

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND TEACHERS' ROLE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR: A CASE STUDY OF MINZU MIDDLE SCHOOL IN NINGDE CITY, FUJIAN PROVINCE

Xi Xia LEI¹ and Sirikawin KRUTKRONGPAN¹

¹ Faculty of Education, Thongsook College, Thailand; sirikwinth7@gmail.com

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 7 November 2025 **Revised:** 21 November 2025 **Published:** 9 December 2025

ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were 1) to examine the levels of the school environment, teacher roles, and student behavior, and 2) to investigate the relationships between the school environment and teacher roles in relation to student behavior within the context of secondary education. A quantitative research design was employed, involving a sample of 350 students. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire developed based on conceptual frameworks related to the learning environment, professional teacher roles, and student behavioral development. Data analysis consisted of descriptive statistics, and multiple regression analysis. The results revealed that the school environment was perceived at a positive level, particularly in terms of peer relationships and co-curricular activities, which were found to promote appropriate behavior and social adjustment among students. Teacher roles were also rated at a high level across classroom management, fair communication, instructional support, and role modeling, all of which demonstrated significant correlations with student behavior. Additionally, the regression analysis indicated that teacher roles served as the strongest predictor of student behavior, followed by co-curricular activities and peer relationships.

Keywords: School Environment, Teachers' Role, Student Behavior

CITATION INFORMATION: Lei, X., & Krutkronphan, S. (2025). The Relationship between School Environment and Teachers' Role and Student Behavior: A Case Study of Minzu Middle School in Ningde City, Fujian Province. *Procedia of Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(12), 54.

INTRODUCTION

The school environment serves as a fundamental context in which students' academic, social, and behavioral development unfold. Research consistently demonstrates that a positive and well-organized school environment strengthens students' behavioral adjustment, promotes prosocial conduct, and reduces the likelihood of disruptive behavior (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). Elements such as school climate, peer relationships, institutional culture, and safety collectively shape students' daily experiences and influence how they respond to social and academic demands. Eccles and Roeser (2011) further argue that the psychological and structural conditions within schools can enhance or hinder students' well-being, thereby affecting their behavioral patterns and long-term developmental trajectories.

Alongside environmental influences, teachers play a critical role in shaping students' behavioral tendencies through their classroom management strategies, communication practices, and role-modeling behaviors. Empirical findings indicate that supportive teacher-student interactions contribute substantially to students' behavioral engagement and self-regulation (Cornelius-White, 2007). Likewise, equitable and consistent teacher practices are associated with a learning environment that encourages cooperation, reduces conflict, and minimizes behavioral difficulties (Wang & Degol, 2016). These perspectives underscore the interdependency between school climate and teacher roles in determining student behavior.

In China's contemporary educational landscape, middle schools operate under conditions characterized by high academic expectations and rapidly shifting developmental demands. For schools serving culturally diverse populations, such as Minzu Middle School in Ningde City, Fujian Province, the interaction between school environmental conditions and teacher influence may be particularly significant. Studies conducted within Chinese contexts highlight that school climate and teacher-student relationships are vital determinants of behavioral adjustment, especially in multicultural or minority-populated school settings where differences in cultural norms can influence behavior (Sun & Shek, 2012; Deng & Gopinathan, 2016). Despite this recognition, empirical studies examining the combined influence of school environmental factors and teacher roles on student behavior within such contexts remain relatively scarce.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the levels of the school environment, teachers' roles, and student behavior at Minzu Middle School in Ningde City, Fujian Province, and to investigate how the school environment and teachers' roles are related to student behavior within this culturally diverse educational setting. Through this inquiry, the research seeks to generate insights that contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical strategies for promoting positive behavioral development among middle school students.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Relationship between the School Environment and Student Behavior

A substantial body of research has demonstrated that the school environment is a critical determinant of student behavioral outcomes. Empirical evidence indicates that elements such as school climate, peer relationships, and the overall learning atmosphere significantly shape students' social adjustment and behavioral patterns. O'Brennan et al. (2014) emphasized that positive school environments characterized by supportive peer interactions and constructive teacher-student relationships substantially reduce disruptive behaviors and promote prosocial conduct. Similarly, Kassab et al. (2024) found that students' perceptions of their educational environment predicted their behavioral engagement and contributed to improved behavioral functioning within the school setting. Complementing these findings, a systematic review highlighted that cohesive school culture and safe, structured environments are consistently associated with enhanced behavioral development and reduced behavioral problems (Abubakar & Oluwatosin, 2023). These convergent findings provide strong conceptual grounding for

Hypothesis 1, which proposes a significant relationship between the school environment and student behavior.

Relationship between Teachers' Role and Student Behavior

The role of teachers has been widely recognized as a central factor influencing student behavioral outcomes. High-quality teacher practices—including consistent classroom management, equitable communication, and explicit role-modeling—have been shown to foster constructive behavioral patterns among learners. Blazar (2016) reported that teacher effectiveness directly affects students' behavioral engagement, with more effective teachers leading to fewer behavioral disruptions and increased student participation. Endedijk et al. (2021) further showed that teacher behaviors shape peer-group dynamics, indirectly influencing students' behavioral adjustment within the classroom environment. Additionally, Löper and Hellmich (2024) demonstrated that students' perceptions of teachers' role-model behavior significantly predicted their social attitudes and interpersonal conduct. Collectively, these studies empirically reinforce Hypothesis 2, asserting that teachers' roles are significantly related to student behavior.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.

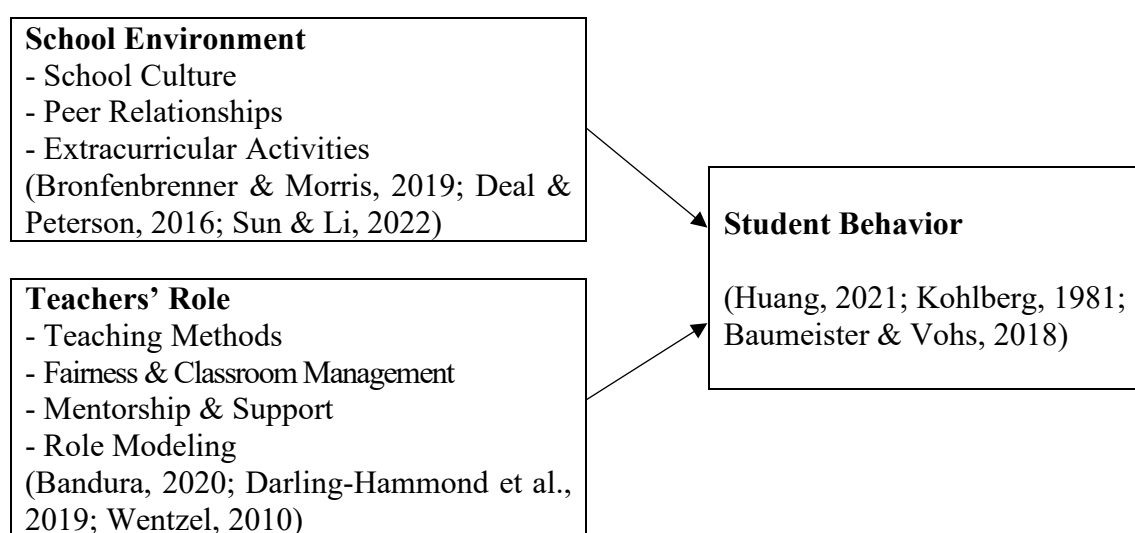


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the levels of school environment, teacher roles, and student behaviors, as well as the relationships among these variables within lower and upper secondary education. A total of 350 students were selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure followed by convenience sampling. In the first stage, grade levels within the school were identified and included to ensure representation across both lower and upper secondary education. In the second stage, specific classes within each grade level were selected using a simple random process. After the class selection was completed, convenience sampling was applied to include all students who were present and willing to participate in the selected classes. This combined approach ensured broad grade-level representation while acknowledging practical constraints in student participation.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising four sections: demographic information; school environment focusing on peer relationships and co-curricular activities; teacher roles encompassing classroom management, communication, instructional support, and role modeling; and student behaviors related to social adjustment, discipline, and classroom conduct. All scale-based items were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire was evaluated for content validity by experts using the item-

objective congruence index and tested for reliability through Cronbach's alpha, both indicating satisfactory levels of instrument quality.

Data collection was coordinated through school administrators and homeroom teachers to ensure that students completed the questionnaire under neutral and supervised conditions without external influence. Descriptive statistics including percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize the overall levels of the school environment, teacher roles, and student behaviors. To further identify predictors of student behavior, multiple regression analysis was employed using school environment factors and teacher roles as independent variables. The results were organized and presented in tabular and narrative form to provide a clear and coherent explanation of how school environment elements and teacher practices contribute to students' behavioral development in secondary education settings.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Results of general data analysis of respondents

Most of the respondents were female, accounting for 184 individuals (52.57%). A total of 162 respondents (46.29%) were aged 17 years and above. The majority were in Grade 9, totaling 207 students (59.14%). Regarding family background, 149 respondents (42.57%) reported that their parents' highest level of education was secondary school. For family socioeconomic status, 220 respondents (62.86%) indicated a medium level, characterized by stable employment and average income.

Level of Respondents' Opinions

Table 1 Shows the mean and standard deviation of school environment

School Environment	\bar{X}	SD	Level of opinion
School Culture	4.21	.56	Highest
Peer Relationships	4.19	.56	High
Extracurricular Activities	4.21	.61	Highest
Total	4.20	.53	High

From Table 1, it was found that the majority of respondents had an overall opinion on school environment at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.20$, $SD = .53$). When considering each aspect, respondents had the highest opinion on School Culture ($\bar{X} = 4.21$, $SD = .56$), followed by Extracurricular Activities ($\bar{X} = 4.21$, $SD = .61$), and the lowest on Peer Relationships ($\bar{X} = 4.19$, $SD = .56$).

Table 2 Shows the mean and standard deviation of teachers' role

Teachers' Role	\bar{X}	SD	Level of opinion
Teaching Methods	4.22	.60	Highest
Fairness and Classroom Management	4.19	.60	High
Mentorship and Support	4.19	.61	High
Role Modeling	4.19	.63	High
Total	4.20	.56	High

From Table 2, it was found that the majority of respondents had an overall opinion on teachers' role at a high level ($\bar{X} = 2.39$, $SD = 1.23$). When considering each aspect, respondents had the highest opinion on Teaching Methods ($\bar{X} = 4.22$, $SD = .60$), followed by Fairness and Classroom Management ($\bar{X} = 4.19$, $SD = .60$), and the lowest on Role Modeling ($\bar{X} = 4.19$, $SD = .63$).

Table 3 Shows the mean and standard deviation of student behavior

Student Behavior	\bar{X}	SD	Level of opinion
Discipline	4.19	.60	High
Compliance with Laws	4.18	.60	High
Civic Responsibility	4.16	.62	High
Moral Integrity	4.18	.61	High
Total	4.18	.57	High

From Table 3, it was found that the majority of respondents had an overall opinion on student behavior at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.18$, $SD = .57$). When considering each aspect, respondents had the highest opinion on Discipline ($\bar{X} = 4.19$, $SD = .60$), followed by Compliance with Laws ($\bar{X} = 4.18$, $SD = .60$), and the lowest on Civic Responsibility ($\bar{X} = 4.16$, $SD = .62$).

Hypothesis testing

Table 4 Shows the relationship between school environment and student behavior

Model	b	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.783	.153		5.113	.000***		
School Culture	.018	.054	.018	.336	.737	.390	2.564
Peer Relationships	.364	.059	.361	6.115	.000***	.318	3.140
Extracurricular Activities	.427	.052	.457	8.185	.000***	.356	2.807

R = .785, $R^2 = .616$, Adjusted $R^2 = .613$, Std. Error of the Estimate = .352,
F = 185.302, Sig. = .000***

*** p < .001

From Table 4, the results of the multiple regression analysis examining the influence of the school environment, which consisted of school culture (X1), peer relationships (X2), and co-curricular activities (X3), on overall student behavior revealed that the predictive model demonstrated a high level of fit. The analysis yielded $R = .785$, $R^2 = .616$, and Adjusted $R^2 = .613$, indicating that the model accounted for 61.6 percent of the variance in student behavior, which is considered a high proportion. Furthermore, the significance test of the overall model using the F statistic showed $F = 185.302$ with Sig. = .000, confirming that the model was statistically significant at the .001 level.

Table 5 Shows the relationship between teachers' role and student behavior

Model	b	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.453	.113		4.003	.000***		
Teaching Methods	.235	.046	.248	5.082	.000***	.288	3.478
Fairness and Classroom Management	.246	.047	.262	5.256	.000***	.276	3.617
Mentorship and Support	.232	.048	.250	4.837	.000***	.256	3.908
Role Modeling	.175	.051	.194	3.415	.001***	.213	4.694

R = .874, $R^2 = .764$, Adjusted $R^2 = .761$, Std. Error of the Estimate = .277,
F = 278.730, Sig. = .000***

*** p < .001

From Table 5, the results of the multiple regression analysis assessing the effects of the four dimensions of teacher roles, namely teaching methods (T1), fairness and classroom

management (T2), guidance and support (T3), and role modeling (T4), on overall student behavior revealed that the predictive model exhibited a very high level of fit. The model produced $R = .874$, $R^2 = .764$, and Adjusted $R^2 = .761$, indicating that it explained 76.4 percent of the variance in student behavior, which is considered remarkably high. Additionally, the F-test for overall model significance resulted in $F = 278.730$ with $\text{Sig.} = .000$, confirming that the model was statistically significant at the .001 level.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the school environment plays an important and positive role in shaping student behavior, particularly through elements such as peer relationships and co-curricular activities. These components were perceived at a high level among the respondents and contributed meaningfully to students' social adjustment and appropriate behavioral development. This outcome is consistent with previous research showing that supportive peer interactions and engagement in structured activities can enhance prosocial behavior and reduce the likelihood of misconduct among students (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). Within the culturally diverse context of Minzu Middle School, where students come from multiple ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, positive peer relationships may hold heightened importance by helping students bridge cultural differences, develop shared norms, and cultivate inclusive social networks. Studies in multicultural school settings similarly show that peer affiliation and cross-cultural friendships contribute to improved behavioral adjustment and reduced intergroup tensions (Park, 2020; Hu et al., 2022). These findings reinforce theoretical perspectives that emphasize the role of school climate in shaping student behavioral outcomes while underscoring the significance of culturally inclusive peer interactions in diverse educational environments.

The findings further show that teacher roles, including classroom management, communication practices, instructional support, and role modeling, were rated at a high level and demonstrated the strongest predictive power for student behavior. This aligns with substantial empirical evidence indicating that effective teacher practices support behavioral engagement, cooperation, and self-regulation among students (Cornelius-White, 2007). In a culturally diverse school environment, teachers also serve as key mediators of intercultural understanding by establishing culturally responsive communication, clarifying expectations, and modeling respectful interactions across cultural groups. Prior research demonstrates that teachers who adopt fair, consistent, and culturally sensitive practices contribute to improved classroom cohesion and more positive student behavior (Li et al., 2020; Chen & Astor, 2020). The strong predictive effect of teacher roles in this study therefore highlights the central pedagogical and relational influence that teachers exert in supporting behavioral development in multicultural learning environments.

The regression analysis additionally revealed that co-curricular activities and peer relationships, although less influential than teacher roles, contributed significantly to predicting student behavior. This pattern reflects a multidimensional understanding of behavioral development in which school climate, learning activities, and interpersonal relationships collectively shape students' behavioral tendencies. In culturally diverse schools, co-curricular programs offer critical spaces for cross-cultural interaction, collaborative learning, and identity expression, thereby strengthening students' emotional and behavioral adjustment. Prior studies confirm that participation in meaningful co-curricular activities supports improved conduct, enhanced social responsibility, and stronger cross-cultural understanding (Feng, 2019; Zhou & Brown, 2015). The results of this study therefore support ecological and social learning theories that highlight the interaction between environmental conditions and social role models in shaping behavior, while illustrating how structured intercultural engagement contributes to positive student outcomes in diverse school settings.

Based on these findings, several practical implications can be drawn. First, schools should prioritize professional development programs that enhance teachers' capacities for culturally responsive classroom management, equitable communication, and inclusive instructional support. Training should include strategies for addressing cultural misunderstandings, fostering inclusive dialogue, and supporting students with diverse linguistic and cultural needs. Second, because peer relationships meaningfully influence behavioral development, schools should create structured peer-support systems, intercultural group activities, and collaborative learning models that promote positive interaction across cultural groups. Third, enhancing co-curricular activities through culturally inclusive programming, student-led clubs, and mixed-group projects can foster greater social cohesion and encourage responsible behavioral patterns. Collectively, these recommendations can guide teachers, administrators, and policymakers in developing interventions that leverage both environmental and interpersonal factors to promote positive student behavior in diverse educational settings.

REFERENCES

- Abubakar, I., & Oluwatosin, A. (2023). Building better behavior: How school environments shape student character. *Journal of Educational Development, 18*(2), 45-59.
- Blazar, D. (2016). Teacher and teaching effects on students' academic performance, attitudes, and behaviors. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 9*(2), 324-365.
- Chen, J., and Astor, R. A. (2020). Students' perceptions of school climate in different cultural contexts. *Educational Review, 72*(3), 322-340.
- Cornelius-White, J. (2007). Learner-centered teacher-student relationships are effective: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 77*(1), 113-143.
- Deng, Z., & Gopinathan, S. (2016). PISA and high-performing education systems: Explaining the East Asian phenomenon. *Journal of Education Policy, 31*(6), 758-778.
- Eccles, J. S., & Roeser, R. W. (2011). School and community influences on human development. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 21*(1), 225-241.
- Endedijk, M. D., Slegers, P. J. C., van Veen, K., & van Kuijk, M. F. (2021). The teacher's invisible hand: A meta-analysis on the role of teacher behavior in peer relationships. *Review of Educational Research, 91*(4), 475-510.
- Feng, L. (2019). Co-curricular participation and adolescent behavioral outcomes in Chinese secondary schools. *Youth and Society, 51*(6), 846-870.
- Hu, Y., Zhang, W., and Wei, X. (2022). Cross-cultural peer relationships and behavioral adjustment among ethnic minority students in China. *Journal of Adolescence, 95*, 22-33.
- Kassab, M., Koumi, R., Zein, H., & Ghandour, L. (2024). Exploring pathways from the educational environment to learning outcomes through behavioral engagement. *BMC Medical Education, 24*(1), 1-10.
- Li, X., Yang, Y., and Li, Z. (2020). Culturally responsive teaching practices and student behavioral engagement in multicultural classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 96*, 103186.
- Löper, M., & Hellmich, F. (2024). Students' perceptions of teachers as role models and their influence on social attitudes. *Frontiers in Education, 9*, Article 1400471.
- O'Brennan, L. M., Bradshaw, C. P., & Furlong, M. J. (2014). Influence of psychosocial factors on student behavior in school settings. *Psychology in the Schools, 51*(3), 243-257.
- Park, H. (2020). Peer relationships and behavioral outcomes in multicultural school settings: A comparative study. *Journal of School Psychology, 82*, 1-14.
- Sun, R. C. F., & Shek, D. T. L. (2012). Student classroom misbehavior: An exploratory study based on teachers' perceptions. *The Scientific World Journal, 2012*, Article 208907.

- Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(3), 357-385.
- Wang, M. T., and Degol, J. (2016). School climate: A review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28(2), 315-352.
- Zhou, M., and Brown, D. (2015). Educational learning theories and diversity. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 4(2), 15-23.

Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers. Any product that may be evaluated in this article, or claim that may be made by its manufacturer, is not guaranteed or endorsed by the publisher.



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. This is a fully open-access article distributed under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).