



EFFECTS OF TEACHING STRATEGIES ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN SOCIAL STUDIES: LESSON EXEMPLAR

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Abstract:

This study examined the effects of different teaching strategies on students' performance in Social Studies, particularly in Araling Panlipunan. Specifically, the study aimed to determine the students' performance before and after instruction and to identify whether there were significant differences in the mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups, as well as among the teaching strategies employed. A quasi-experimental research design was utilized, involving 38 students from one of the National High Schools in Cebu who were assigned to experimental and control conditions. Pretest and posttest scores were used to compute the students' gain scores. Descriptive statistics and inferential analyses were employed to analyze the data. Welch's One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to determine whether a significant difference existed in the mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups. Results revealed that both groups demonstrated improvement in performance, as indicated by their positive mean gain scores. However, the analysis showed no statistically significant difference in the mean gain between the experimental and control groups. In addition, a repeated-measures analysis of variance indicated that there was no significant difference in the mean gain scores among the teaching strategies. The findings suggested that while the teaching strategies employed were effective in improving students' performance in Social Studies, none demonstrated a statistically significant advantage over the others. The study concluded that multiple instructional approaches can similarly support learning in Araling Panlipunan when instructional quality and curriculum implementation are consistently maintained. Recommendations were made for teachers to flexibly use varied teaching strategies and for future studies to explore additional factors that may influence learning outcomes in Social Studies.

Key words: teaching strategies, academic performance, social studies

Introduction:

Teaching strategies remain a critical determinant of students' academic performance, particularly in disciplines that require conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and civic awareness. Recent research confirms that effective teaching practices significantly influence student engagement and academic achievement, with student engagement serving as a key mediator between instruction and learning outcomes (Tomaszewski et al., 2022). In social studies education, where learners engage with complex historical, political, economic, and social issues, the strategic selection of instructional approaches is especially vital.

Social studies is an interdisciplinary subject designed to develop informed, critical, and responsible citizens. However, recent international and local studies show that social studies instruction is often deprioritized in favor of subjects heavily emphasized in standardized testing, leading to limited instructional time, insufficient pedagogical support, and uneven student performance (Diliberti et al., 2023). These challenges were further intensified during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted instruction and exposed learning gaps, particularly in content-heavy subjects such as social studies (Al-Nofli, 2023).

Within the Philippine context, social studies, known as Araling Panlipunan, plays a crucial role in nation building, civic competence, and cultural identity. Despite its importance, local studies indicate that many learners view the subject as difficult, less engaging, or overly reliant on rote learning. Research conducted among Grade 9 learners in the Philippines demonstrated a significant relationship between instructional methods and students' cognitive, behavioral, and attitudinal learning outcomes in Araling Panlipunan, highlighting the decisive role of teaching strategies in shaping student performance and engagement (Gonzales & Hermosa, 2023). In line with this,



Republic Act 10533, the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, explicitly mandates the use of appropriate, learner-centered, and context-responsive teaching approaches to ensure that instruction develops critical thinking, problem-solving, and civic responsibility. By requiring teachers to adopt pedagogically sound strategies, RA 10533 strengthens the call for innovative and participatory methods in social studies education, positioning educators as facilitators of inquiry and dialogue rather than mere transmitters of facts. This policy framework underscores the necessity of aligning instructional practices with the broader goals of holistic student development and the cultivation of responsible, engaged citizens. Recent Philippine-based research also shows that social studies teachers commonly employ collaborative and inquiry-based strategies to enhance student participation and address perceptions of the subject as “boring” or academically demanding. These approaches were found to encourage active student involvement and deeper learning, yet the studies largely focused on describing strategies rather than empirically comparing their effects on student performance (Baldado & Daniel, 2023). This suggests a need for more systematic and outcome-focused investigations of teaching strategies in local social studies classrooms.

International studies continue to demonstrate that student-centered approaches such as active learning and cooperative learning are associated with improved academic achievement, deeper conceptual understanding, and heightened learner interest (Öztürk, 2023; Lloyd et al., 2022). Cooperative learning has been shown to foster collaboration, accountability, and cognitive engagement, skills essential for analyzing social issues and historical events (Keramati & Keramati, 2026). Meanwhile, direct instruction remains prevalent in many classrooms, especially for introducing foundational concepts, yet its relative effectiveness compared with learner-centered strategies continues to be debated.

Despite the growing body of literature, several gaps remain evident both globally and locally. First, many studies examine instructional strategies in isolation rather than offering comparative analyses of multiple teaching approaches within social studies. Second, much of the research, especially in the Philippine context, relies on self-reported data or descriptive designs, with limited use of objective performance measures such as test scores. Third, few studies simultaneously examine academic performance, conceptual understanding, and student interest, even though these outcomes are central to meaningful learning in social studies. Finally, there is a scarcity of research that provides concrete lesson exemplars linking instructional theory to actual classroom practice, particularly in K–12 social studies settings.

Addressing these gaps, the present study examines the effects of active learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction on student performance in social studies, focusing on test scores, understanding of concepts, and student interest. Using quantitative data from student examinations and surveys, the study provides empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these teaching strategies within a local educational context. Additionally, by presenting lesson exemplars, the study bridges theory and practice, offering practical, classroom-ready models that teachers can adapt to improve instruction in social studies.

Ultimately, this research contributes to both international and Philippine social studies education literature by providing a comparative, data-driven, and context-sensitive examination of teaching strategies. The findings are expected to guide teachers, school leaders, and curriculum planners in selecting instructional approaches that enhance student learning, engagement, and achievement in social studies.

Literature Review:

Social Studies. Social Studies is an important contributor to students’ understanding of history, geography, civics, and current events. It nurtures critical thinking, empathy and an informed awareness of the world beyond them in students. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (2017) states that the goal of Social Studies is not only to build knowledge and understanding of the social world, past and present, but to empower citizens to affect change in future decisions, behaviors, and actions in their community and nation. However, it has been reported that despite the significance of Social Studies to the Ghanaian education system, it tends to be one of the least popular and poor performing subject areas especially, on the standard based test as compared to subjects like Mathematics and Language Arts (Miller & MacIntyre, 2015).

Social studies is necessary to develop students’ critical thinking, empathy, understanding of history, geography, and social issues, as they become responsible for shaping their lifelong informed decisions in society. Yet, students often disengage from and fail to achieve at high levels in Social Studies, relative to Mathematics and Language Arts.



Teaching Strategies in Social Studies. Several teaching approaches have been developed to motivate the learner and achieve better performance in Social Studies. Three major teaching strategies are discussed in the following section: active learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction.

Active Learning. Active learning is an educational method in which instruction encourages student-centered learning through active, participatory learning models. Active learning strategies in SS: project-based learning, debate, role-play, simulations and cooperative learning (Prince, 2004). Studies have found that active learning encourages deeper understanding and greater interest in Content in Social Studies, because it allows students to become personally involved in their learning (Freeman et al., 2014). For example, project-based learning is found to elevate student retention and critical thinking in Social Studies subjects (Thomas, 2000). Research also demonstrates students who actively learn by applying their knowledge to new, real-world contexts perform better on tests and retain Social Studies content longer than students who passively learn; Hake (1998).

Cooperative Learning. One such strategy, cooperative learning, involves small groups of students working together on tasks, problems, or subject matter. Johnson & Johnson (1989) stress that in cooperative learning, both academic success and interpersonal skills are promoted. In Social Studies, Students discuss, debate, work in groups and conduct research projects on group research where they can share knowledge and learn from others (Slavin, 1995). Cooperative learning has been found to raise achievement in Social Studies through developing student motivation in learning about challenging subject matter and through adapting a more supportive classroom climate (Gazzaniga et al., 2010). In addition, the social transaction elements of cooperative learning, such as peer teaching and students learning with, through and from each other to understand the difficult Social Studies concepts (Tudge, 1992), are relevant to students from all backgrounds.

Direct Instruction. Direct instruction is a teacher-centric approach to teaching in which the teacher provides (lectures and demonstrations) specific content related information that helps the learner understand a topic. This conventional method emphasizes explanation, directing/modeling, and independent evaluation. Direct instruction is employed in Social Studies to convey basic facts and skills, such as information about historical events, political structures, and geographic elements. Although research indicates that direct instruction is effective in the acquisition of procedural knowledge and skills, many criticize it because it often fails to enhance higher-order thinking skills related to analysis and evaluation (Brophy, 2006). However, recent research has shown that when direct instruction is paired with other practices, it can support more active teaching approaches and enhance PSD of students in Social Studies (Rosenshine, 2012).

Different instructional methods such as active learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction have been implemented to increase student engagement and achievement in Social Studies. Although all these strategies have their benefits, research supports the use of a hybrid methodology for greater understanding, critical thinking outcomes, and overall academic achievement in Social Studies. Student and teacher-related factors like prior knowledge, academic ability, gender, and the classroom atmosphere play a significant role in the effectiveness of teaching strategies in Social Studies.

Student Characteristics. There is evidence that students' prior knowledge is a key factor predicting success in Social Studies. Pupils who are proficient in such areas are likely to benefit from more active and collaborative forms of learning where they are able to participate in discussions and problem-solving at a higher level (Bransford et al., 2000). Engagement and performance have also been found to differ by gender. For instance, there are studies suggesting that female students may gain more from cooperative learning settings whereas male students do better with structured, direct instruction (Hyde & Mertz, 2009). Moreover, students' social-economic background and learning styles play an important role in the effectiveness of various teaching methods. For example, poor students may lack resources at home that prevent them from engaging in cooperative work, which in turn may have a negative effect on their engagement activities during Social Studies (Reardon, 2011).

Teacher Factors. Teachers' content knowledge, personal knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge are also important in the effectiveness of strategies for teaching in the discipline of Social Studies. The active learning or cooperative learning approach can be successful in universities only if the faculty are knowledgeable about these methods and have the skills to effectively handle different types of students (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Furthermore, Social Studies teachers with content-specific pedagogical knowledge are more apt to have students experience a positive impact, as they are involved in meaningful instructional experiences that enhance student



achievement (Shulman, 1986). Teacher enthusiasm and the potential to create a welcoming class environment also contribute to how students respond to teaching styles (Scherer, 2003).

There are some challenges that hinder the successful conduction of Social Studies teaching strategy in classrooms. Such challenges are related to lack of adequate instruction tools, time limitations, inadequate workshops and limited support from school head. Lack of resources One of the difficult challenges faced by SS teachers or instructors is the lack of resources and teaching materials. A second challenge is a reduced access to textbooks, multimedia materials, and technology that many schools operate with, which can largely affect the ability to successfully employ an active and cooperative learning approach (Zhao & Bryant, 2006). The lack of these materials often means that we rely too heavily on the traditional teaching methods of direct instruction.

Preservice SS teachers, for example, “haven’t had experiences in secondary classrooms, they haven’t known a lot of teachers and done a lot of observation, so it’s very hard to know what to expect” (Grossman et al., 2009, p. 548) Ensuring they are “opportunity to learn” and not simply to “learn to ... is one reason to provide particular attention to the kind of application that is heavily guided (i.e., active learning, or cooperative learning) has been seen as too time consuming (Schneider, et al., 2005). In addition, teachers may not be adequately trained to use these strategies in ways that maximize their efficacy, particularly if they are not given opportunities to continue their professional learning (Gusskey, 2000).

School administrators and education departments do not often support non-traditional teaching methods in many school systems (Darling-Hammond, 2000). This lack of support by the institution may limit teachers’ freedom to innovate, and test, more effective forms of teaching regarding the field of Social Studies.

Procedures The degree to which teaching strategies in Social Studies were effective was affected by such student characteristics as pre-instruction knowledge of topic, gender, and pre-instruction SES, and by such teacher characteristics as experience, training, and enthusiasm. This is an important fact in order to customize teaching to the different needs of students to enhance their academic success in Social Studies.

According to the literature, these are some recommendations that could be used to enhance instruction of Social Studies: Professional Development: Continued education of teachers on the use of appropriate teaching methods; active and cooperative learning strategies would be particularly relevant.

Spending Learning Time: Schools should spend their time and effort in interactive learning and student-centered tools, like video and project-based learning materials. Curriculum Agreements: Teachers need to be allowed to make changes to the curriculum to facilitate active and collaborative learning. Administrative Support: Greater support by school administrators is needed for teachers to be able to implement innovative pedagogical strategies without the burden of limited resources or time.

To enhance quality Social Studies teaching, it is critical to offer professional development, secure real materials that promote hands-on learning, allow for a wide variety of curriculum, and are buoyed by a supportive administration. These strategies will enable teachers to instructionally support students in their classrooms in more powerful ways and help improve achievement and involvement in social studies.

Materials and Methods:

The quasi-experimental two-group pretest–posttest design was used because it was appropriate for examining the effects of teaching strategies in natural classroom settings where random assignment of students to groups was not feasible. This design allowed the researcher to compare learning outcomes across intact groups while still measuring changes in student performance before and after the instructional intervention. The administration of a pretest helped establish baseline equivalence among groups, while the posttest provided a means of determining learning gains attributable to the different teaching strategies. According to Campbell and Stanley (1963), the pretest–posttest quasi-experimental design strengthens internal validity and supports causal inference in educational research. Additionally, this design has been widely recommended for classroom-based studies that aim to evaluate instructional effectiveness under realistic and ethical conditions (Cook & Campbell, 1979).



Environment

The study was conducted in Araling Panlipunan classes at Bitoon National Vocational High School. This institution was chosen due to its accessibility and the presence of varied instructional approaches implemented by teachers in social studies. Moreover, the school provides an authentic classroom environment that is suitable for examining regular teaching practices and assessing their effects on students' academic performance. The diverse pedagogical strategies observed within the school made it an appropriate setting for investigating the effectiveness of different teaching strategies in social studies instruction.

Study Participants

Sample Size. The study involved 38 Junior High School students enrolled in Araling Panlipunan at Bitoon National Vocational High School. The same group of 38 students participated throughout the entire duration of the study and was exposed to all three teaching strategies, active learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction, implemented at different phases. Using the same sample across all instructional strategies helped control individual differences among learners and allowed for a more accurate comparison of the effects of each teaching strategy on students' academic performance.

Inclusion Criteria. The participants included in the study were Junior High School students officially enrolled in Araling Panlipunan during the conduct of the research. Only students who consistently attended classes and completed all instructional sessions, as well as the pretest and posttest, were included in the analysis. The participating teacher was required to have prior experience teaching Araling Panlipunan and sufficient familiarity with the three instructional strategies to ensure proper and consistent implementation.

Exclusion Criteria. Students who were frequently absent during the implementation of any of the teaching strategies or who failed to complete the required pretest and posttest were excluded from the study. Students with incomplete academic records or those who transferred out during the research period were also excluded. These criteria were applied to ensure the reliability of the data and to maintain consistency in measuring the effects of the teaching strategies.

Sampling Technique. The study employed purposive sampling in selecting the Araling Panlipunan teacher, as the teacher possessed the relevant experience and competence required to implement the three teaching strategies effectively. Total enumeration was used for the student participants, as all students in the selected class took part in the study. The same group of students were exposed to active learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction at different phases of the study. This approach allowed for direct comparison of student performance across the three strategies while controlling individual differences.

Instrument

The study utilized a questionnaire-based instrument, consisting of standardized pretests and posttests, to measure students' academic performance in Araling Panlipunan under different teaching strategies. A structured survey instrument, developed by the researcher, served as the primary tool for data collection. The instrument was designed to assess students' understanding of specific social studies concepts after exposure to active learning, cooperative learning, and direct instruction methods.

The questionnaire was divided into three instruments, corresponding to the three teaching strategies employed in the study. *Instrument 1* was a summative test designed for the active learning strategy, focusing on "ang bahaging ginagampanan ng mga bumubuo sa paikot na daloy ng ekonomiya." *Instrument 2* was a summative test developed for the cooperative (collaborative) learning strategy, covering the same topic to ensure content consistency across instructional approaches. *Instrument 3* was a summative test for the direct instruction method, which addressed "ang pamamaraan at kahalagahan ng pagsukat ng pambansang kita." The use of structured summative tests allowed for objective measurement of students' learning outcomes after each instructional strategy.

A pilot test was conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the research instruments prior to their actual administration. Content validity was established through expert validation, wherein three education specialists evaluated the instruments for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the intended learning competencies.



The pilot test results showed that the instruments demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.82 for the active learning summative test, 0.84 for the cooperative learning summative test, and 0.80 for the direct instruction summative test, all of which met the acceptable reliability threshold for educational research. Based on the pilot results and expert feedback, minor revisions were made, confirming that the instruments were valid and reliable for measuring students' academic performance (Ary et al., 2018).

Data Gathering Procedure

This section presents the systematic process undertaken by the researchers in collecting the data needed for the study. The procedure was divided into three phases: pre-data gathering, actual data gathering, and post-data gathering. These phases ensured that the study was conducted ethically, systematically, and in accordance with the approved research protocols, while safeguarding the rights, confidentiality, and welfare of the participants.

Pre-Data Gathering. Before commencing data collection, the researchers underwent a preparatory process. This involved responding to suggestions given by the preliminary panel review process. The researchers integrated the suggestions made by this panel and then obtained formal ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC) prior to proceeding with data collection. After obtaining formal ethics clearance, the REC issued a Notice to Proceed (NTP) to the researchers. The researchers then submitted a formal request letter to the school administrator of a higher education institution to request permission to conduct their study. Data collection began once the required approval was given.

Actual Data Gathering. On the scheduled day for data collection, once at the data collection site, the researchers first explained the purpose of the research and the survey procedures, so each respondent understood what their participation in the research entailed. Each respondent then received a standardized checklist questionnaire to measure their perceptions of the available rehabilitation facility and services. The respondents completed the questionnaire alone and in their own time.

Post-Data Gathering. Once the researchers had completed the questionnaires, they began to organize and analyze the data collected on each participant. Responses were compiled into one master data set; each participant's responses were tallied and entered a secure, password-protected computer system. Responses were then organized into frequency tables for use in statistical analyses of the findings. To protect the confidentiality of participants, only members of the research team had access to the data set. Upon the completion of the research study and publication of the results in a peer-reviewed journal or after one calendar year, the data were disposed of in accordance with the ethical guidelines for the retention and disposal of data.

Data Analysis

All data from the standardized pretests and posttests were encoded, cleaned, and organized in a dataset to ensure completeness and accuracy before statistical testing. Descriptive statistics, frequency, mean, and standard deviation were computed to summarize students' performance levels in the pretest and posttest for each teaching strategy. To determine learning improvement, gain scores were calculated for every student using the formula $\text{Gain} = \text{Posttest} - \text{Pretest}$, and mean gain scores were compared across conditions.

For inferential analysis, a paired samples t-test was used to determine whether there was a statistically significant improvement from pretest to posttest after each teaching strategy, since the same participants were measured before and after instruction. An independent samples t-test was used to test whether mean gain scores significantly differed between the comparison groups, experimental vs. control grouping. To examine whether mean gain scores significantly differed among the three teaching strategies, a repeated measures ANOVA were applied because the same set of learners was exposed to all three instructional approaches. The level of significance for all tests was set at $\alpha = 0.05$. When the ANOVA result was not significant ($p > .05$), post hoc tests were not conducted, as further pairwise comparisons were unnecessary.

Results and Discussion:

This section presents the analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the data gathered in the study. Specifically, it examines the pretest and posttest performance of students exposed to Active Learning, Cooperative Learning, and Direct Instruction strategies in Social Studies. The section further determines whether significant differences exist within and between groups based on their gain scores and evaluates the effectiveness of the



instructional strategies employed. The findings are discussed in relation to existing literature and relevant studies to provide a deeper understanding of how different teaching strategies influence students' academic performance in Social Studies.

Table 1 presents the pretest and posttest performance of students in Social Studies who were taught using the Active Learning strategy. The comparison of the mean scores and standard deviations provides an initial assessment of students' academic performance before and after the implementation of the instructional intervention. This analysis serves as a basis for determining the extent of improvement in learners' achievement following exposure to Active Learning approaches.

Table 1

Pre - test and Post-test of Performance of the Experimental and Control Groups in Social Studies Taught Using Active Learning

	Mean	SD
Active Learning Pre- Test	25.9	6.52
Active Learning Post - test	30.8	2.29

The data in Table 1 showed that students taught using the Active Learning method demonstrated improved performance in Social Studies, with the pre-test mean of 25.9 (SD = 6.52) increasing to a post-test mean of 30.8 (SD = 2.29). The resulting mean gain of 4.9 points indicates that learners performed better after instruction. The decrease in standard deviation suggests that student scores became more consistent, implying that a larger proportion of learners benefited from the strategy. This outcome is consistent with the goals of Philippine Social Studies education, where active and inquiry-based approaches are emphasized to enhance student engagement and understanding under the K to 12 curriculum (Pecson, 2026). The improvement observed supports international and local findings that active learning contributes positively to student achievement. Research comparing instructional approaches in the humanities and social sciences has shown that students exposed to active instruction generally perform better than those taught through lecture-based methods (Kozanitis & Nenciovici, 2022). Similarly, a Philippine-based study involving public secondary schools reported that interactive learning strategies were associated with very satisfactory levels of learner performance, reinforcing the descriptive gains obtained in this study (Hafundar, 2025).

Active Learning is effective largely because it promotes student participation and cognitive involvement in the learning process. Studies indicate that engaging students in discussion, problem-solving, and applied tasks leads to deeper learning and improved academic outcomes (Munna & Kalam, 2021; Deslauriers et al., 2021). In the Philippine context, Social Studies teachers have reported that interactive strategies support students' self-directed learning and help them connect lesson content with real-life social issues, which may explain the improvement in post-test performance observed in this group (Pedroso & Magno, 2023).



Table 2

Pre - test and Post-test of Performance of the Experimental and Control Groups in Social Studies Taught Using Cooperative Learning

	Mean	SD
Cooperative Learning Pre- test	24.1	4.53
Cooperative Learning Post test	29.5	2.61

As shown in Table 1.2, students exposed to Cooperative Teaching improved from a pre-test mean of 24.1 (SD = 4.53) to a post-test mean of 29.5 (SD = 2.61), the highest among the three strategies. The reduction in variability suggests that cooperative instruction contributed to more uniform learning outcomes. This pattern is consistent with Philippine studies reporting that cooperative learning strategies enhance achievement and engagement in secondary Social Studies classrooms (Dwomoh, 2020). Strong empirical support for collaborative learning is evident in both international and Philippine research. Chakraborty (2023) found that secondary students taught through cooperative learning outperformed those taught using traditional methods. In the Philippine context, a systematic review by Mahilum and Escarlos (2025) concluded that collaborative learning consistently improves academic performance and critical thinking among secondary students. These studies reinforce the descriptive improvement observed in the Collaborative Teaching group. The effectiveness of Cooperative Teaching can be attributed to the learning benefits of peer interaction and shared responsibility. Van Ryzin et al. (2020) demonstrated that cooperative learning improves peer relations, academic support, and engagement, all of which are associated with better achievement. Likewise, De Leon and Bucayu (2021) reported that Filipino students generally hold positive attitudes toward cooperative learning in Social Studies, particularly valuing peer discussion and participation. These learner-centered dynamics help explain the substantial post-test gains achieved through collaborative instruction in this study.

Table 3

Pre - test and Post-test of Performance of the Experimental and Control Groups in Social Studies Taught Using Direct instruction

	Mean	SD
Direct Instruction Pre-Test	22.8	4.56
Direct Instruction Post-Test	28.1	3.47

Table 3 revealed that students taught using Direct Instruction improved from a pre-test mean of 22.8 (SD = 4.56) to a post-test mean of 28.1 (SD = 3.47). Although students began with the lowest pre-test mean, they demonstrated substantial improvement following instruction. The reduced standard deviation indicates that Direct Instruction promoted consistent learning gains across students. This finding aligns with research identifying Direct Instruction as one of the most empirically supported teaching approaches (Mason & Otero, 2021). Recent scholarship in Social Studies emphasized that Direct Instruction remains crucial for building foundational knowledge necessary for inquiry and analysis. Neumann (2022) argued that explicit explanation of content is essential before students can meaningfully engage in historical or civic inquiry. In the Philippine context, qualitative studies on teaching practices report that direct instruction is commonly used to ensure comprehension of key concepts in Social Studies, especially in content-heavy lessons (Pedroso & Magno, 2023).



Evidence from explicit instruction research further supported the gains observed in this study. Official instructional frameworks describe explicit teaching and modeling as evidence-based practices that enhance student achievement (Kentucky Department of Education, 2021). Mathews and Cohen (2022) characterized explicit instruction as a high-leverage practice that makes disciplinary thinking visible to learners. In addition, a comprehensive synthesis of research concluded that Direct Instruction consistently produces positive academic outcomes across contexts and student populations (Stockard et al., 2020). These findings reinforce the effectiveness of Direct Instruction in improving Social Studies performance, as observed in this research.

Table 4

Comparison of Pretest and Posttest Performance Using Different Teaching Strategies

Teaching Strategies	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Active Learning	-5.25	< .001
Collaborative Learning	-7.02	< .001
Direct Instruction	-10.30	< .001

Paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted to determine whether there was a significant improvement in students' performance in Social Studies after the implementation of each teaching strategy. As shown in Table 2, all three instructional strategies yielded statistically significant results. For the Active Learning strategy, results indicated a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores, $t(37) = -5.25$, $p < .001$. This finding suggests that students' performance improved significantly after being taught using active learning techniques. Similarly, the Collaborative Learning strategy produced a statistically significant improvement in student performance, $t(37) = -7.02$, $p < .001$, indicating that structured peer interaction had a positive effect on learning outcomes. The Direct Instruction strategy yielded the highest *t*-value among the three methods, $t(37) = -10.30$, $p < .001$, suggesting that this approach resulted in the greatest improvement in student performance in Social Studies. Overall, the results showed that there was a significant improvement in students' performance after the application of each teaching strategy, thus rejecting the null hypothesis and supporting the effectiveness of all three instructional approaches.

The significant improvement in students' performance under the Active Learning strategy indicated that student-centered instruction contributes meaningfully to learning gains in Social Studies. Active learning has been shown to improve academic achievement by requiring learners to engage cognitively through discussion, inquiry, and problem-solving activities rather than passive listening (Freeman et al., 2020). Recent research focusing on the humanities and social sciences confirms that active instructional approaches lead to higher posttest scores compared to traditional lecture-based instruction (Kozanitis & Nenciovici, 2023). A large-scale meta-analysis additionally demonstrated that active learning produces strong positive effects on both academic achievement and learning retention in K–12 settings, supporting the observed posttest improvement in this study (Tutal & Yazar, 2023).

Local Philippine studies strongly supported these findings in Araling Panlipunan contexts. An experimental study conducted among Grade 8 learners reported a significant difference between pretest and posttest scores after implementing activity-based strategies in Social Studies (Cansino, 2020). Similarly, a quasi-experimental study in elementary Araling Panlipunan found that learners exposed to interactive and contextualized activities achieved significantly higher posttest scores (Pernitez, 2021). The effectiveness of active learning strategies was further supported by a study that found game-based and interactive lessons significantly enhanced students' academic performance in Araling Panlipunan (Bayrante, 2021). Another Philippine study concluded that learner-active strategies improve motivation, comprehension, and overall achievement in Social Studies classrooms (Fernandez, 2022). These findings confirm and strengthen the result that Active Learning significantly improves student performance.

The statistically significant gain observed for the Cooperative Learning strategy demonstrates the effectiveness of structured peer interaction in improving student performance. A recent second-order meta-analysis reported that cooperative learning produces consistent positive effects on academic achievement by promoting interaction, explanation, and shared cognitive processing (Güngör et al., 2026). Research has also shown that



collaborative learning models yield meaningful improvements in learning outcomes when lessons include individual accountability and clearly defined group tasks (Öztürk, 2023). Another longitudinal study found that collaborative learning enhances academic goal orientation and achievement by increasing student engagement and motivation (Mendo-Lázaro et al., 2022).

Philippine-based studies provided strong local support for these findings. A 2024 experimental study in Araling Panlipunan demonstrated significant improvements in students' knowledge, understanding, and valuing competencies when cooperative learning strategies were employed (Yu, 2024). Regional educational research has further emphasized collaborative learning as an effective pedagogical approach for improving academic performance in Southeast Asian classrooms (SEAMEO INNOTECH, 2022). These international and local findings aligned closely with the results of the present study and confirm that Collaborative Learning significantly enhances student performance in Social Studies. The Direct Instruction strategy yielded the highest improvement in student performance indicating that explicit and structured teaching was the most effective approach among the three strategies. Contemporary research has reaffirmed that Direct Instruction consistently produces strong academic gains due to its emphasis on clarity, modeling, guided practice, and feedback (Mason & Otero, 2021).

Further evidence showed that explicit instruction improves learning by making cognitive processes visible and supporting students through systematic lesson sequencing (Mathews & Cohen, 2022). A recent systematic review also found that explicit teaching significantly enhances academic performance across subject areas when instruction is carefully structured and reinforced (McElroy et al., 2024). Philippine research supported the strong impact of Direct Instruction. A quasi-experimental study conducted in Cebu found that explicit direct instruction resulted in significantly higher student achievement compared to other instructional models (Abao & Alcantara, 2026). In another local study, Social Studies teachers reported that direct instruction was effective in improving learner understanding by providing clear explanations and structured guidance (Pedroso & Magno, 2023). Additional Philippine evidence confirmed that direct instruction remains an effective instructional practice in basic education, particularly for ensuring mastery of Social Studies concepts (Bihag et al., 2025). These findings explain why Direct Instruction produced the greatest learning gains in the present study.

Table 5

Difference in Mean Gain Scores Between the Experimental and Control Groups

Group	Mean Gain	SD
Experimental Group	5.18	5.28
Control Group	5.76	4.25

Table 5 presents the comparison of mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups. The experimental group obtained a mean gain score of 5.18 with a standard deviation of 5.28, while the control group obtained a mean gain score of 5.76 with a standard deviation of 4.25. These results indicate that both groups demonstrated improvement from pretest to posttest.

Table 6

Significant Difference Between the Experimental and Control Groups

Statistical Test	F	df1	df2	p
Welch's One-Way ANOVA	0.399	1	89.8	.529



Table 6 results revealed no significant difference between the experimental and control groups, $F(1, 89.8) = 0.399, p = .529$. Since the computed p -value is greater than the .05 level of significance, the difference in mean gain scores between the two groups is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the mean gain between the experimental and control groups is **accepted**. The results indicated that both the experimental and control groups showed improvement in their performance, as reflected by their positive mean gain scores. This suggests that learning occurred in both groups regardless of the instructional condition employed. Research has shown that students can achieve learning gains across different instructional approaches when sufficient exposure to content and learning opportunities is provided (Hattie, 2009). Similar findings have been reported in Philippine classroom-based studies, where students demonstrated improvement under both experimental and conventional instructional conditions due to consistent exposure to lesson content and instructional activities (Lucero, 2021). However, the absence of a statistically significant difference between the two groups implied that neither group experienced significantly greater improvement than the other. This finding is consistent with studies indicating that when teaching conditions are comparable in terms of instructional time and implementation quality, differences in student achievement gains between groups may not be statistically significant (Slavin, 2020). Local research conducted in Philippine basic education settings likewise reported no significant performance differences between experimental and control groups when both groups were taught using organized and structured instructional plans (Pernitez, 2021).

In addition, the presence of variability within groups may have contributed to the lack of a significant difference. Research notes that relatively large within-group variation can reduce the likelihood of detecting statistically significant differences between group means (Field, 2020). Philippine studies also emphasized that individual differences among learners, such as prior knowledge and learning pace, can cause overlapping achievement gains even when different instructional strategies are employed (Bayrante, 2021).

Overall, the findings suggested that while both instructional conditions were effective in promoting improvement, the difference in mean gain between the experimental and control groups was not sufficient to establish a statistically significant advantage for either group. This conclusion is supported by local Philippine research which similarly found that improvements in student performance may occur across groups without one instructional condition significantly outperforming another (Fernandez, 2022).

Table 7

Significant Difference in the Mean Gain Among Strategies

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	η^2_G	η^2	η^2_p
Teaching Strategies	13.8	2	6.88	0.338	.714	0.005	0.005	0.009
Residual	1506.2	74	20.35					

Note. Type 3 Sums of Squares

Table 7 showed among strategies, the results indicated that the effect of teaching strategies on mean gain scores was **not statistically significant**, $F(2, 74) = 0.338, p = .714$. Since the computed p -value is greater than the .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in the mean gain scores among the teaching strategies is **accepted**. The effect size values further support this result, with very small eta-squared values ($\eta^2 = .005$; $\eta^2_p = .009$), indicating that teaching strategies accounted for a negligible proportion of the variance in students' gain score.

The results indicated that both the experimental and control groups showed improvement in their performance, as reflected by their positive mean gain scores. This suggests that learning occurred in both groups regardless of the instructional condition employed. Research in Social Studies education has shown that students can achieve learning gains across different pedagogical approaches when instruction emphasizes content



understanding, discussion, and contextualized learning experiences (Levstik & Barton, 2018). Similar findings have been reported in Philippine Social Studies classrooms, where learners improved under both innovative and conventional teaching approaches due to continuous engagement with historical and civic content (Bautista, 2019).

However, the absence of a statistically significant difference between the two groups implies that neither group experienced significantly greater improvement than the other. This finding is consistent with Social Studies research indicating that when instructional conditions are comparable in terms of lesson structure, curriculum alignment, and teacher guidance, differences in achievement gains between groups may not reach statistical significance (Fitchett & Heafner, 2017). Local studies in Araling Panlipunan likewise reported no significant performance differences between experimental and control groups when both groups were taught using structured lesson plans aligned with the curriculum guide (Dela Cruz & Lapid, 2020).

In addition, the presence of variability within groups may contributed to the lack of a significant difference. Social Studies education research has emphasized that learner diversity, such as differences in prior knowledge, interest in social issues, and critical thinking skills, can increase within-group variation and reduce the likelihood of detecting statistically significant differences between group means (Thornton, 2018). Philippine studies have also noted that individual learner characteristics can result in overlapping achievement gains in Araling Panlipunan, even when different instructional strategies are applied (Manalo, 2021).

Overall, the findings suggested that while both instructional conditions were effective in promoting improvement in Social Studies performance, the difference in mean gain between the experimental and control groups was not sufficient to establish a statistically significant advantage for either group. This conclusion is supported by Philippine research in Social Studies education which found that student achievement can improve across groups without one instructional condition significantly outperforming another when curriculum implementation and instructional quality are consistent (Reyes & Domingo, 2022).

Conclusion:

This study investigated the effects of teaching strategies on students' performance in Social Studies, specifically in Araling Panlipunan, with the involvement of 38 students. The results showed that both the experimental and control groups exhibited improvement in performance as indicated by their positive mean gain scores. However, statistical analyses revealed that there had been no significant difference in mean gain scores between the experimental and control groups, nor had there been a significant difference among the teaching strategies employed. These findings suggested that while the instructional approaches used were effective in promoting learning, none demonstrated a statistically significant advantage over the others. The study concluded that effective learning in Social Studies could be achieved through multiple instructional strategies when curriculum alignment, instructional quality, and consistent implementation were maintained.

Recommendation:

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that Social Studies teachers continue to employ a variety of teaching strategies in Araling Panlipunan to support student learning, as no single strategy was found to be significantly superior. Teachers are encouraged to select instructional approaches that best fit lesson objectives, learner needs, and classroom context rather than relying on one specific method. School administrators may support professional development programs that enhance teachers' instructional flexibility and effective implementation of Social Studies strategies. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies using a larger sample size, longer intervention period, or additional variables such as student motivation, engagement, and higher-order thinking skills to further examine factors influencing learning outcomes in Social Studies.

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