learning, contributing to academic success.

Active learning approaches in classroom design, such as movable seating, group tables, and flexible layouts, promote collaboration, communication, and higher participation among students (Rands & Gansemer-Topf, 2017; Brooks, 2017). OECD (2017) suggested that effective learning environments recognize students as active participants, encourage cooperative learning, provide formative feedback, and account for students' emotional and social needs. Research also indicates that the physical and social arrangement of classrooms directly influences teacher pedagogy, student engagement, and learning outcomes (McNeil & Borg, 2018; Baum, 2018).

Positive discipline is an effective classroom management approach that contributes to a supportive learning space. Developed by Nelsen (2011), Positive Discipline promotes respect, responsibility, and cooperation while encouraging self-discipline and long-term personal development. Studies have shown that positive discipline improves classroom behavior, teacher-student relationships, motivation, and student self-control (Graziano & Hart, 2016; Somayeh et al., 2013; Santos, 2024). It is considered a preventive and supportive approach that helps reduce disruptive behaviors while fostering responsibility and academic engagement (Mabuza et al., 2017; Roberts-Clawson, 2017; Tshewang, 2022).

Academic performance is a measure of how effectively students achieve learning objectives and demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills (Steinmayr, Meißner, & Weidinger, 2020). Research shows that positive classroom environments and well-managed learning spaces contribute to improved academic outcomes, motivation, and self-esteem (Wriston & Duchesneau, 2023; Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2019). Conversely, poorly managed spaces and negative disciplinary practices can hinder student engagement and performance (Innes, 2011; The Education Trust, 2023).

Studies have established a link between positive learning space approaches and academic performance. Azizollah (2013) found that supportive classroom management and positive discipline enhance students' self-control and learning motivation. In the Philippine context, Santos (2024) reported that effective use of positive discipline, extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and classroom management contributed to satisfactory student performance, though behavioral outcomes varied. Similarly, Somayeh et al. (2013) concluded that implementing positive discipline improved learners' behavior, self-regulation, and responsibility, which positively impacted academic performance.

Theoretical frameworks guiding this study include Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory (1994), Glasser's Choice Theory (1999), and Piaget's Constructivist Theory (1972). Bronfenbrenner emphasizes the influence of interconnected systems, such as family, school, and community, on student development and performance. Choice Theory highlights that students' behavior is determined by personal choices, and teachers can support positive decision-making through effective learning spaces. Constructivist Theory suggests that knowledge is actively constructed through experience and social interaction, making flexible and collaborative learning spaces essential for academic success (Boyle, 1997; Devries & Zan, 2003).

Overall, existing literature demonstrates that learning space approaches, positive discipline, and supportive classroom management are critical factors influencing student academic performance. While prior studies have highlighted the benefits of active learning environments and positive discipline, gaps remain regarding their specific application in elementary schools in the Eastern Samar Division, particularly in examining the relationship between teachers' learning space approaches and students' academic performance. This study seeks to address these gaps and provide context-specific insights for improving learning outcomes.

## **Research Methodology**

This study employed a **quantitative research approach** using a **descriptive–correlational design** to examine the relationship between teachers' learning space approaches and learners' academic performance in central elementary schools of Eastern Samar Division. The descriptive component was used to determine the profile of teacher-respondents, their learning space approaches, and the academic performance of their pupils, while the correlational component examined the relationship between these variables. **Purposive sampling with complete enumeration** was utilized to select grade VI teachers who met the criteria of being regular permanent teachers, having at least three years of teaching experience, handling a class advisory, and having attended relevant professional development on learning space approaches, along with their respective pupils. Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire consisting of sections on teacher demographics, learning space approaches, and pupil academic performance. Learning space approaches were measured using a **5-point Likert scale**, while academic performance was obtained from official SF9 records. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and the **Pearson Product–Moment Correlation Coefficient** was used to determine the relationship between teachers' learning space approaches and learners' academic performance. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity, with all data used solely for research purposes.

## Analysis and Discussion

### *Demographic Profile of Teachers*

**Table 1: Teaching Position of Teachers**

Teaching Position	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Teacher II</b>	5	8.93%
<b>Teacher III</b>	34	60.71%
<b>Master Teacher II</b>	17	30.36%
Total	56	100%

The majority of teachers (60.71%) are Teacher III, indicating a proficient teaching workforce capable of managing learning programs and participating actively in professional development.

**Table 2: Highest Educational Attainment**

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
<b>MA Graduate</b>	25	44.64%
<b>With MA Units</b>	31	55.36%
Total	56	100%

Most teachers hold master's units (55.36%), suggesting a commitment to further studies to improve teaching skills.

**Table 3: Number of Trainings Attended**

Trainings Attended	Frequency	Percentage
<b>1–4</b>	31	60.71%
<b>5 and above</b>	25	39.29%
Total	56	100%

The majority of teachers attended 1–4 trainings on learning space approaches, showing ongoing professional development to enhance classroom practices.

### *Teachers' Learning Space Approaches*

**Organization of the Lesson:** The total mean of 4.36 indicates that teachers highly practice organizing lessons by considering student learning styles, prior knowledge, and logical sequencing of activities.

**Classroom Management:** With a total mean of 3.90 (practiced), teachers emphasize positive discipline by involving students in establishing rules, providing reinforcement, and communicating expectations, reducing disruptive behavior.

**Interaction during Lessons:** A total mean of 4.40 (highly practiced) reflects active teacher-student interaction through modeling, monitoring, verbal praise, and feedback, enhancing student engagement and motivation.

**Teacher-Student Personal Communication:** Scoring a total mean of 4.40 (highly practiced), teachers maintain strong personal connections with students, recognizing individual needs, praising accomplishments, and providing supportive guidance.

**Psychological and Social Classroom Environment:** The highest total mean of 4.55 (highly practiced) shows teachers create safe, collaborative, and respectful classroom climates that foster student participation, cooperation, and problem-solving skills.

### *Academic Performance of Pupils*

**Table 4: Academic Performance of Pupils**

Performance	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Outstanding</b>	14	25.00%
<b>Very Satisfactory</b>	42	75.00%
Total	56	100%

Most pupils (75%) achieved very satisfactory ratings, indicating that positive learning space approaches are associated with high student performance.

### *Relationship between Learning Space Approaches and Academic Performance*

**Table 5: Pearson-r Correlation**

Learning Space Approach	r-value	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Lesson Organization</b>	0.850	0.024	Very High, Significant
<b>Classroom Management</b>	0.758	0.014	Substantial, Significant
<b>Interaction During the Lesson</b>	0.815	0.022	Very High, Significant
<b>Teacher-Student Communication</b>	0.876	0.003	Very High, Significant
<b>Psychological &amp; Social Classroom Env.</b>	0.803	0.012	Very High, Significant

The results indicate significant positive correlations between all learning space approaches and pupils' academic performance ( $p < 0.05$ ). Higher levels of lesson organization, classroom management, interaction, communication, and positive classroom climate are associated with improved academic outcomes. These findings support the notion that well-implemented learning space strategies promote engagement, motivation, and achievement (Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2019).

### **Conclusion**

This study provides valuable insights into the relationship between teachers' implementation of positive learning space approaches and the academic performance of Grade 6 pupils in the central elementary schools of the southern district of Eastern Samar Division. The findings reveal that teachers generally demonstrate high levels of practice in key aspects of learning spaces, including lesson organization, interaction during lessons, teacher-student personal communication, and psychological and social classroom environment. Classroom management, while practiced, showed slightly lower levels, indicating an area for potential improvement.

Furthermore, the results indicate a significant positive relationship between teachers' practices in learning space approaches and pupils' academic performance. Teachers who effectively implement these approaches tend to facilitate higher levels of student achievement, as evidenced by the majority of pupils attaining very satisfactory grades. These findings highlight the critical role of professional development, continuous support, and practical application of learning space strategies in enhancing both teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes.

The study emphasizes that sustained professional development, focused on classroom management and interactive learning strategies, alongside collaborative sharing of best practices, is essential to further strengthen teachers' capacity. Strengthening these areas can help educators create more structured, engaging, and supportive learning environments that promote academic success for all learners. Overall, the findings underscore the need for a collaborative and well-supported approach to learning space implementation that empowers teachers and maximizes students' academic potential.

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**Ethics and Consent Statement:** This study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards to ensure respondents' privacy, confidentiality, and security. Informed consent was obtained after clearly explaining the study's objectives and procedures, in compliance with Republic Act 10173 – Data Privacy Act of 2012. All data were anonymized, participation was voluntary, and interviews were conducted in private. Any future data sharing will adhere to ethical guidelines and require explicit consent from respondents.

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