

# Attitudes Related to Social Studies among Grade 9 Students of MSU-ILS

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*Abstract*—It is popular that students do not believe Social Studies as an important subject or one of their favorite areas of study. The variety arises because attitude development can occur in widely different contexts. It is important to recognize that education has no role in enforcing prescribed attitude change. The better way is to look at attitude development where the learner is enabled to develop attitudes on a well-informed basis, set in the context of rich educational experiences. The purpose of this study was to explore, in depth, the attitudes of Grade 9 students about Social Studies in MSU-ILS. Using a Qualitative and Quantitative with Classroom observation research approaches, 15 selected students of three sections were interviewed, one section was observed during their Social Studies class and survey questionnaires were implemented to all Grade 9 students with 102 total. It was found out that 66 (65.69 percent) were females while 36 (34.31 percent) were males. The research revealed that the Grade 9 students in MSU-ILS valued social studies and at the same time they rate social studies as one of their most favorite subjects. They find Social Studies interesting because according to them it was more concerned on their ancestors' life in which they could trace where they came from and if the teacher is interesting. It was found out that the high image of Social Studies was caused by the students' belief that the subject was relevant to their future occupations. In addition, they like Social Studies and would like to spend more time in studying it. On other hand, they see the area as useful for a career or to help them understand their own country or even being related to their lives. However, some students indicated that many teachers continued to depend on textbooks and lectures as the main method for teaching. They like Social Studies as a subject even though their classroom was not the ideal environment for the subject. Thus, students put a high value on teacher enthusiasm and encouragements.

*Key words:* Attitudes, Social Studies, Grade 9 students, MSU-ILS

## I. INTRODUCTION

In present day, citizens are expected to think critically and be respectful and knowledgeable to human rights. Pertaining to it, education has a significant role. Apparently, Social Studies is a subject area that inculcate students to gain nationalistic identity and account their duty in society. This will make them actively involve as they become aware of their roles and responsibility in the society. In relation to this, schooling in all societies obliged to teach students the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for them to function as responsible citizens.

In a democratic society, schools translate these curricular goals into knowledge of the community, nation, and world. Schooling also translates to the skills required to participate competently within the larger society. It also helps promote and protect one's interests and the democratic attitudes that form the bases for decision making on one's behalf while keeping in mind the larger context of the common good.

In developing a school educational system, there has always to be a balance between the needs of the individual and the needs of wider society. The individual learners will not only need to be prepared for life beyond school including the world of work but also to be able to develop as individuals so that they are capable of taking their full place in society as they understanding themselves and the world around. In other words, personal development and citizen development are two aspects of the key goals for school education as cited by [1]. This is in line with DepEd mission to provide quality basic education that is equitably accessible to all and to lay foundation lifelong learning and service to common good. This supports [36] vision for every learner to be functionally literate, equipped with life skills as they appreciate arts and sports reinforce with desirable values of a person who is Makabayan, Makatao, Makakalikasan and Makadiyos.

In learning, there are times when learning of one behavior is a prerequisite to the learning of another behavior. For instance, we must be able to crawl before we can walk, count before we add as cited by [35]. Specifically, in school learning even if you find studying Social Studies as boring, there are benefits you will get from it. Though additional subject, Social Studies supports the role of other subjects [1]. Reference [17] found that girls showed a greater interest and liking towards the subject area than males.

The change in behavior refers to the ability to remember or comprehend various things and the tendency to have certain kinds of attitudes and values of the kind set forth in the statement of educational objectives as cited by [35]. The view that Social Studies is just an additional subject that supports role of other subject influenced the student attitudes towards the subject, teacher Benjes stated that the problem he encountered in his classroom was an issue of interest and engagement, many students were not interested in Social Studies for a number of reasons and that traditionally, for many students, Social Studies is a subject that they either love or hate. They see it as either discovering the past, or memorizing dates. Teachers often depend upon textbooks written materials to provide pupils with the basic knowledge needed to further their learning to participate actively in the class discussion as cited by [12]. Reference [2] identified attitude of students to influence academic performance.

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Child's attitude toward a subject, affect his knowledge about it.

The communicator (teacher) is one of the more powerful influences which can change and develop attitudes. The influence of parents is very powerful with very young children yet teachers strongly influence primary aged children. According to [1] teacher failed to convey the importance of Social Studies to the students and resulted to negative attitudes of the students and less appreciation toward the subject matter. Typically, a professor or a teacher would just stand in front of all the students and start reciting all the details of the topics. The scenario is that the teacher prioritizes to finish the content of the lesson that lead learners to make sense of what is presented rather than memorizing all those dates, places, names of prominent people and events.

Corresponding to above mentioned concept, the researchers then conducted a study pertaining to attitude related to Social Studies subject among Grade 9 students of MSU-ILS. The aimed of this study is to deeply explore, the attitudes of Grade 9 students about Social Studies in MSU-ILS. In addition, Social Studies subject, classroom environment, work in the future and teacher are the variables of this study.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to determine the attitudes related to Social Studies among grade 9 students of MSU-ILS thus; the qualitative method, quantitative method, and classroom observation method of research were employed. Interview provides access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provides a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior. A basic assumption in in-depth interviewing research is that the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience [7].

The respondents of the study are Grade 9 students from Mindanao State University-Integrated Laboratory School enrolled in the A.Y. 2014-2015. There are only three sections of Grade 9 students. The classroom observation was conducted only in one section with forty (40) students. The observation employed in video recording device until the end of their Social Studies class. Five (5) students from each section were randomly selected to become the respondents.

The researcher used questionnaire as an instrument in this study. To test the reliability of the instrument, it was pilot tested with the notion that the said questionnaire, —A method of gathering information from a number of individuals, a "sample", in order to learn something about the large population from which the sample is drawn" as stated by [1]. In the process of gathering the data needed for the study, a follow-up questionnaire was used for the interview. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part seeks for the profile of the respondents in terms of their gender and their age. The second part consists of different views related to Social Studies such us; Social Studies subject, classroom environment, work in the future and teacher. The respondents chose their answers by putting a mark if they strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree to every question.

III. FINDINGS

TABLE 1: RESPONDENT'S PROFILE IN TERMS OF GENDER

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	36	34.31%
Female	66	65.69%
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data indicated that out of 102 respondents, 36 (34.31 percent) were males and while 66 (65.69 percent) were females. The total respondents belonged to three different sections of Grade 9 students. Therefore, the researchers can conclude that majority of the students in the Grade 9 students MSU-ILS were females.

Girls and boys show few differences in their responses. However, boys tend to think slightly more that Social Studies lessons are poor while girls are less enthusiastic about practical work although girls say they cope better than boys. All this probably relates to different teaching styles, with separate schooling for boys and girls. Furthermore, examinations are perceived as more stressful by girls [1].

TABLE 2: RESPONDENT'S PROFILE IN TERMS OF AGE

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 15	14	13.73%
15	42	41.18%
Above 15	46	45.10%

From the figure shown above out of 102 respondents, 14 (13.73 percent) were below 15 years old, 42 (41.18 percent) were 15 years old and 46 (45.10 percent) were under the age 15 above. It implies that majority of the Grade 9 students of MSU-ILS were under the age of 15. According to the study of [1], as they become older, they are more aware of career options.

They consider that there are few options based on studies in the Social Studies area. For girls, teaching is an acceptable option. However, for boys (and, indeed, for girls if social expectations permit), there are probably more options which develop from studies in the area of Social Studies than are seen by students at these ages. Thus, boys who study Social Studies can get diverse job opportunities. They can work as historian, geologist, weather observer, map-drawer, and social worker.

TABLE 3: HOW STUDENTS VIEW SOCIAL STUDIES AS A SUBJECT

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
Useless lesson	4.31	0.75	Strongly Disagree	1
Important lessons	4.29	0.77	Strongly Agree	2
I like Social Studies lesson	4.05	0.71	Strongly Agree	3
Interesting lesson	4.03	0.81	Agree	4
I hate Social Studies lesson	3.93	1.02	Disagree	5
Boring lesson	3.85	0.89	Disagree	6
Enjoyable lesson	3.74	0.94	Agree	7
Easy lessons	3.38	0.70	Neutral	8
I'd like to spend more time on Social Studies	3.40	0.72	Neutral	9
Complicated lesson	3.06	0.88	Neutral	10
I'd like to spend less time on Social Studies	3.02	0.85	Neutral	11
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.73</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

<i>Scale:</i>	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Items Negative Items</i>
1.00-1.80	Strongly	Disagree Strongly Agree
1.81-2.60	Disagree	Agree
2.61-3.40	Neutral	Neutral
3.41-4.20	Agree	Disagree
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree

Based on the data above, majority of them agree that they like the Social Studies lesson and disagree that they hate the Social Studies lesson. This is supported by the case study of [38] which stated that most of students indicated that they liked Social Studies. Students disagree that Social Studies lesson is boring. In addition, they agree that it is an interesting lesson.

However, most of the respondents are neutral on the question that Social Studies lesson is easy and is complicated. Correspondingly, with the question I'd like to spend less time on Social Studies and I'd like to spend more time on Social Studies majority are neutral. Furthermore, majority of the students answered that Social Studies lesson are enjoyable. Lastly, majority of the respondents strongly disagree that Social Studies lessons are useless and agreed that it is an important lesson which contradicts the study of [39] which states that students do not understand the importance of Social Studies as cited by [1].

TABLE 4: HOW STUDENTS THINK OF THEMSELVES WHEN STUDYING SOCIAL STUDIES

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
I am enjoying the subject	3.71	0.76	Agree	1
I am obtaining many new skills	3.66	0.82	Agree	2
I feel I am coping well	3.63	0.91	Agree	3
I am not enjoying the subject	3.61	0.93	Disagree	4
I feel I am not coping well	3.57	0.98	Disagree	5
I find it easy	3.22	0.76	Neutral	6
I find it hard	3.15	0.83	Neutral	7
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.51</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

**Scale:**  
 1.00-1.80 *Positive Strongly*  
 1.81-2.60 *Disagree*  
 2.61-3.40 *Neutral*  
 3.41-4.20 *Agree*  
 4.21-5.00 *Strongly Agree*

**Items Negative Items**  
 Disagree Strongly Agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

Based on the table above, most of the respondents consider themselves coping well and enjoying Social Studies while studying the subject. With regards to the questions, if they find it very hard and if they find it easy when studying Social Studies, students are neutral whereas in the study of [1] students agreed that Social Studies was not too hard for them. In addition, majority of the respondents agreed that they are obtaining many new skills when they are studying Social Studies. However, when they were asked if they are enjoying the subject majority of them did not agree. In the case study of [38], students are marginal for the item "I enjoy the activities we do in Social Studies".

TABLE 5: HOW STUDENTS PERCEIVED SOCIAL STUDIES AND THEIR TEACHER

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
I like my teacher in Social Studies	3.97	0.75	Agree	1
I like Social Social Studies	3.79	0.77	Agree	
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.88</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

**Scale:**  
 1.00-1.80 *Positive Strongly*  
 1.81-2.60 *Disagree*  
 2.61-3.40 *Neutral*  
 3.41-4.20 *Agree*  
 4.21-5.00 *Strongly Agree*

**Items Negative Items**  
 Disagree Strongly Agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

As shown in the table above, most of the respondents agree that they like Social Studies. Most of the students also answered that they like their teacher in Social Studies which means that their teacher motivates them in studying Social Studies. Though some students only like their teacher but not the subject. It implies that when you like your teacher in a specific subject it doesn't mean that you like the subject as well and vice versa.

It is very clear that the two questions based on the answers given by the students, coincidentally, they like Social Studies as they like their teacher. The subject will be more interesting if the teacher presents the lesson well. This contradict the study of [1] that the students form negative attitude toward Social Studies on which teacher was the major factor because they failed to motivate and failed to convey the importance of Social Studies to the students.

TABLE 4.6: POINT OF VIEWS OF THE RESPONDENTS ON SOME REASONS WHY WE STUDY SOCIAL STUDIES

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
Learning about the important events in history	4.30	0.62	Strongly Agree	1
Learning how people live	4.25	0.55	Strongly Agree	2
Studying about the rights and responsibilities of the citizens	4.07	0.70	Agree	3
Studying about environment problems and how to solve them	4.06	0.71	Agree	4
Studying Social Studies applications in life	4.04	0.67	Agree	5
Studying Social Studies can help me in life	4.01	0.71	Agree	6
Explaining natural phenomena	3.95	0.72	Agree	7
Preparing for a career	3.80	0.90	Agree	8
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.06</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

**Scale:**  
 1.00-1.80 *Positive Strongly*  
 1.81-2.60 *Disagree*  
 2.61-3.40 *Neutral*  
 3.41-4.20 *Agree*  
 4.21-5.00 *Strongly Agree*

**Items Negative Items**  
 Disagree Strongly Agree  
 Agree  
 Neutral  
 Disagree  
 Strongly Disagree

Based on the responses given by the respondents, they believed that Social Studies teaches how people live, learn about important events in history and about the rights and responsibilities of the citizens. This strengthens the K-12 curriculum on which Araling Panlipunan (Social Studies) is drawn for students to become developed Filipino, have national identity and understand the different full place of individual in the society.

Therefore, most students believed that being a responsible individual can be learned in Social Studies subject. Though some of them viewed that Social Studies as a subject is more on memorizing dates and events during the interviews, but still they find it important to study this subject in the development of their lives.

TABLE 7: STUDENTS VIEWS ON THE SUBJECTS THAT MAY HELP IN GETTING A JOB IN THE FUTURE

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
English	4.39	0.72	Strongly Agree	1
Science	4.32	0.72	Strongly Agree	2
Filipino	4.26	0.66	Strongly Agree	3
Values Education	4.20	0.77	Agree	4
Social Studies	4.02	0.75	Agree	5
Technology and Livelihood Education	4.03	0.86	Agree	6
Mathematics	3.94	1.06	Agree	7
Physical Education	3.93	0.81	Agree	8
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.14</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

Scale: *Positive* *Items Negative Items*  
 1.00-1.80 *Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree*  
 1.81-2.60 *Disagree Agree*  
 2.61-3.40 *Neutral Neutral*  
 3.41-4.20 *Agree Disagree*  
 4.21-5.00 *Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree*

Altogether, the respondents agreed that the entire subject may help them in getting the job in the future. On the other hand, students viewed that the top five (5) subjects that may help them in getting a job in the future are English, Science, Filipino, Values Education and Social Studies. Based on the result, according to the respondents, the number one subject that may help them in getting a job in the future is English considering its importance in all kinds of job in different societies. The study of [4] concluded that Social Studies is one of the subject that may help them to get job in the future but English is ahead of all the subjects.

TABLE 8: HOW STUDENTS THINK LIFE IN THE FUTURE AND WHAT THEY WOULD MOST LIKE TO BE

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
Medical Doctor	3.92	1.03	Agree	1
Business Manager	3.82	0.94	Agree	2
Lawyer	3.67	1.22	Agree	3
Accountant	3.61	1.16	Agree	4
Nurse	3.60	1.16	Agree	5
Social Worker	3.52	0.99	Agree	6
Engineer	3.34	1.24	Neutral	7
Teacher	3.21	1.21	Neutral	8
Police/Army	2.81	1.33	Neutral	9
Politician	2.94	1.24	Neutral	10
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.44</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

Scale: *Positive* *Items Negative Items*  
 1.00-1.80 *Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree*  
 1.81-2.60 *Disagree Agree*  
 2.61-3.40 *Neutral Neutral*  
 3.41-4.20 *Agree Disagree*  
 4.21-5.00 *Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree*

The careers which mostly preferred to be chosen by the respondents are medical doctor, business manager, lawyer, accountant and nurse. This is understandable, considering its influence in the society. While being a social worker, engineer and teacher was moderately rated by the respondents. Because of the risk and bad image, police/army and politician are rated at a low level by them. This is perhaps negligible because majority of the respondents were females. Women usually would not choose the careers the careers of policeman/army or politician though there is an exception to some women who excelled in these fields.

TABLE 9: HOW STUDENTS ATTRACTED IN STUDYING SOCIAL STUDIES

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description	Rank
My parents	3.92	0.94	Agree	1
Books I have read about Social Studies	3.81	0.86	Agree	2
My Social Studies lesson	3.75	0.74	Agree	3
My Social Studies teacher	3.77	0.82	Agree	4
I am interested in Social Studies	3.71	0.77	Agree	5
What I see on television	3.69	0.98	Agree	6
The story of my ancestors	3.67	0.95	Agree	7
The opinion of my friends	3.43	0.87	Agree	8
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.72</b>		<b>Agree</b>	

Scale: *Positive* *Items Negative Items*  
 1.00-1.80 *Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree*  
 1.81-2.60 *Disagree Agree*  
 2.61-3.40 *Neutral Neutral*  
 3.41-4.20 *Agree Disagree*  
 4.21-5.00 *Strongly Agree Strongly Disagree*

Parents, books about Social Studies, the lesson itself, the teacher and students' interests are the factors that attract students in studying Social Studies. It indicates that parents play major role in motivating their children in school as well as providing materials needed in school attract more student to study and similar with the big responsibility of the teacher to motivate student. Contradictingly, in the study of [1], parents and books influence suddenly drops and television influence is rising.

*Classroom Observation*

To deeply understand the attitudes of the students towards Social Studies, classroom observation was conducted as well. The views or attitudes of the students toward the Social Studies subject were compared to the answers of the students during interview. It was observed that majority of the students during their Social Studies lesson were attentive while some are just listening to their teacher. This observation supports the findings during the interview where Social Studies ranked as one of their favorite subjects. By seeing their facial expressions, some of them were interested in the topic while the rest are bored.

It was found out that the demand of the students of changing their classroom environment was justifiable because from the observation, the researchers can tell that their classroom is not the ideal classroom for the Social Studies class. Their classroom is too crowded and not well ventilated to accommodate those numbers of students. It is too hot for them and for the teachers as well to concentrate. However, the environmental dimensions mentioned in this study are classroom variables that are under the control of the teacher to a great extent.

The teacher during their Social Studies class did not use any visual materials that can motivate the students to participate. These visual materials may also help the students think and analyze things being presented in the class. Somehow it will answer their level of curiosity regarding the lesson. Moreover, the findings of this observation showed that students in certain types of classroom environments have more positive attitudes toward Social Studies than students in other environments and that these environmental dimensions are, to a large degree, under the direct influence of the classroom teacher.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings gathered in this study, it was found out that the high image of Social Studies was caused by the students' belief that the subject was relevant to their future occupations. According to their answers the main activities involved were reading, listening to the teacher, copying from the blackboard and whole-class discussions orientated learning activities. Students indicated that they wanted group work, relevant and interesting topics and more visual aids in Social Studies.

Although this study was conducted to both male and female students, researchers did not put extent emphasis with regards to gender. Thus, a comparative study may be conducted between male and female students' attitudes towards Social Studies. Furthermore, the curriculum was replaced by K-12 curriculum and made lot of changes to Social Studies. In lined with this reason, a study may be conducted concerning the changes in Social Studies subject in the K-12 curriculum.

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