

# Attitudes Toward Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC) and the Prosocial Behavior of Grade 3 Learners at Mangagoy South Elementary School, Bislig City Division: A Descriptive-Correlational Approach

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## ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between Grade 3 learners' attitudes toward Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC) and their prosocial behavior in school at Mangagoy South Elementary School, Bislig City Division, during School Year 2025-2026. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design was used. Through total enumeration, the study involved 26 Grade 3 learners. Data were gathered using a researcher-made learner questionnaire and a teacher-rated checklist. Weighted mean was used to describe the learners' attitudes toward GMRC and their prosocial behavior, while Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the relationship between the variables. The learners demonstrated a highly favorable attitude toward GMRC, with an overall mean of 3.56, interpreted

as Strongly Agree. Interest in GMRC obtained the highest mean of 3.73, followed by application of GMRC learning with 3.59 and perceived importance of GMRC with 3.38. Their prosocial behavior obtained an overall mean of 3.22, interpreted as Often. Courtesy and respect registered the highest mean of 3.52, followed by cooperation and inclusion with 3.12 and helping and sharing with 3.03. A significant moderate positive relationship was found between attitudes toward GMRC and prosocial behavior ( $r = 0.482$ ,  $p = 0.013$ ). The findings indicate that favorable attitudes toward GMRC are associated with more desirable social behavior in school and support the continued use of meaningful, applied, and age-appropriate GMRC learning experiences.

**Keywords:** *Good Manners and Right Conduct, prosocial behavior, Grade 3 learners, values education, descriptive-correlational research, elementary education*

## INTRODUCTION

Good Manners and Right Conduct (GMRC) is more than a school subject on etiquette. It is a formative learning area through which children are guided to practice respect, care, responsibility, cooperation, and appropriate behavior in their daily relationships. Republic Act No. 11476 institutionalized GMRC and Values Education in the K to 12 curriculum and established GMRC as a separate subject from Grades 1 to 6 (Republic of the Philippines, 2020). Consistent with this mandate, the MATATAG Curriculum identifies GMRC as a core elementary subject that supports the formation of socially accepted values and proper conduct toward other people (Department of Education, 2024).

In Grade 3, the relevance of GMRC becomes visible in ordinary school situations. Learners are expected to interact respectfully, respond to the needs of others, show compassion, and make appropriate choices. These

expectations are closely related to prosocial behavior, which refers to voluntary actions intended to benefit others, including helping, sharing, comforting, cooperating, and protecting others from harm (Spivak & Durlak, 2016). Prosocial behavior is important in elementary school because it supports positive peer relationships, a safe classroom environment, and learners' social adjustment.

International evidence supports the value of deliberately cultivating such attitudes and behaviors. Durlak et al. (2011), in a meta-analysis of school-based social and emotional learning programs, found improvements in learners' attitudes, social behavior, and academic performance. A more recent meta-analysis by Cipriano et al. (2023) likewise reported positive effects of universal school-based interventions on skills, attitudes, behavior, peer relationships, school functioning, and school climate. These findings suggest that values-oriented instruction becomes educationally meaningful when learners are encouraged not only to understand values but also to express them in actual behavior.

The need for respectful and caring school relationships is also evident in broader education contexts. UNESCO (2024) emphasized that bullying and school violence remain serious concerns worldwide. In Southeast Asia, SEA-PLM evidence indicates that children's well-being, school belonging, sense of safety, and positive school relationships are closely connected with learning (Játiva & Mills, 2022). These conditions make it important for schools to examine whether children appreciate values-oriented learning and whether favorable attitudes are reflected in their interpersonal behavior.

Although GMRC is mandated in Philippine basic education, school-level evidence on the relationship between learners' attitudes toward GMRC and their prosocial behavior remains limited, particularly among young elementary learners in local public-school settings. Measuring attitude alone may not fully show whether values are expressed in conduct. Similarly, observing behavior without examining learners' attitudes may not clarify how they perceive and apply the lessons taught in GMRC. The present study addressed this gap by examining both variables among Grade 3 learners at Mangagoy South Elementary School, Bislig City Division.

Specifically, the study determined the level of learners' attitudes toward GMRC in terms of interest in GMRC, perceived importance of GMRC, and application of GMRC learning; described their prosocial behavior in school in terms of courtesy and respect, helping and sharing, and cooperation and inclusion; and tested whether a significant relationship existed between attitudes toward GMRC and prosocial behavior in school.

## Literature Review

### *Good Manners and Right Conduct as Values Formation*

GMRC is grounded in the view that values education should develop habits that are visible in the learner's conduct. Republic Act No. 11476 provides the legal basis for teaching GMRC as a distinct subject in the elementary grades (Republic of the Philippines, 2020). The MATATAG Curriculum further emphasizes proper interaction, respect, compassion, responsible decision-making, and conduct that supports harmonious relationships (Department of Education, 2024). Thus, GMRC is not limited to knowledge of rules; it is intended to help children internalize and practice values in everyday settings.

This orientation is consistent with international research on character and social-emotional learning. Brown et al. (2023) reported a significant positive effect of character education programs across a large body of studies. Taylor et al. (2017) also found that the positive effects of school-based social and emotional learning interventions can persist beyond the immediate program period. These studies reinforce the importance of sustained classroom opportunities for learners to practice values through discussion, reflection, modelling, and real-life application.

### *Attitudes Toward GMRC*

Attitudes toward GMRC may be understood through learners' interest in the subject, their recognition of its importance, and their willingness to apply its lessons. Interest involves positive attention, enjoyment, and a tendency to reengage with a topic over time (Harackiewicz et al., 2016). Hidi and Renninger (2006) explained that interest can develop progressively when learners encounter meaningful and engaging experiences. In GMRC, interest may be reflected in liking the subject, enjoying activities, feeling positive during lessons, and wanting to learn more.

Perceived importance is also central to attitude formation. Expectancy-value theory explains that learners are influenced not only by their expectations of success but also by the value they assign to a task or subject (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). For GMRC, perceived importance is reflected in learners' beliefs that the subject helps them respect others, speak kindly, and make right decisions. Such beliefs matter because values instruction is more likely to be internalized when children see its relevance to their own lives.

Application represents the behavioral direction of attitude. Learners demonstrate the application of GMRC when they use classroom lessons in interactions with classmates and in school decision-making. Evidence from values-oriented education suggests that engaging strategies can support this process. Nair et al. (2014), for example, found that storytelling improved interest, motivation, and achievement in Moral Education among primary-school pupils. Yao and Wong (2021) also reported that a values-based intervention increased pupils' prosocial behavior, which in turn supported peer and teacher-student relationships. These findings emphasize the importance of connecting GMRC concepts with actual behavior.

### ***Prosocial Behavior in School***

Prosocial behavior refers to voluntary behavior intended to benefit another person or group. In school, it includes courtesy, respect, helping, sharing, cooperation, inclusion, and peaceful interaction (Spivak & Durlak, 2016). Such behaviors support a classroom climate in which learners feel safe, accepted, and able to participate. They are therefore important educational outcomes, particularly in the elementary grades when children are developing habits that shape their relationships with peers and adults.

Courtesy and respect are reflected in polite speech, attentive listening, and consideration for the feelings of others. Helping and sharing involve responding to classmates' needs, offering assistance, and showing concern. Cooperation and inclusion are expressed when learners participate constructively in group activities, take turns, include classmates, and settle simple conflicts peacefully. These behaviors closely correspond with the interpersonal aims of GMRC and with broader social-emotional learning outcomes.

Research indicates that prosocial behavior can be strengthened through intentional school-based approaches. Cipriano et al. (2023) found that social-emotional learning interventions improved behavior and peer relationships, while Brown et al. (2023) reported positive effects of character education programs. These findings support the view that schools should provide repeated opportunities to practice helpfulness, cooperation, fairness, and respect instead of treating values as abstract concepts.

### ***Relationship Between GMRC Attitudes and Prosocial Behavior***

The conceptual relationship between GMRC attitudes and prosocial behavior is based on the expectation that learners who appreciate, value, and apply GMRC lessons are more likely to display desirable behavior toward others. Durlak et al. (2011) showed that school-based interventions can improve both attitudes and positive social behavior, while Yao and Wong (2021) provided elementary-level evidence that values-based instruction can influence prosocial behavior and relationship quality.

However, positive association does not imply that attitudes alone determine behavior. Children's actions may also be shaped by family practices, teacher modelling, peer relationships, and the broader school climate. Examining the relationship at the school level is therefore useful for identifying whether favorable attitudes toward GMRC are accompanied by more positive conduct and for guiding appropriate classroom and school-based strategies.

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component was used to determine the level of Grade 3 learners' attitudes toward GMRC and their prosocial behavior in school. The correlational component was used to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the two variables. No variables were manipulated, and the study focused on describing and relating the learners' responses and observed behavior (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### Research Locale

The study was conducted at Mangagoy South Elementary School, a public elementary school located in Barangay Mangagoy, Bislig City, Surigao del Sur, within Caraga Region. The school was selected because it provided an appropriate local setting for examining GMRC attitudes and prosocial behavior among elementary learners in their actual school environment.

### Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants were the 26 Grade 3 learners under the researcher's advisory class during School Year 2025-2026. Total enumeration was used because all learners in the class were included. This approach was appropriate for the small and fully accessible target population. Only officially enrolled learners whose parents or guardians provided consent and who gave assent were included in the study.

Table 1. *Distribution of the Participants*

| Sex    | Population | Participants |
|--------|------------|--------------|
| Male   | 13         | 13           |
| Female | 13         | 13           |
| Total  | 26         | 26           |

### Research Instrument

The study used a researcher-made instrument composed of three parts. The first part recorded basic identifying information using learner codes. The second part was a 12-item learner questionnaire on attitudes toward GMRC, grouped into interest in GMRC, perceived importance of GMRC, and application of GMRC learning. It used a four-point scale: 4 - Strongly Agree, 3 - Agree, 2 - Disagree, and 1 - Strongly Disagree. The third part was a 12-item teacher-rated checklist on prosocial behavior in school, grouped into courtesy and respect, helping and sharing, and cooperation and inclusion. It used a four-point frequency scale: 4 - Always, 3 - Often, 2 - Sometimes, and 1 - Never. The checklist ratings were based on observed school behavior during the previous four weeks.

Table 2. *Distribution of Instrument Items*

| Variable                     | Indicator                    | No. of Items | Scale             |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Attitudes Toward GMRC        | Interest in GMRC             | 4            | 4-point Likert    |
| Attitudes Toward GMRC        | Perceived Importance of GMRC | 4            | 4-point Likert    |
| Attitudes Toward GMRC        | Application of GMRC Learning | 4            | 4-point Likert    |
| Prosocial Behavior in School | Courtesy and Respect         | 4            | 4-point frequency |
| Prosocial Behavior in School | Helping and Sharing          | 4            | 4-point frequency |
| Prosocial Behavior in School | Cooperation and Inclusion    | 4            | 4-point frequency |

### Data Gathering Procedure

After the research instrument had been approved, permission to conduct the study was secured from the school head. Informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians, and assent was obtained from the learners. The purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and confidentiality of responses were explained. Learner names were replaced with codes. Because the participants were young learners, the questionnaire statements were read aloud using simple and age-appropriate language without influencing their answers. The teacher-rated checklist was then completed using the corresponding learner codes and the specified observable behaviors. The accomplished instruments were checked, coded, tallied, and tabulated for analysis.

### Data Analysis

Weighted mean was used to describe the learners' attitudes toward GMRC and their prosocial behavior in school. For attitudes toward GMRC, the verbal interpretations were: 3.26-4.00 = Strongly Agree, 2.51-3.25 = Agree, 1.76-2.50 = Disagree, and 1.00-1.75 = Strongly Disagree. For prosocial behavior, the interpretations were:

3.26-4.00 = Always, 2.51-3.25 = Often, 1.76-2.50 = Sometimes, and 1.00-1.75 = Never. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the relationship between attitudes toward GMRC and prosocial behavior at the 0.05 level of significance.

### Ethical Consideration

Participation was voluntary. Parent or guardian consent and learner assent were secured before data collection. Learner codes were used in place of names, and the data were treated confidentially. Findings were reported in aggregate form and used solely for research and school improvement purposes. The procedures were designed to avoid discomfort, stigma, or any adverse consequence for the participating learners.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Attitudes Toward GMRC

Table 3. *Learners' Attitudes Toward GMRC*

| Dimension and Indicators                            | Weighted Mean | Interpretation |
|---|---------------|----------------|
| Interest in GMRC                                    | 3.73          | Strongly Agree |
| I like the GMRC subject.                            | 3.88          | Strongly Agree |
| I enjoy our GMRC class activities.                  | 3.73          | Strongly Agree |
| I feel happy when it is time for GMRC.              | 3.62          | Strongly Agree |
| I want to learn more in GMRC.                       | 3.69          | Strongly Agree |
| Perceived Importance of GMRC                        | 3.38          | Strongly Agree |
| GMRC is important to me.                            | 3.58          | Strongly Agree |
| GMRC helps me respect other people.                 | 3.42          | Strongly Agree |
| GMRC helps me speak kindly to others.               | 3.12          | Agree          |
| GMRC helps me choose the right thing to do.         | 3.38          | Strongly Agree |
| Application of GMRC Learning                        | 3.59          | Strongly Agree |
| I try to do what I learn in GMRC.                   | 3.58          | Strongly Agree |
| I use my GMRC lessons when I am with my classmates. | 3.73          | Strongly Agree |
| I remember my GMRC lessons when I make decisions.   | 3.65          | Strongly Agree |
| I practice good manners in school because of GMRC.  | 3.38          | Strongly Agree |
| Overall Mean  | 3.56          | Strongly Agree |

Table 3 shows that the Grade 3 learners possessed a highly favorable attitude toward GMRC, with an overall mean of 3.56, interpreted as Strongly Agree. Interest in GMRC obtained the highest dimension mean of 3.73. The most highly rated statement was "I like the GMRC subject" (WM = 3.88). The results indicate that the learners generally enjoyed GMRC and remained receptive to further learning in the subject.

Application of GMRC learning obtained a mean of 3.59, also interpreted as Strongly Agree. The highest-rated statement in this dimension was "I use my GMRC lessons when I am with my classmates" (WM = 3.73). This finding is important because GMRC aims not only to teach appropriate conduct conceptually but also to guide its use in everyday relationships. The result aligns with the view that values-oriented learning is strengthened when children can connect classroom lessons with actual social interaction (Yao & Wong, 2021).

Perceived importance of GMRC obtained the lowest dimension mean, although it remained within the Strongly Agree range (WM = 3.38). The item "GMRC helps me speak kindly to others" registered the lowest item mean (WM = 3.12), interpreted as Agree. This suggests that the learners recognized GMRC as meaningful, while the explicit connection between lessons and kind speech could still be reinforced through role-playing, storytelling, modelling, and guided reflection. This interpretation is consistent with expectancy-value theory, which emphasizes that learners' engagement is supported when they perceive a subject as useful and personally meaningful (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

### Prosocial Behavior in School

Table 4. *Learners' Prosocial Behavior in School*

| Dimension and Indicators   | Weighted Mean | Interpretation |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Courtesy and Respect   | 3.52          | Always         |
| The learner speaks politely to classmates.                             | 3.65          | Always         |
| The learner speaks politely to teachers and other personnel in school. | 3.62          | Always         |
| The learner listens when others are speaking.                          | 3.35          | Always         |
| The learner shows respect for the feelings of others.                  | 3.46          | Always         |
| Helping and Sharing  | 3.03          | Often          |
| The learner shares school materials when needed.                       | 3.04          | Often          |
| The learner helps classmates who need assistance.                      | 3.00          | Often          |
| The learner offers help even without being told.                       | 2.96          | Often          |
| The learner shows concern when a classmate is sad, hurt, or upset.     | 3.12          | Often          |
| Cooperation and Inclusion  | 3.12          | Often          |
| The learner works well in pair or group activities.                    | 3.04          | Often          |
| The learner waits for his or her turn during activities.               | 3.08          | Often          |
| The learner includes classmates in games or activities.                | 3.04          | Often          |
| The learner settles simple conflicts peacefully.                       | 3.35          | Always         |
| Overall Mean   | 3.22          | Often          |

Table 4 presents an overall prosocial behavior mean of 3.22, interpreted as Often. Courtesy and respect obtained the highest dimension mean of 3.52, interpreted as Always. Speaking politely to classmates registered the highest item mean (WM = 3.65), followed by speaking politely to teachers and other school personnel (WM = 3.62). These findings indicate that respectful communication was the most evident prosocial behavior among the learners.

Cooperation and inclusion obtained a mean of 3.12, interpreted as Often. The strongest behavior in this dimension was settling simple conflicts peacefully (WM = 3.35, Always). However, working well in pair or group activities and including classmates in games or activities both obtained means of 3.04. These behaviors may be strengthened through cooperative learning tasks, buddy systems, and classroom routines that give learners repeated opportunities to participate with different classmates.

Helping and sharing obtained the lowest dimension mean of 3.03, although it was still interpreted as Often. The lowest-rated behavior was offering help even without being told (WM = 2.96). This finding suggests that the learners generally responded positively to others but could still develop greater initiative in helping. School-based social and emotional learning research shows that prosocial behavior can be strengthened when schools explicitly teach, model, and provide opportunities to practice supportive behavior (Cipriano et al., 2023; Durlak et al., 2011).

### Relationship Between Attitudes Toward GMRC and Prosocial Behavior

Table 5. *Relationship Between Attitudes Toward GMRC and Prosocial Behavior in School*

| Variables Compared                                     | r-value | p-value | Decision              | Interpretation                 |
|--|---------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Attitudes Toward GMRC and Prosocial Behavior in School | 0.482   | 0.013   | Reject H <sub>0</sub> | Moderate positive relationship |

Table 5 shows that attitudes toward GMRC had a significant moderate positive relationship with prosocial behavior in school ( $r = 0.482$ ,  $p = 0.013$ ). Since the p-value was lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Learners who had more favorable attitudes toward GMRC also tended to demonstrate more positive prosocial behavior in school.

The relationship is educationally meaningful because the dimensions of GMRC attitude were closely aligned with the behaviors observed in the school setting. Learners who liked the subject, perceived its importance, and reported using GMRC lessons in their interactions were also more likely to demonstrate courtesy, respect,

cooperation, and helpfulness. The result is consistent with research showing that school-based values and social-emotional learning can improve attitudes and positive social behavior (Brown et al., 2023; Durlak et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2017).

Nevertheless, the relationship should be interpreted as an association rather than as proof of causation. Prosocial behavior may also be influenced by other factors, including family practices, peer relationships, teacher modelling, and school climate. The finding provides a practical basis for strengthening GMRC instruction while recognizing the importance of coordinated support from the school and home.

## CONCLUSION

The Grade 3 learners of Mangagoy South Elementary School demonstrated a highly favorable attitude toward GMRC. Their strongest area was interest in the subject, followed by the application of GMRC learning, while perceived importance registered the lowest dimension mean but remained favorable. These findings show that learners generally appreciated GMRC and recognized its relevance to their daily behavior.

The learners also manifested positive prosocial behavior in school. Courtesy and respect were consistently observed, while helping and sharing and cooperation and inclusion occurred often but still required further strengthening. The learners were generally polite and capable of peaceful interaction, although more consistent initiative in helping and more inclusive participation in group activities could be developed.

The significant moderate positive relationship between attitudes toward GMRC and prosocial behavior indicates that learners with more favorable attitudes toward the subject also tended to display more desirable social behavior. The study contributes local evidence that GMRC remains a meaningful elementary learning area when its lessons are understood, valued, and practiced in daily school life.

## Recommendations

1. Teachers may sustain learners' interest in GMRC through age-appropriate stories, role-playing, reflection activities, classroom discussions, and situations that allow children to connect values with actual school experiences.
2. Teachers and class advisers may strengthen the perceived importance and practical application of GMRC by explicitly linking lessons to polite communication, helping behavior, peaceful conflict resolution, and inclusive participation in classroom routines.
3. School administrators may support peer-helping activities, buddy systems, cooperative learning tasks, and recognition programs that encourage initiative in helping, sharing, cooperation, and inclusion.
4. Parents and guardians may reinforce at home the courtesy, respect, helpfulness, and inclusiveness emphasized in school so that positive behavior can be practiced consistently across settings.
5. Future researchers may conduct similar studies with larger samples, other grade levels, and multiple schools. Additional variables such as family environment, teacher practices, peer influence, and school climate may also be examined. Longitudinal or intervention-based designs may be used to explore how GMRC learning contributes to behavioral development over time.

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