

Democratic Classroom Discourse and Civic Identity Formation Among Secondary Students

Richel C. Agustin and Genesis N. Damaso

Northeastern College

richelagustin979@gmail.com, genesisdamaso@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

This study situated the Social Science classroom as a living space for democratic practice by determining the relationship between democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation among secondary students. Using a convergent classroom discourse mapping design, the study gathered quantitative data through a validated and reliability-tested survey instrument and supported the findings with classroom observation pattern matching. The instrument measured democratic classroom discourse in terms of student voice and expression, respectful listening and turn-taking, reasoned argumentation, openness to diverse views, and participatory classroom interaction. Civic identity formation was measured in terms of civic belonging, awareness of rights and responsibilities, civic self-efficacy, respect for democratic values, and willingness to participate

in school and community life. Findings revealed that democratic classroom discourse was generally high, with respectful listening and turn-taking emerging as the strongest dimension, while participatory classroom interaction required further strengthening. Civic identity formation was also high, with respect for democratic values and awareness of rights and responsibilities rated strongest, although willingness to participate in school and community life remained comparatively lower. Spearman correlation showed a strong positive and significant relationship between democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation. Canonical correlation further indicated that openness to diverse views, reasoned argumentation, and student voice were the strongest discourse-related contributors to civic identity. Observation results confirmed that democratic practices were evident in classroom exchanges, but deeper reasoning, inclusive participation, student-to-student questioning, and action-oriented civic engagement still needed improvement. The study concluded that democratic classroom discourse meaningfully supported civic identity formation, especially when students were given space to speak, listen, reason, and engage with differing views.

Keywords: *civic identity formation, democratic classroom discourse, democratic values, open classroom climate, secondary students, social science education*

INTRODUCTION

Schools remain one of the most important places where young people learn what it means to live with others, listen to differing views, and take part in public life. In democratic societies, civic learning is not limited to memorizing constitutional principles, government structures, or historical facts. It also involves the daily experience of speaking, listening, questioning, disagreeing with respect, and making sense of social issues with others. For secondary students, this is especially important because adolescence is a period when learners begin to form stronger opinions about fairness, authority, rights, responsibility, belonging, and participation. When classroom conversations allow students to examine social and political concerns in a respectful manner, the

classroom becomes more than a place for academic instruction. It becomes a small democratic space where learners begin to understand themselves as citizens.

Democratic classroom discourse refers to classroom interaction where students are given meaningful opportunities to express ideas, listen to diverse perspectives, ask questions, justify their views, and participate in reasoned discussion. This type of discourse is closely related to the concept of an open classroom climate, which has been widely examined in civic and citizenship education research. Myoung and Li (2025) described open classroom climate as a classroom environment where adolescents can freely discuss political issues and express their opinions. Their review of studies using international civic education data showed that open classroom climate continues to be an important construct in understanding how classroom experiences shape civic knowledge, attitudes, and engagement. This suggests that students do not develop civic identity only through the content of lessons, but also through the kind of participation they are allowed to practice inside the classroom.

The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study 2022 emphasized that young people develop civic knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions within different contexts, including schools and classrooms, where social interaction and participatory experiences shape how they understand citizenship (Schulz et al., 2024). The same line of evidence shows that open classroom discussion is positively associated with civic learning outcomes, particularly because students are encouraged to encounter multiple views, reflect on public issues, and connect civic concepts with lived experience. In this sense, democratic discourse is not merely a teaching style. It is part of the civic environment that helps students see whether their voice matters, whether disagreement can be handled respectfully, and whether participation has value.

The role of classroom discourse becomes more significant when viewed in relation to civic identity formation. Civic identity refers to the way learners see themselves as members of a community and as persons capable of contributing to public life. It involves awareness of rights and duties, concern for others, willingness to participate, and a sense of connection to local and national concerns. Blaskó et al. (2019), using evidence from the ICCS 2016 study, found that civic education is associated with a range of non-cognitive civic outcomes, including civic attitudes, institutional trust, and civic self-efficacy. Their findings are important because they show that civic learning should not be measured only through factual knowledge. It should also consider how students develop confidence, responsibility, and readiness to act as members of society.

Teaching quality also matters in shaping students' civic participation. Alscher et al. (2022) found that perceived cognitive activation and open classroom climate were positively associated with students' willingness to participate in political and civic life. This means that civic education becomes more meaningful when students are not treated as passive receivers of information, but as thinking participants who can examine issues, compare viewpoints, and form reasoned judgments. In Social Science classrooms, democratic discourse may therefore serve as a bridge between lesson content and civic identity. Through guided discussion, learners may begin to connect abstract ideas such as democracy, justice, equality, human rights, and citizenship with their own experiences as students, family members, community members, and future voters.

The relevance of democratic classroom discourse is strongly connected to the goals of Araling Panlipunan and Social Science education in the Philippines. The K to 12 Araling Panlipunan Curriculum emphasizes the development of a functionally literate and developed Filipino, guided by lifelong learning, constructivism, collaborative learning, experiential learning, and contextualized learning (Department of Education, 2016). These foundations imply that students are expected to learn not only by receiving information from the teacher, but also by constructing meaning through interaction, reflection, and real-life application. A Social Science classroom that allows thoughtful discussion of social realities can help students understand citizenship not as a distant concept, but as something practiced in the way they listen, speak, decide, and relate with others.

However, studies on citizenship education in the Philippine curriculum also point to areas that require closer attention. Dizon (2022), in a content analysis of the K to 12 Junior High School Economics curriculum, found that the curriculum integrates liberal individualist and civic republican conceptions of citizenship, but also noted that some civic-oriented outcomes need to be stated more explicitly. These findings matter because curriculum content alone may not fully guarantee civic formation. Even when citizenship concepts are present in

the curriculum, students still need classroom experiences that make those concepts visible, discussable, and personally meaningful. Democratic discourse can help fill this space by allowing learners to examine how civic ideas operate in ordinary social life, school relationships, community issues, and national concerns.

Global citizenship education also supports this direction. UNESCO (2015) emphasized that global citizenship education seeks to help learners develop knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes that enable them to contribute to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable world. While this goal is broad, it begins in simple classroom practices such as respectful dialogue, perspective-taking, and responsible participation. For secondary students, the Social Science classroom can become a venue where local identity, national belonging, and wider civic responsibility are discussed together. This is particularly important in a time when young people encounter social issues not only in textbooks, but also through family conversations, community life, news, and digital platforms.

Despite the growing literature on civic education, there remains a need for more school-based studies that examine how democratic classroom discourse relates to civic identity formation among secondary students in specific educational contexts. Many studies have examined open classroom climate, civic knowledge, and civic engagement at large international or national levels, but fewer studies have focused on how students in ordinary classrooms experience democratic discourse and how such experiences shape their sense of citizenship. For Social Science teachers, this concern is practical and urgent. If students are expected to become reflective, responsible, and participative citizens, then classroom interaction must be studied as part of civic learning itself.

The study seeks to contribute to the continuing discussion on how classroom talk, participation, and respectful exchange influence students' civic development. By examining democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation together, the study recognizes that citizenship is not formed by lessons alone. It is shaped through repeated classroom experiences where students learn to speak with reason, listen with respect, understand difference, and gradually see themselves as members of a democratic community.

Literature Review

Democratic Classroom Discourse as a Foundation for Civic Learning

Democratic classroom discourse has gained attention in civic education because it treats students not only as learners of social concepts but also as participants in the practice of democracy. In classroom settings, discourse becomes democratic when learners are allowed to express opinions, listen to others, ask questions, defend their views with reasons, and revise their thinking after encountering different perspectives. This kind of classroom exchange is closely linked to deliberative democratic learning because it gives students repeated opportunities to experience fairness, respect, voice, disagreement, and shared reasoning in ordinary academic interaction. Maurissen, Barber, and Claes (2018) emphasized that open discussion of political and social issues helps prepare students for engaged citizenship because learners begin to understand civic participation through communicative experience rather than through content exposure alone. In the same way, Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Losito, Agrusti, and Friedman (2024) reported through the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study that an open classroom climate for discussion remains one of the stable school-related factors associated with students' civic knowledge and civic learning outcomes. These findings suggest that democratic discourse in the Social Science classroom is not an additional activity, but a central condition for helping students understand citizenship as a lived practice shaped by listening, speaking, reasoning, and responsible participation.

Open Classroom Climate and Students' Civic Engagement

Open classroom climate is one of the most established constructs in international civic education research because it captures the extent to which students feel free to discuss social, political, and public issues inside the classroom. Myoung and Li (2025) explained that open classroom climate has been widely used in international large-scale assessments to understand how classroom environments influence civic learning, although they also noted the need for more precise conceptual and measurement approaches in future studies. ICCS 2022 findings further reaffirmed that students' perceptions of open classroom discussion were positively associated with civic

knowledge, while opportunities for student participation within schools remained important in forming civic engagement (Schulz et al., 2024). This indicates that classrooms where students are encouraged to speak, ask, and listen create more favorable conditions for civic growth than classrooms where learners remain silent recipients of information. Alscher, Ludewig, and McElvany (2022) also found that open classroom climate and cognitively activating instruction were associated with students' willingness to participate in civic and political life, with civic knowledge and political interest serving as important mediating factors. Taken together, these studies show that open discussion does not weaken academic seriousness. Instead, it deepens civic understanding by allowing students to connect public issues with personal judgment, moral responsibility, and future participation.

Civic Identity Formation among Secondary Students

Civic identity formation refers to the gradual development of how students see themselves as members of a community and as persons who can take part in public life. For secondary students, this process is especially important because adolescence is a stage when learners begin to form stronger views about rights, rules, fairness, leadership, belonging, and social responsibility. Blaskó, da Costa, and Vera-Toscano (2019) found that civic education contributes not only to cognitive outcomes but also to non-cognitive civic outcomes such as civic attitudes, institutional trust, and civic self-efficacy. This matters because civic identity cannot be reduced to knowing facts about government or history. It also involves confidence in one's capacity to participate, sensitivity to social concerns, and willingness to act responsibly within a community. Conrad (2022) further showed that classroom climate is connected to civic engagement and civic attitudes, although students' civic experiences may differ according to social identity and classroom context. These findings point to the need to study civic identity formation in actual school settings because students do not encounter citizenship in a neutral space. Their sense of civic self is shaped by the opportunities they receive to speak, be heard, negotiate difference, and make meaning from issues that affect their lives and communities.

Democratic Discourse in the Philippine Social Science Classroom

In the Philippines, democratic classroom discourse is closely connected to the goals of Araling Panlipunan and Social Science education, where students are expected to understand society, history, governance, citizenship, culture, and contemporary issues. The Department of Education's Araling Panlipunan curriculum recognizes the curriculum as a blueprint of what society seeks to realize through education, which implies that civic formation is not separate from classroom learning but embedded in the aims of basic education (Department of Education, 2016). Dizon (2022), in a content analysis of the K to 12 Junior High School Economics curriculum, found that citizenship education is present through liberal individualist and civic republican orientations, but some civic-oriented outcomes need stronger and more explicit articulation. This finding suggests that the curriculum may provide the foundation for citizenship education, but classroom practice determines whether students can actually experience civic learning in meaningful ways. In this light, a Social Science classroom that promotes democratic discourse can help students move beyond memorization of concepts toward active reflection on fairness, accountability, rights, duties, community life, and national identity. For a study situated in Dicomay National High School, this line of inquiry is relevant because it examines how classroom talk and student participation may contribute to civic identity formation among secondary learners in a real educational context.

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a convergent classroom discourse mapping design, a quantitative-dominant design supported by contextual validation from classroom-based observations. This design was considered appropriate because the study did not merely describe students' perceptions, but also examined how democratic classroom discourse was connected with civic identity formation among secondary students. The quantitative component measured the extent of democratic discourse and civic identity formation, while the observational component provided supporting classroom evidence on how voice, respect, participation, reasoning, and shared meaning-

making were manifested during Social Science learning activities. The design allowed the researcher to view democratic discourse both as a measurable classroom condition and as a lived interactional practice within the learning environment.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Dicomay National High School, where Social Science instruction served as the immediate academic context of the investigation. The locale was appropriate because secondary students in this school were exposed to lessons involving citizenship, governance, rights, responsibilities, social issues, and civic participation. These learning areas provided a meaningful setting for examining whether classroom discussion practices encouraged students to speak, listen, reflect, and develop a stronger sense of civic belonging. The school context also allowed the researcher to examine democratic classroom discourse within an actual public secondary school environment rather than in an artificial or highly controlled setting.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of the study were secondary students enrolled in Social Science classes at Dicomay National High School. They were selected through stratified purposeful sampling to ensure representation across relevant grade levels where civic, social, and democratic concepts were taught. The use of this sampling technique helped the researcher include students who had sufficient exposure to classroom discussions related to citizenship and public life. The selection was also guided by inclusion criteria, particularly current enrollment in a Social Science class, regular class attendance, and willingness to participate with the consent of the appropriate authorities and guardians. Students who were not officially enrolled in the identified classes during the conduct of the study were excluded from participation.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used in the study was a researcher-developed survey questionnaire titled Democratic Classroom Discourse and Civic Identity Formation Scale. The instrument was divided into two major parts. The first part measured democratic classroom discourse in terms of student voice and expression, respectful listening and turn-taking, reasoned argumentation, openness to diverse views, and participatory classroom interaction. The second part measured civic identity formation in terms of civic belonging, awareness of rights and responsibilities, civic self-efficacy, respect for democratic values, and willingness to participate in school and community life.

The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale to avoid neutral responses and encourage participants to indicate the direction of their perceptions. The scale was interpreted as follows: 4.00 to 3.25, Very High; 3.24 to 2.50, High; 2.49 to 1.75, Low; and 1.74 to 1.00, Very Low. This scale was used for both democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation.

To establish content validity, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts composed of a Social Science teacher, a research specialist, and a curriculum or instructional leader. The validators examined the instrument in terms of relevance to the study objectives, clarity of wording, suitability for secondary students, alignment with the constructs, and appropriateness of the response format. Their comments were incorporated before the pilot testing was conducted.

The instrument was pilot tested among secondary students from a comparable public secondary school who were not included in the actual study. The pilot test was conducted to determine the clarity, readability, and internal consistency of the instrument. After the pilot test, reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was performed. The democratic classroom discourse scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91, while the civic identity formation scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89. The overall instrument produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93, indicating excellent internal consistency. These results showed that the instrument was reliable for measuring the constructs of the study.

In addition to the questionnaire, a classroom discourse observation checklist was used as a supporting tool. This checklist recorded observable indicators of democratic discourse, including opportunities for student expression, evidence of respectful disagreement, teacher facilitation of multiple viewpoints, student use of reasons

in explaining answers, and inclusive participation during discussion. The checklist was not used to grade students but to support the interpretation of the survey results.

Data Gathering

The researcher first secured permission from the appropriate school authorities before conducting the study. After approval was granted, the purpose, procedures, and ethical safeguards of the study were explained to the concerned teachers, students, and parents or guardians. Consent and assent forms were distributed and collected before the administration of the instrument.

The survey questionnaire was administered during a scheduled time that did not disrupt major classroom activities. The researcher gave clear instructions and assured the participants that their responses would remain confidential and would be used only for research purposes. The students were given enough time to answer the questionnaire independently.

Classroom observations were conducted after the survey administration to gather supporting evidence on democratic discourse practices in actual Social Science classes. The researcher observed selected class sessions using the prepared checklist and recorded only classroom interaction patterns relevant to the study. No names of students were written in the observation notes. After all instruments were retrieved, the responses were checked for completeness, encoded, and prepared for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive and relational statistical procedures. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation among the students. These measures helped describe the general pattern of student responses and the consistency of perceptions within each dimension.

To determine the relationship between democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation, Spearman's rank-order correlation was used. This was selected because the data came from Likert-scale responses and the study focused on the strength and direction of association between two ordered constructs. This statistical treatment was appropriate because it did not assume strict interval-level measurement and was suitable for analyzing perception-based educational data.

To further determine which dimensions of democratic classroom discourse were most strongly associated with civic identity formation, canonical correlation analysis was employed. This provided a broader and more refined interpretation because it examined the relationship between two sets of variables rather than looking only at isolated pairwise associations. Through this analysis, the study identified which discourse-related dimensions, such as student voice, respectful listening, reasoned argumentation, openness to diverse views, and participatory interaction, were most closely linked with civic identity indicators such as civic belonging, civic self-efficacy, democratic values, and willingness to participate.

The classroom observation results were analyzed through pattern matching. The observed classroom interaction patterns were compared with the survey findings to determine whether the reported levels of democratic classroom discourse were reflected in actual classroom exchanges. This helped strengthen the interpretation of the quantitative results by connecting numerical findings with classroom-based evidence.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed ethical standards in the conduct of educational research involving secondary students. Permission was obtained from the school authorities before data gathering. Since the participants were minors, informed consent from parents or guardians and assent from students were secured before their participation. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to withdraw at any point without penalty.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained. The names of the students were not written in the questionnaire, observation checklist, or data file. The results were reported in summarized form and were used only for academic and research purposes. The researcher also ensured that no classroom activity was disrupted

and that no student was pressured to answer in a particular way. All data were handled with care, stored securely, and accessed only by the researcher. The study avoided any procedure that could cause embarrassment, discomfort, or harm to the student participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. *Level of Democratic Classroom Discourse among Secondary Students*

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
Student Voice and Expression	3.18	0.52	High
Respectful Listening and Turn-Taking	3.34	0.47	Very High
Reasoned Argumentation	2.91	0.58	High
Openness to Diverse Views	3.07	0.55	High
Participatory Classroom Interaction	2.84	0.61	High
Overall Mean	3.07	0.55	High

Legend: 3.25 to 4.00, *Very High*; 2.50 to 3.24, *High*; 1.75 to 2.49, *Low*; 1.00 to 1.74, *Very Low*

Table 1 presents the level of democratic classroom discourse among secondary students in terms of student voice and expression, respectful listening and turn-taking, reasoned argumentation, openness to diverse views, and participatory classroom interaction. The overall mean of 3.07, interpreted as High, indicates that democratic discourse was generally present in the Social Science classroom. Students perceived that they were given opportunities to participate, express their opinions, listen to others, and engage with ideas that may differ from their own. This suggests that classroom interaction was not purely teacher-centered and that learners experienced a degree of freedom in sharing thoughts during discussions.

Among the dimensions, respectful listening and turn-taking obtained the highest mean of 3.34, interpreted as Very High. This result shows that students generally observed courtesy and patience during discussions. They were likely able to wait for their turn, listen when classmates were speaking, and avoid openly dismissing the opinions of others. This is a strong indicator of a classroom climate where basic democratic behavior is already practiced. In a Social Science classroom, such a finding is meaningful because civic formation begins with the simple discipline of listening to another person, especially when the opinion expressed is different from one's own.

Student voice and expression also obtained a high mean of 3.18. This suggests that learners felt that their views were welcomed during classroom discussion. The result indicates that the teacher was able to create opportunities for students to answer, ask, clarify, and relate lessons to their own understanding. However, the mean did not reach the very high level, which may imply that while students were allowed to express themselves, not all learners were equally confident or equally active in doing so. Some students may have remained hesitant to speak, especially when discussions involved sensitive social issues, political concerns, or moral judgments.

Reasoned argumentation received a mean of 2.91, which was still High but lower than the first two dimensions. This means that students were able to explain their answers and provide reasons, although this skill may not yet have been consistently strong. Some learners may have participated by giving opinions, but not always by supporting these opinions with evidence, examples, or clear explanations. This reveals a realistic area for improvement. Democratic discourse is not only about giving everyone a chance to speak. It also requires students to learn how to think carefully, justify their claims, and consider whether their statements are fair, logical, and grounded.

Openness to diverse views obtained a mean of 3.07, interpreted as High. This indicates that students generally accepted the presence of differing opinions in the classroom. They were able to recognize that classmates may hold different ideas due to personal experience, family background, culture, beliefs, or exposure to social

issues. Still, the result also suggests that deeper openness may need further strengthening. Students may tolerate differing views, but tolerance alone is not the same as active understanding. For civic identity formation, students must gradually learn to appreciate difference as part of democratic life rather than merely endure it during class discussions.

The lowest mean was obtained by participatory classroom interaction, with a mean of 2.84, although still interpreted as High. This suggests that the classroom had participatory features, but participation may not have been evenly distributed among students. It is possible that a small group of confident learners often dominated recitation and discussion, while quieter students participated less visibly. This finding points to a common classroom concern. Democratic discourse may be present in the classroom, but it becomes more meaningful when participation is widened and when more students, including reserved learners, feel that they have a safe and legitimate place in the conversation.

Table 2. *Level of Civic Identity Formation among Secondary Students*

Dimensions	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
Civic Belonging	3.21	0.50	High
Awareness of Rights and Responsibilities	3.28	0.46	Very High
Civic Self-Efficacy	2.89	0.57	High
Respect for Democratic Values	3.31	0.45	Very High
Willingness to Participate in School and Community Life	2.76	0.63	High
Overall Mean	3.09	0.52	High

Legend: 3.25 to 4.00, *Very High*; 2.50 to 3.24, *High*; 1.75 to 2.49, *Low*; 1.00 to 1.74, *Very Low*

Table 2 shows the level of civic identity formation among secondary students. The overall mean of 3.09, interpreted as High, reveals that students had a generally developed sense of civic identity. They appeared to recognize themselves as members of a school and community, understood the importance of rights and responsibilities, valued democratic principles, and showed some willingness to participate in civic-related activities. This result suggests that Social Science learning contributed to the formation of civic awareness and civic orientation among the students.

Respect for democratic values obtained the highest mean of 3.31, interpreted as Very High. This finding indicates that students strongly valued fairness, respect, equality, freedom of expression, and responsible participation. Such a result is encouraging because democratic values form the moral foundation of citizenship. When students value fairness and respect, they become more prepared to engage with others without resorting to hostility or indifference. In the classroom context, this may also reflect the influence of repeated discussions on rights, governance, justice, and social responsibility.

Awareness of rights and responsibilities also received a Very High rating, with a mean of 3.28. This shows that students had a strong understanding that citizenship involves both entitlements and obligations. They were likely aware that citizens have rights that must be protected, but they also recognized that citizens have responsibilities toward others and the community. This finding reflects the importance of Social Science instruction in helping learners connect civic concepts with ordinary duties such as obeying school rules, respecting others, participating in activities, and showing concern for public welfare.

Civic belonging obtained a mean of 3.21, interpreted as High. This suggests that students generally felt connected to their school and community. They may have seen themselves as part of a larger social group where their actions and decisions matter. However, the result also suggests that civic belonging could still be deepened. Some students may understand the idea of belonging at the school level but may not yet fully connect it to wider community or national participation. This is a significant point because civic identity grows stronger when students understand that citizenship extends beyond classroom lessons and school activities.

Civic self-efficacy obtained a mean of 2.89, interpreted as High but lower than the dimensions on values and awareness. This indicates that students believed they could contribute to discussions and social concerns, but their confidence was not yet fully established. They may know what is right or important, but may not always feel capable of taking action, leading others, or speaking up when faced with real situations. This finding reveals a gap between civic understanding and civic confidence. In practical terms, students may be aware of democratic values but still need more guided opportunities to practice civic decision-making, express opinions, and take part in classroom or school-based initiatives.

The lowest mean was observed in willingness to participate in school and community life, with a mean of 2.76. Although still High, this result indicates a clear area for development. Students may have valued citizenship and understood civic responsibility, but their readiness to participate actively in school and community matters was comparatively weaker. This may be due to shyness, limited opportunities, fear of judgment, lack of experience, or the belief that civic participation is mainly for adults or student leaders. This finding makes the study more realistic because it shows that civic identity was present, but it had not fully translated into active civic participation.

Table 3. *Spearman Rank-Order Correlation between Democratic Classroom Discourse and Civic Identity Formation*

Variables	Spearman's rho	p-value	Strength of Relationship	Decision
Democratic Classroom Discourse and Civic Identity Formation	0.68	<0.001	Strong Positive Relationship	Significant

Table 3 presents the result of the Spearman rank-order correlation analysis between democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation. The computed Spearman's rho of 0.68 with a p-value of less than 0.001 indicates a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between the two variables. This means that students who perceived a higher level of democratic classroom discourse also tended to report a higher level of civic identity formation.

This finding suggests that classroom discourse played an important role in shaping how students understood themselves as members of a democratic community. When students were encouraged to express ideas, listen respectfully, reason out their views, consider different perspectives, and participate in classroom exchanges, they were more likely to develop civic belonging, awareness of responsibilities, respect for democratic values, civic confidence, and willingness to participate. The result supports the view that civic identity is not developed only through textbook-based instruction. It is also formed through classroom experiences where students are allowed to practice the habits of democratic life.

The strength of the relationship is especially meaningful because it shows that democratic discourse is not a superficial classroom feature. It appears to have a direct connection with how students construct their civic selves. However, the result also needs to be interpreted with caution. A strong relationship does not mean that democratic classroom discourse is the only factor influencing civic identity formation. Family background, peer influence, community exposure, school culture, media use, and personal experiences may also shape civic identity. Still, the finding confirms that the classroom remains a powerful site for civic development.

Table 4. *Correlation between Dimensions of Democratic Classroom Discourse and Civic Identity Formation*

Dimensions of Democratic Classroom Discourse	Spearman's rho	p-value	Interpretation
Student Voice and Expression	0.61	<0.001	Strong Positive Relationship
Respectful Listening and Turn-Taking	0.56	<0.001	Moderate Positive Relationship
Reasoned Argumentation	0.64	<0.001	Strong Positive Relationship
Openness to Diverse Views	0.66	<0.001	Strong Positive Relationship
Participatory Classroom Interaction	0.59	<0.001	Moderate Positive Relationship

Table 4 displays the relationship between each dimension of democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation. All dimensions showed positive and statistically significant relationships with civic identity formation. This means that each component of democratic classroom discourse contributed meaningfully to students' civic development, although the strength of the relationships varied.

Openness to diverse views obtained the highest correlation with civic identity formation, with a Spearman's rho of 0.66. This suggests that students who experienced greater openness to differing perspectives were more likely to develop a stronger civic identity. This finding is significant because democratic citizenship requires the ability to live with difference. In the classroom, students who are exposed to multiple viewpoints may become more aware that society is composed of people with different beliefs, experiences, and interests. Such exposure helps students understand that civic life requires patience, fairness, and respect for plurality.

Reasoned argumentation also showed a strong positive relationship with civic identity formation, with a correlation coefficient of 0.64. This indicates that students who were encouraged to explain their answers, defend their views, and provide reasons were more likely to develop civic confidence and democratic values. The finding suggests that reasoning is a key part of civic formation. Students do not become civic-minded only by agreeing with the teacher or following classroom rules. They become more civically aware when they are trained to think through issues, examine claims, and express judgments in a responsible manner.

Student voice and expression obtained a strong positive relationship, with a coefficient of 0.61. This means that students who felt that their voices were recognized were more likely to develop civic belonging and civic self-efficacy. The result highlights the emotional and social value of being heard. When students experience that their opinions matter in class, they may begin to believe that their participation can also matter in school and community life. This is important in adolescence because young people often develop confidence through repeated experiences of recognition.

Participatory classroom interaction obtained a moderate positive relationship with civic identity formation, with a coefficient of 0.59. This finding suggests that active participation helped strengthen civic identity, although the relationship was not as strong as openness to diverse views or reasoned argumentation. This may mean that participation alone is not enough. What matters is the quality of participation. If students merely answer questions or join activities without deeper reflection, civic formation may be limited. Participation becomes more powerful when it involves thoughtful discussion, shared inquiry, and meaningful connection to social realities.

Respectful listening and turn-taking showed a moderate positive relationship with civic identity formation, with a coefficient of 0.56. Although this was the lowest correlation among the dimensions, it remained significant. The result indicates that respectful listening contributes to civic identity, but it may function more as a necessary classroom condition than as a direct driver of civic growth. Students need to listen respectfully before deeper discourse can happen. However, listening must eventually lead to reflection, dialogue, and participation for civic identity to become stronger.

Table 5. *Canonical Correlation Analysis of Democratic Classroom Discourse and Civic Identity Formation*

Canonical Function	Canonical Correlation	Wilks' Lambda	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Function 1	0.74	0.43	6.82	<0.001	Significant
Function 2	0.39	0.78	2.11	0.046	Significant
Function 3	0.24	0.91	1.28	0.183	Not Significant

Table 5 presents the canonical correlation analysis between the set of democratic classroom discourse dimensions and the set of civic identity formation dimensions. The first canonical function yielded a canonical correlation of 0.74, with Wilks' Lambda of 0.43 and a p-value of less than 0.001. This indicates a significant and substantial relationship between the two sets of variables. The result means that democratic classroom discourse, taken as a combined set of classroom practices, was strongly associated with civic identity formation, taken as a combined set of civic outcomes.

The first canonical function suggests that the strongest shared pattern between the two variable sets was found in classroom conditions where students experienced openness to diverse views, reasoned argumentation, and student voice. These dimensions were most closely aligned with civic belonging, respect for democratic values, and civic self-efficacy. This means that students developed stronger civic identity when they were not only allowed to participate but were also encouraged to think, explain, and encounter differences in a respectful classroom environment.

The second canonical function was also significant, although weaker, with a canonical correlation of 0.39 and a p-value of 0.046. This suggests a smaller but meaningful relationship between participatory classroom interaction and willingness to participate in school and community life. The lower strength of this function is important because it reveals a practical concern. While classroom participation was related to civic participation, the connection was not as strong as expected. This may indicate that classroom participation had not yet fully extended into active involvement beyond the classroom. Students may be willing to speak during lessons but may still hesitate to join school organizations, civic projects, or community activities.

The third canonical function was not significant. This means that the remaining unexplained patterns between the two sets of variables were not strong enough to be considered meaningful. Overall, the canonical correlation analysis confirms that democratic classroom discourse and civic identity formation were not isolated constructs. They were connected as broader sets of classroom experiences and student civic outcomes.

Table 6. *Canonical Loadings for the First Significant Canonical Function*

Variable Set	Variables	Canonical Loading
Democratic Classroom Discourse	Openness to Diverse Views	0.86
Democratic Classroom Discourse	Reasoned Argumentation	0.82
Democratic Classroom Discourse	Student Voice and Expression	0.79
Democratic Classroom Discourse	Participatory Classroom Interaction	0.68
Democratic Classroom Discourse	Respectful Listening and Turn-Taking	0.63
Civic Identity Formation	Respect for Democratic Values	0.84
Civic Identity Formation	Civic Self-Efficacy	0.80
Civic Identity Formation	Civic Belonging	0.76
Civic Identity Formation	Awareness of Rights and Responsibilities	0.71
Civic Identity Formation	Willingness to Participate in School and Community Life	0.66

Table 6 shows the canonical loadings for the first significant canonical function. Among the democratic classroom discourse dimensions, openness to diverse views had the highest loading of 0.86, followed by reasoned argumentation with 0.82 and student voice and expression with 0.79. These results indicate that the strongest contributors to democratic classroom discourse were not merely behavioral routines but the more intellectually and socially demanding parts of classroom discussion. Students developed stronger civic identity when they experienced a classroom where different opinions could be explored, where explanations were expected, and where student voices were recognized.

Participatory classroom interaction and respectful listening also contributed to the canonical function, with loadings of 0.68 and 0.63, respectively. These values show that participation and listening were still important, although they were less influential than openness, reasoning, and voice. This suggests that democratic discourse becomes strongest when classroom participation moves beyond surface-level recitation. Students need to participate in ways that allow them to explain, compare, question, and reconsider ideas.

For civic identity formation, respect for democratic values had the highest loading of 0.84, followed by civic self-efficacy with 0.80 and civic belonging with 0.76. These findings suggest that democratic discourse was most closely connected with students' valuing of democracy, confidence in their civic capacity, and sense of belonging. Awareness of rights and responsibilities also showed a strong loading of 0.71, which means that

students' understanding of civic duties was related to classroom discourse experiences. Willingness to participate in school and community life had the lowest loading of 0.66, although still meaningful. This result again suggests that active civic participation remained the area that needed greater support.

The pattern of canonical loadings shows that the strongest link between the two constructs was found in the movement from classroom dialogue to civic confidence and democratic values. Students who experienced open and reasoned classroom discussion were more likely to see themselves as capable, responsible, and respectful members of a democratic community. However, translating this identity into actual civic participation remained less developed, indicating a need for more experiential civic activities.

Table 7. *Classroom Observation Pattern Matching on Democratic Discourse Practices*

Observed Indicators	Frequency of Observation	Pattern Interpretation
Teacher invited students to express opinions during discussion	Frequently Observed	Consistent with high student voice
Students listened without interrupting classmates	Frequently Observed	Consistent with very high respectful listening
Students supported answers with examples or reasons	Occasionally Observed	Partially consistent with reasoned argumentation
Teacher encouraged consideration of different viewpoints	Frequently Observed	Consistent with openness to diverse views
Quiet students were invited to participate	Occasionally Observed	Partially consistent with participatory interaction
Students asked follow-up questions to classmates	Occasionally Observed	Emerging but not yet consistent
Discussion connected lesson concepts to school or community issues	Frequently Observed	Consistent with civic identity formation
Students proposed possible actions or solutions to social issues	Occasionally Observed	Civic action readiness needed strengthening

Table 7 presents the classroom observation pattern matching on democratic discourse practices. The observation results generally supported the survey findings. The teacher frequently invited students to express opinions during discussion, which confirmed the high-rating for-student voice and expression. Students were also frequently observed listening without interrupting classmates, which aligned with the very high rating for respectful listening and turn-taking. These patterns suggest that the classroom had a respectful and supportive environment where students could participate without fear of open ridicule or dismissal.

The teacher was also frequently observed encouraging students to consider different viewpoints. This finding was consistent with the high rating for openness to diverse views and the strong relationship between openness and civic identity formation. In observed discussions, students were exposed to different interpretations of social issues, classroom situations, or community concerns. This may have helped them understand that citizenship involves more than personal opinion. It also involves the ability to recognize the experiences and concerns of others.

However, some indicators were only occasionally observed. Students supported their answers with examples or reasons, but this was not consistent across all observed sessions. This confirmed the lower mean for reasoned argumentation compared with student voice and respectful listening. It appeared that many students were willing to share their opinions, but not all were ready to explain those opinions in a deeper or more evidence-based manner. This suggests that students needed more structured practice in explaining, defending, and refining their ideas.

Quiet students were also only occasionally invited to participate. This supported the finding that participatory classroom interaction had the lowest mean among the democratic discourse dimensions. The

classroom was participatory, but participation was not always evenly distributed. More confident students tended to respond more often, while quieter students were less visible in classroom exchanges. This reveals a practical issue in democratic discourse. A classroom may appear active, but the activity may still depend on a few dominant voices unless the teacher deliberately designs ways for all students to contribute.

Students were occasionally observed asking follow-up questions to classmates. This indicates that dialogic interaction was emerging but not yet fully established. Many classroom exchanges still followed the pattern of teacher question, student answer, and teacher response. While this pattern allowed participation, it did not always lead to student-to-student dialogue. For democratic discourse to become deeper, students need more opportunities to respond to one another, ask clarifying questions, and build ideas collectively.

The observation also showed that discussion frequently connected lesson concepts to school or community issues. This supported the high level of civic identity formation. Students were able to relate classroom topics to fairness, responsibility, leadership, respect, and community participation. However, students proposed possible actions or solutions to social issues only occasionally. This finding was consistent with the lowest mean under willingness to participate in school and community life. It suggests that learners were developing civic awareness and values, but their readiness to translate ideas into action remained limited.

Overall, the pattern matching strengthened the results of the survey and statistical analysis. Democratic classroom discourse was present and meaningfully connected with civic identity formation. However, the findings also revealed that the classroom needed stronger support for reasoned argumentation, inclusive participation, student-to-student questioning, and civic action readiness. These areas represent the realistic problem identified in the study. Students had promised civic values and a generally positive classroom discourse climate, but their deeper deliberative skills and active civic participation still required development.

CONCLUSION

Democratic classroom discourse was meaningfully associated with the civic identity formation of secondary students, as learners who experienced greater opportunities for voice, respectful listening, reasoned explanation, openness to varied viewpoints, and classroom participation also showed stronger civic belonging, awareness of rights and responsibilities, respect for democratic values, civic self-efficacy, and willingness to engage in school and community life. However, while the findings showed generally favorable results, they also revealed that students were stronger in valuing democracy and understanding civic responsibility than in confidently translating these into active participation, especially in student-led dialogue, reasoned argumentation, and civic action. Based on these findings, it is recommended that Social Science teachers sustain democratic classroom practices by designing more structured discussions, debates, issue-based inquiries, reflection activities, and collaborative tasks where students can speak, listen, question, justify opinions, and respond to different perspectives with respect. Teachers should also provide more opportunities for quiet and hesitant learners to participate through small-group dialogue, guided prompts, peer facilitation, and written-to-oral sharing activities. The school may strengthen civic identity formation by linking classroom discourse with meaningful school and community-based activities, such as student forums, classroom citizenship projects, community issue mapping, and action-oriented Social Science performance tasks. Future researchers may expand the study by including other schools, comparing grade levels, using longitudinal data, or integrating interviews to further explain how democratic classroom discourse shapes students' civic confidence and actual participation.

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