

Social Sciences Instructional Strategies: Preferences and Practices of Public Secondary School Teachers in Kasibu East District, Nueva Vizcaya

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Abstract: Effective teaching strategies are crucial for fostering meaningful learning and enhancing learners' critical thinking, civic competence, and active engagement in the Social Sciences. This study explored the instructional strategies, preferences, and practices of Social Studies teachers in public secondary schools. It specifically outlined the demographic characteristics of the respondents, assessed the effectiveness of teaching methods, identified factors influencing their use, investigated challenges faced during implementation, and proposed suitable interventions to enhance Social Studies teaching. A descriptive-survey research design was utilized, involving 24 Social Studies teachers from public secondary schools selected through total population sampling. Data collection was conducted using a researcher-developed and validated questionnaire, with analysis performed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and standard deviation. The results indicated that respondents viewed their teaching methods as effective ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 0.58$), with learner-centered approaches, such as games and simulations, role-playing, brainstorming, and dramatization, receiving the highest evaluations. Factors affecting the use of teaching methods were rated as strongly agreeing ($M = 4.49$, $SD = 0.50$), emphasizing the significance of instructional planning, teacher competence, supportive supervision, and sufficient learning resources. However, challenges such as a lack of instructional materials, inadequate funding, and time limitations were identified as significant obstacles to effective teaching ($M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.65$). Respondents strongly endorsed interventions such as providing instructional materials, enhancing professional development, improving instructional supervision, and increasing financial support ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 0.47$). Strengthening institutional support and maintaining learner-centered teaching practices are vital for improving the quality of Social Studies instruction and student learning outcomes.

Keywords: *Social Studies instruction, instructional strategies, teacher practices, learner-centered learning, public secondary schools*

INTRODUCTION

Social studies education is important for shaping people into informed, responsible, and democratic citizens, and this is something that is recognized worldwide. It gives learners the opportunity to be active citizens by promoting values linked to sustainable development, setting them up for a lifetime of involvement in society (Lilian, 2022). Social studies also plays a significant role in developing critical thinking, civic responsibility, cultural understanding, and problem-solving skills, which are crucial for tackling complex social issues (Wren, 2021). Globally, teaching methods have shifted from the old teacher-centered approach to more learner-focused and inquiry-based styles. This change encourages experiential and reflective learning, boosting student engagement and critical inquiry (Lilian, 2022; Suastika et al., 2022). Moreover, there is a growing need for effective teaching strategies in social studies to improve students' learning outcomes and active participation (Wren, 2021). On an international level,

quality education that aligns with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 focuses on inclusive and effective teaching methods that promote global citizenship, equity, and sustainable development (Assefa, 2024; Shabalala, 2025).

The Department of Education (DepEd) is important when it comes to improving how Social Studies is taught in the Philippines, especially with the K–12 curriculum. This curriculum is all about boosting higher-order thinking skills and 21st-century competencies, which are key for developing informed and responsible citizens (Crisolo et al., 2021). Social Studies is a must-have subject in Philippine secondary schools because it helps build civic values, nationalism, and social responsibility, which are crucial for good citizenship and driving social change (Crisolo et al., 2021). However, the education system faces some hurdles, such as students losing interest, behavioral issues, a weak grasp of civic values, and teaching methods that are not effective. This means we need teaching strategies that match the needs of students and the curriculum (Crisolo et al., 2021). In the Kasibu East District of Nueva Vizcaya, secondary schools are in line with the national trends in teaching Social Studies. Teachers pick their strategies based on the materials they have, their experience and training, the classroom setup, and the characteristics of their students, all of which affect how well they teach (Biñas et al., 2023).

These challenges show why it is important to determine the most effective teaching methods, understand why they are chosen, and tackle any issues to improve teaching (Biñas et al., 2023). The K–12 curriculum is all about putting students at the center and using themes to encourage them to think critically and solve real-world problems. However, how well this works often depends on the support teachers receive and how they adapt to local situations (Montebon & Orleans, 2021). The DepEd's School-Based Management (SBM) framework allows schools to adjust their teaching of Social Studies to fit local needs through planning and community involvement (Biñas et al., 2023). However, there are hurdles such as limited resources, gaps in teacher training, and ongoing issues with student behavior and engagement that require strategies tailored to the community and students (Biñas et al., 2023; Crisolo et al., 2021). Most past studies have focused on the effectiveness of teaching methods or how students perform academically in Social Studies. However, there is little research on how public secondary Social Studies teachers pick and use their teaching strategies. In addition, few studies have investigated the factors influencing teachers' choices of teaching methods, the challenges they face, and the solutions they come up with, especially in the Philippines. There is also a lack of data involving teachers in the Kasibu East District, Nueva Vizcaya. This study aims to fill these gaps by examining teacher profiles, teaching strategies, influencing factors, challenges, and interventions to boost Social Studies teaching.

Research Questions

This study aimed to examine the instructional strategies, preferences, and practices of public secondary school Social Studies teachers in the Kasibu East District, Nueva Vizcaya. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

- What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, present position, highest educational attainment, years in teaching, performance rating, and level of in-service training in Social Studies?
- What is the perceived effectiveness of the instructional methods used in teaching Social Studies?
- What factors affect the utilization of instructional methods in teaching Social Studies?
- What problems do teachers encounter in the utilization of instructional methods in teaching Social Studies?
- What interventions are perceived to address the problems encountered in the utilization of instructional methods?

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-survey research design to examine the instructional strategies, influencing factors, challenges, and interventions related to Social Studies instruction among public secondary school teachers in the Kasibu East District of Nueva Vizcaya. The design was appropriate because it described the respondents' perceptions and existing instructional practices without manipulating any variables. Specifically, the study assessed the perceived effectiveness of instructional methods, identified the factors affecting their utilization, examined the problems encountered during implementation, and determined the interventions needed to strengthen Social Studies instruction.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in the Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines, which consists of five public secondary schools implementing the Department of Education's K–12 curriculum. The district was selected because it provided an appropriate setting for examining the instructional practices of Social Studies teachers and the contextual factors influencing the implementation of instructional strategies.

Research Participants

The respondents consisted of 24 public secondary school Social Studies teachers from five public secondary schools in the Kasibu East District during the School Year 2025–2026. Since the population was relatively small, total population sampling was employed, allowing all qualified Social Studies teachers to participate. This sampling technique ensured a complete representation of the target population and enhanced the credibility of the findings.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire based on the study objectives and an extensive review of the related literature. The instrument comprised five sections: (1) respondents' demographic profile, (2) perceived effectiveness of instructional methods, (3) factors affecting the utilization of instructional methods, (4) problems encountered in the utilization of instructional methods, and (5) interventions to address the identified problems. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire underwent expert validation to establish content validity and was pilot tested among teachers with characteristics similar to those of the respondents. Reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable.

Data Gathering Procedure

After securing approval from the Graduate School and the Schools Division Office, the researcher obtained permission from the District Supervisor and the school heads of the participating schools. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, and informed consent was obtained before the questionnaires were distributed. The completed questionnaires were personally retrieved, checked for completeness, coded, tabulated, and prepared for statistical analysis to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the collected data.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques appropriate for the objectives of the study. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the respondents' demographic profiles. Weighted mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the perceived effectiveness of instructional methods, factors affecting their utilization, problems encountered, and interventions identified by the respondents. The computed mean values were interpreted using the established five-point descriptive scale to facilitate the interpretation of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (Combined Tables 1–8)

Variable	Category	f	%
Age	20–25 years	3	12.50
	26–30 years	4	16.70
	31–35 years	2	8.30
	36–40 years	6	25.00
	41–45 years	6	25.00
	46 years and above	3	12.50
Gender	Male	8	33.30
	Female	16	66.70
Civil Status	Single	7	29.10
	Married	16	66.70
	Widowed	1	4.20
Present Position	Teacher I–III	21	87.50
	Master Teacher I–III	3	12.50
Highest Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	6	25.00
	MAEd with Units	12	50.00
	MAEd Graduate	6	25.00
Years in Teaching	1–10 years	9	37.50
	11–20 years	9	37.50
	21 years and above	6	25.00
Performance Rating	Outstanding	20	83.33
	Very Satisfactory	2	8.33
	Satisfactory	2	8.33
Level of In-Service Training in Social Studies*	Local/School	24	100.00
	Division	24	100.00
	Regional	24	100.00
	National	12	50.00
	International	5	20.83

Note. Multiple responses were allowed for the level of in-service training; therefore, percentages may exceed 100% when summed across categories.

Table 1 presents the respondents' demographic profiles. The findings indicate that the respondents were generally experienced social studies teachers, with the largest proportion belonging to the 36–40 and 41–45 age groups, respectively. Female teachers comprised the majority of respondents, and most were married. In terms of professional position, the majority were Teacher I–III, while only a few occupied Master Teacher positions. Regarding educational attainment, half of the respondents had already earned graduate units, whereas the remaining teachers had either completed a bachelor's or a master's degree. Teaching experience was relatively balanced, with most respondents having 1–20 years of service, indicating a combination of early career and experienced educators. Moreover, the majority obtained outstanding performance ratings, reflecting a high level of professional competence. All respondents had participated in local, division, and regional in-service training, while fewer had attended national and international training. Overall, the demographic characteristics suggest that the respondents possess adequate academic preparation, teaching experience, professional competence, and continuous professional development, providing a strong foundation for implementing effective instructional strategies in social study classes.

Table 2. Perceived Effectiveness of Instructional Methods in Teaching Social Studies

Instructional Method	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Inquiry	3.30	0.72	Effective

Lecture Method	3.33	0.70	Effective
Creativity Activity	4.20	0.64	Very Effective
Brainstorming	4.89	0.32	Very Effective
Guided Discovery	4.10	0.69	Effective
Games and Simulation	4.91	0.29	Very Effective
Questioning	4.41	0.56	Very Effective
Debate	4.60	0.47	Very Effective
Panel Discussion	3.50	0.68	Effective
Devil's Advocate	3.78	0.66	Effective
Project Method	3.80	0.63	Effective
Discussion	4.40	0.58	Very Effective
Field Trip	3.93	0.71	Effective
Future Wheel	3.60	0.65	Effective
Concept Mapping	4.50	0.49	Very Effective
Dramatization	4.80	0.37	Very Effective
Expository	4.00	0.68	Effective
Problem Solving	3.91	0.66	Effective
Explanation	4.22	0.61	Very Effective
Role Playing	4.90	0.30	Very Effective
Modeling	3.90	0.64	Effective
Storytelling	4.51	0.47	Very Effective
Reportorial	4.30	0.59	Very Effective
Human Diorama	3.70	0.67	Effective
Overall	4.15	0.58	Effective

The perceived effectiveness of instructional methods in teaching social studies, as summarized in Table 2, indicates a clear preference for interactive and student-centred approaches. Methods such as brainstorming ($M = 4.89$, $SD = 0.32$), games and simulation ($M = 4.91$, $SD = 0.29$), role playing ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 0.30$), and dramatization ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 0.37$) were rated as "Very Effective," suggesting that strategies engaging learners actively tend to enhance instructional outcomes. This is supported by empirical evidence indicating that brainstorming strategies significantly improve students' academic performance and creativity, particularly in mathematics and problem-solving contexts, by fostering critical thinking and collaborative learning without gender bias (Danlami et al., 2025; Doğan and Batdı, 2021). Similarly, guided discovery ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.69$) and inquiry ($M = 3.30$, $SD = 0.72$) methods, which emphasize exploration and student involvement, have been shown to enhance mastery of learning objectives through reflective and participatory processes. For example, inquiry-based learning increases student engagement and knowledge retention when implemented with well-structured lesson planning aligned to students' prior skills and knowledge (Sriana Umbase and Lexi Lonto, 2022). The effectiveness of discussion-based methods, including debates ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.47$), questioning ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.56$), and panel discussions ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.68$), is corroborated by evidence that such approaches cultivate critical thinking, communication, and cooperative learning skills, which are essential for developing social studies competencies (Masoumifard 2021). Notably, cooperative learning strategies, such as group discussions, have demonstrated greater efficacy than brainstorming alone in improving learning outcomes and enhancing teamwork interest in social studies e-learning contexts (Masoumifard, 2021). In contrast, less interactive methods, such as inquiry and lectures, still hold "Effective" ratings but with comparatively lower mean scores. This aligns with findings that, while these methods are functional, their efficacy may be limited by less active engagement compared to participatory approaches (Colclasure et al. 2022). In summary, the evidence emphasizes that instructional methods fostering active participation, creativity, and social interaction contribute more significantly to effective teaching in social studies, underscoring the importance of integrating such strategies into curriculum design and

teacher development programs (Danlami et al., 2025; Rajasekaran et al., 2024).

Table 3. Factors Affecting the Utilization of Instructional Methods

Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Teachers are non-majors/minors in Social Studies	3.90	0.67	Agree
Objectives are clearly understood	4.60	0.48	Strongly Agree
Strong planning and implementation	4.81	0.35	Strongly Agree
Positive teaching attitude	4.78	0.38	Strongly Agree
Close supervision	4.40	0.56	Strongly Agree
Teacher competence reflected in student output	4.80	0.37	Strongly Agree
Adequate school facilities	4.50	0.52	Strongly Agree
Appropriate learning spaces	4.20	0.60	Strongly Agree
Availability of instructional aids	4.38	0.58	Strongly Agree
Funds for commercial materials	4.55	0.50	Strongly Agree
Funds for field trips	4.52	0.51	Strongly Agree
Overall	4.49	0.50	Strongly Agree

Table 3 indicates that teachers strongly agreed that several factors influence the effective utilization of instructional methods in Social Studies, with an overall mean of 4.49 (SD = 0.50). The highest-rated factors were strong planning and implementation of instructional strategies (M = 4.81, SD = 0.35), teacher competence reflected in students' learning outcomes (M = 4.80, SD = 0.37), and positive teaching attitude (M = 4.78, SD = 0.38). These findings suggest that effective instruction depends largely on teachers' pedagogical preparation, professional competence, and commitment to delivering quality learning experiences. This finding is supported by Colclasure et al. (2022), who reported that instructional planning, teacher competence, and classroom management are among the strongest predictors of effective instructional practices. Similarly, Biñas et al. (2023) emphasized that collaborative planning and sound curriculum implementation enhance the quality of instruction in Philippine public schools. Furthermore, respondents recognized the importance of adequate facilities, instructional resources, supervision, and financial support, indicating that both teacher-related and school-related factors contribute to successful instructional implementation. Overall, the findings underscore that effective Social Studies instruction requires competent teachers supported by an enabling learning environment.

Table 4. Problems Affecting the Utilization of Instructional Methods

Problem	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Shortage of instructional materials	4.51	0.52	Very Serious
Lack of funds	4.50	0.54	Very Serious
Time constraints	4.10	0.66	Serious
Lack of appropriate materials	3.35	0.72	Serious
Teacher laziness	3.20	0.79	Serious
Overall	3.93	0.65	Serious

The problems affecting the utilization of instructional methods, as presented in Table 4, reveal critical challenges faced by educators, including shortages of instructional materials (M = 4.51, SD = 0.52) and lack of funds (M = 4.50, SD = 0.54), both rated as "Very Serious." These resource-related constraints are consistent with findings from studies highlighting the scarcity of appropriate materials and insufficient funding as significant barriers to effective teaching, especially in under-resourced environments (Alali & Wardat, 2024; Kamal & Illiyan, 2021). Moreover, time constraints (M = 4.10, SD = 0.66) and shortcomings in appropriate material availability (M = 3.35, SD = 0.72) also undermine instructional effectiveness, as teachers struggle to balance workload with quality preparation and delivery (Rios et al., 2023). Teacher motivation issues, such as laziness (M = 3.20, SD = 0.79), though rated less severely,

nonetheless contribute to challenges in instructional methods, reflecting concerns noted in the literature regarding the influence of educator engagement on student learning outcomes. Addressing these motivational and resource limitations requires multifaceted interventions that emphasize professional development, resource provision, and effective time management (Yang & Wang, 2023). Furthermore, the overall seriousness rating of 3.93 underscores the cumulative impact of these problems on pedagogical quality. Studies advocate for integrating innovative instructional technologies and teacher training programs to enhance adaptability and resource use efficiency, which can mitigate these multifactorial challenges (Alzakwani et al., 2025; Olasunkanmi & Oyarinde, 2023). Thus, overcoming these barriers is paramount for improving instructional methods and educational outcomes in diverse teaching contexts.

Table 5. Interventions to Address the Problems

Intervention	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Provision of instructional materials	4.80	0.39	Strongly Agree
Organizing seminars	4.71	0.45	Strongly Agree
Improvisation of local materials	4.70	0.46	Strongly Agree
Regular supervision	4.60	0.50	Strongly Agree
Provision of adequate funds	4.50	0.53	Strongly Agree
Overall	4.66	0.47	Strongly Agree

The interventions detailed in Table 5, such as the provision of instructional materials, organization of seminars, improvisation of local materials, regular supervision, and adequate funding, received strong agreement from respondents, highlighting their perceived importance in addressing educational challenges. The highest mean score was attributed to the provision of instructional materials ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 0.39$), emphasizing its critical role in enhancing teaching and learning processes. This finding aligns with research that underscores the necessity of well-developed instructional materials for effective student engagement, particularly in resource-limited contexts where local adaptation and improvisation are essential(Cayabas Jr & Sumeg-Ang, 2023). Organizing seminars scored closely ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 0.45$), supporting literature that advocates for professional development through seminars and workshops as crucial for enhancing teacher competence and instructional quality(Bezusova & Richter, 2022). Regular supervision ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.50$) also received strong endorsement, consistent with research illustrating the significant influence of supervision on teacher performance and subsequent student outcomes. For instance, instructional supervision practices that encourage collegial discussions and constructive feedback have been shown to improve teaching quality and student learning(Tarimo & Lekule, 2024; Wiyono et al., 2022). The provision of adequate funds ($M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.53$) completes the interventions, emphasizing the necessity of sufficient financial resources to support material development, supervision, and seminars. Without adequate funding, the effective implementation of these interventions can be severely constrained(Cayabas Jr & Sumeg-Ang, 2023). Overall, the mean score of 4.66 indicates a strong collective affirmation of these strategies as essential factors in educational improvement. These findings corroborate the broader academic consensus that comprehensive interventions—encompassing resource provision, professional development, supervision, and funding—are integral to sustaining instructional quality and enhancing student learning outcomes(Abdurahman et al., 2025; Rokhman et al., 2024).

Table 6. Priority Areas for Improvement in Social Studies Instruction

Area	Evidence from the Study	Recommended Action
Instructional Resources	Shortage of materials (WM = 4.51)	Increase funding for instructional resources
Funding	Lack of funds (WM = 4.50)	Allocate a dedicated budget
Teacher Capacity	Seminars highly supported (WM = 4.71)	Conduct continuous professional

Instructional Practice	Games, role playing, and brainstorming rated most effective	development Promote learner-centered instructional strategies
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Table 6 outlines the priority areas identified for enhancing Social Studies instruction based on the study's findings. The results indicate that instructional resources and funding are the most urgent concerns, with shortages of instructional materials and insufficient financial support identified as major challenges in the study. Respondents also highlighted the importance of continuous professional development through seminars and training to enhance teacher competence and instructional delivery. These findings align with those of Cayabas Jr. and Sumeg-Ang (2023), who found that the availability of instructional resources and ongoing teacher development significantly improved instructional quality and classroom effectiveness. Similarly, Tarimo and Lekule (2024) reported that regular instructional supervision and professional support enhance teachers' performance and ultimately improve student learning outcomes. The findings further recommend promoting learner-centred instructional strategies, such as games, simulations, brainstorming, and role-playing, as these approaches were perceived as the most effective methods for engaging students. Collectively, these priority areas suggest that improving Social Studies instruction requires coordinated efforts in resource provision, teacher capacity building, institutional support, and the sustained implementation of interactive teaching strategies.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that Social Studies teachers in public secondary schools in the Kasibu East District generally demonstrate favorable instructional practices supported by adequate professional qualifications and teaching experience. Interactive and learner-centered instructional methods, particularly games and simulations, role-playing, brainstorming, and dramatization, were perceived as the most effective strategies for enhancing student engagement and learning. Teachers strongly agreed that effective instructional planning, pedagogical competence, positive teaching attitudes, adequate instructional resources, and supportive school environments significantly influenced the successful implementation of instructional methods. Despite these strengths, the study identified shortages of instructional materials, insufficient funding, and time constraints as persistent challenges affecting instructional delivery. Respondents likewise recognized that providing adequate instructional resources, conducting continuous professional development, strengthening instructional supervision, and increasing financial support are essential for improving Social Studies instruction. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of sustaining learner-centered teaching practices while addressing resource and institutional constraints to enhance the quality of Social Studies education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that school administrators and education authorities allocate greater financial resources for the procurement and development of instructional materials to address existing resource shortages. Regular professional development programs, workshops, and in-service training should be conducted to further strengthen teachers' pedagogical competence and promote the effective use of learner-centred instructional strategies. School leaders should also sustain instructional supervision and mentoring programs to support teachers in improving classroom practices. Teachers are encouraged to continue integrating interactive approaches, such as games, simulations, role-playing, brainstorming, and other active learning strategies to enhance student participation and learning outcomes. Finally, future researchers may replicate this study in larger populations or different educational settings and incorporate additional variables, such as students' academic achievement or classroom engagement, to provide a broader understanding of the effectiveness of instructional strategies in Social Studies education.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to 24 public secondary school Social Studies teachers in the Kasibu East District, Nueva Vizcaya. Data were gathered using a researcher-developed questionnaire, and the findings were based on the respondents' self-reported perceptions. Since the study employed a descriptive research design and was conducted in only one district, the results may not be generalizable to other schools or educational settings with different contexts.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies involving larger samples from different school districts to validate the findings. Comparative, correlational, or mixed-methods research may also be undertaken to examine the relationship between instructional strategies and students' academic performance, engagement, and critical thinking skills. In addition, future studies may evaluate the effectiveness of learner-centered instructional interventions and technology-integrated teaching strategies in improving Social Studies instruction.

ETHICS STATEMENT

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate educational authorities before data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participating teachers after explaining the purpose, procedures, and significance of the study. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured that their identities would remain confidential and anonymous. All information collected was used solely for academic and research purposes, and the study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical principles governing research involving human participants.

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AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

During the preparation of this work, I used ChatGPT to assist in generating draft texts, improving grammar, enhancing language clarity, refining sentence structure, and supporting the organization of the manuscript. After using this tool, I carefully reviewed, revised, and edited the content to ensure its accuracy, originality, and academic integrity. I take full responsibility for the content of this published work.

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