



Manuscript Title:	Environmental and Emotional Determinants of Student Misbehavior: A Qualitative Study in a Philippine Secondary School
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

General Comments and Recommendations

Both reviewers acknowledge the potential of the manuscript but recommend revisions to further strengthen the paper. The authors are advised to carefully review and address all the comments and suggestions provided by the reviewers in order to improve the overall quality and clarity of the manuscript.

Reviewer 1

General Comments and Recommendations

This manuscript tackles a highly relevant issue in secondary education, but it needs significant elevation to meet the rigorous standards expected for publication. While the qualitative approach is appropriate for exploring the emotional and environmental drivers of student misbehavior, the current execution feels somewhat surface-level. To improve the manuscript, the authors must focus on strengthening the research gap, deepening the phenomenological analysis, and clearly articulating their novel theoretical contribution to the field.

Specific Comments and Recommendations

In the Introduction, the authors justify the need for the study primarily by stating that few studies have employed qualitative methods to capture students' lived experiences regarding misbehavior. This highlights a methodological gap, but fails to establish a strong conceptual one. The authors need to explicitly argue why this qualitative insight is necessary and what specific theoretical or practical blind spots it addresses in the current literature.



The study utilizes a purposive sample of only six students. While small sample sizes are acceptable and common in phenomenological research, the authors do not discuss data saturation. They must explicitly justify this sample size and clarify how they determined that no new thematic insights were emerging from the interviews.

The authors also state that they analyzed the data using Colaizzi's seven-step phenomenological method. Step 5 of this method specifically requires the development of exhaustive descriptions for each emergent theme. However, the results presented are highly truncated. The quoted statements are very brief (e.g., "Because my parents disciplined me, I no longer cut classes") and lack the rich, thick description expected of phenomenological inquiry. The current analysis reads more like a basic thematic summary rather than a deep dive into the students' lived cognitive and emotional processes. The authors need to unpack these quotes significantly to demonstrate the dynamic interplay they mention in the abstract.

The discussion section heavily relies on using the findings to simply confirm Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. The authors must push the analysis further. The study is situated in a very specific context, a secondary school in the Dinagat Islands, Philippines. The authors should articulate how this unique socio-cultural and geographical context challenges established western-centric theories of adolescent behavior, rather than just proving that the theory works here too.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accept the manuscript for publication.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

General Comments and Recommendations

The manuscript has a workable foundation and the topic has value but the paper will improve most if the authors revise the qualitative core of the study. The best direction is to deepen the phenomenological reading of the interviews and make the contribution more specific and less general. With these revisions, the paper can become more persuasive and more publishable.

Specific Comments and Recommendations



The strongest part of the manuscript is its clear focus on student misbehavior as shaped by peer, emotional, and moral factors. Still, the main major issue is the alignment between the stated qualitative-phenomenological approach and the actual depth of the findings. The paper says it used Colaizzi's phenomenological method, but the results remain too descriptive and close to topical grouping only. At present, the themes look more like broad categories already expected from the interview guide, not yet deeply distilled lived meanings from participants' accounts. Because of this, the manuscript would improve a lot if the authors strengthen the phenomenological interpretation by showing how the students actually experienced these factors in their own lifeworld, not only that peer influence, anger, and family matter. In short, the analysis needs more depth, not more breadth.

A second major concern is that the findings are still somewhat generic, so the paper's claimed contribution to the Philippine secondary school context is not yet fully convincing. The themes are valid but they are also very common in the literature and the paper does not yet clearly show what is uniquely learned from these six students beyond confirming what is already known. The authors may improve this by sharpening the essence of each theme, clarifying what makes the participants' experiences specific to their context and connecting the discussion more carefully to the actual quotations rather than mainly to general literature. Right now, some claims in the discussion sound stronger than what the small data set can support. The paper will become more credible if the authors stay closer to the participant narratives and avoid overextending the implications.

Another important issue is methodological rigor in relation to trustworthiness. The paper explains sampling, ethics, and the Colaizzi steps, but it does not clearly show how credibility was ensured in practice. For example, it is not clear whether there was member checking, peer debriefing, audit trail, or any form of validation of the thematic meanings. Since the sample is very small and the participants are students with disciplinary records, this part is very important. The authors do not need to add many procedures, but they should explain more clearly how they ensured that the interpretations were faithful, careful, and not overly shaped by researcher assumptions. This will strengthen the paper more than adding minor technical details.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accept the manuscript for publication.
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.



SECOND ROUND

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Editor</u>	<u>Reviewer 1</u>	<u>Reviewer 2</u>
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Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			