

Institutional Labeling, Stereotyping, Isolating, and Discriminating as Predictors of School Image among Non-resident Senior High School Students

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Abstract

Negative school image is a concern in education. This study examined the significance of forecasting school image using institutional labeling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating as predictors. Predictive research design, stratified random sampling in selecting 241 samples, survey technique, and multiple regression analysis were applied. The result showed that the criterion was significantly predicted, partially and partly supporting the Stigma Theory. Future researchers may explore additional variables to account the unexplained 50.2 variance. School administration, students, and local government officers may reduce stigma through strengthening positive image of school involved in the study. **Keywords:** Institutional labeling, stereotyping, isolating, discriminating, school image, non-resident senior high school students.

Keywords: Institutional labeling; stereotyping; isolating; discriminating; school image; non-resident senior high school students

1. Introduction

Negative school image has become a growing concern in educational institutions worldwide, as schools continue to face challenges related to public perception, institutional reputation, and school climate. Schools located in stigmatized communities are frequently assessed not only on their academic performance but also on the community's reputation (Bernelius et al., 2021). Therefore, if the school operates in a community with negative connotations, it is likely to have a poor image in society (Butler-Warke, 2021). According to some studies, students' perceptions of their institutional affiliation and school climate affect their perceptions of the school as well (Aldridge et al., 2024)

Negative school image has been observed in educational settings across numerous countries. Negative school experiences are associated with negative school perceptions among pupils in the United Kingdom (Brown, 2025). The perception of schools near stigmatized populations has been negatively affected, for example, in Lähiös, Helsinki, Finland (Oittinen et al., 2024). Similarly, in African countries, schools situated in marginalized and socially excluded communities continue to experience a negative school image that affects institutional reputation and public perception (UNESCO, 2023).

In the Philippines, many schools and communities have observed with negative school image for instance, neighborhoods like Tondo and Payatas in Manila have long been associated with negative reputations, which, in turn, generate negative opinions towards schools and children in those areas (Dayrit et al., 2025). Likewise, Talaingod, Davao del Norte, was negatively perceived due to its association with insurgency, which affected the perception of the Salugpungan school system (Gumela & Osmalik, 2025). In Kimamon Barangay, negative labels and drug-related concerns have also contributed to the bad public impression of the community and its institutions, especially schools (Municipality of Santo Tomas, 2022). Additionally, in the context of education, another critical issue is

that students' perceptions of their schools depend on their school experiences (Paderes & Yacapin, 2016).

Conversely, studies indicate that the persistence of a negative school image may weaken institutional reputation, and the internalization of place stigma can negatively affect the self-esteem, identity, and sense of social belonging of people living in the community (Biddau & Brondi, 2023). Moreover, stigmatization processes, such as labeling, stereotyping, isolation, loss of status, and discrimination, intensify negative impressions of places and institutions (Han et al., 2025). There are studies on place attachment and identity. Still, there is a gap in research on how to overcome long-term negative place image and its deeper societal ramifications (Dragin et al., 2021). These gaps and consequences highlight the issue. Thus, the researcher conducted this study.

1.1. Significance of the study

By examining the stigmatization process in terms of labeling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating, which negatively affect the school image of the stigmatized community, the study may contribute to enhancing the school image of the community. The study also supports the vision, mission, and goals of Holy Cross of Davao College in providing quality, values-oriented education and community-based approaches aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), by fostering inclusiveness and reducing negative perceptions. At the local level, the findings may assist LGUs, barangay officials, faculty members, and even residents in formulating programs to enhance the image of schools involved in the study.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

This study investigated the significance of forecasting school image as predicted by labeling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating. Specifically, it pursued the following:

1. To determine the levels of labeling in terms of myths and associated stereotyping, favorable attitudes toward residents, and social perception of devaluation and discrimination; stereotyping in terms of warmth and competence; isolating in terms of degree of familiarity, degree of interaction, and degree of support, discriminating in terms of lifetime exposure, exclusion/rejection, stigmatization/devaluation, discrimination at work/school, and threat/aggression; and school image in terms of physical appearance, community services, entertainment opportunities, and social environment.
2. To determine the significance of the correlation between labeling, stereotyping, isolating, discriminating, and the school image.
3. To determine the model's significance for school image, regarding labeling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating.

1.3. Hypotheses

The researcher tested the null hypotheses at the 0.05 significance level.

Ho1: The correlation between labeling, stereotyping, isolating, discriminating, and the school image is not significant.

Ho2: The model to predict school image with labeling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating as predictors is not significant.

1.4. Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored in the Conceptualization of Stigma by Link and Phelan (2001), which posits that stigma exists when labeling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination occur within a context of power, resulting in unequal social outcomes.

In the context of the study, labeling indicated by myths and associated stereotypes, favorable attitudes toward residents, and social perceptions of devaluation and discrimination. Dimensions of warmth and competence indicated stereotyping. Degree of familiarity, interaction, and support, which together represent separation, indicating the isolating variable. Discrimination represented by lifetime exposure, exclusion or rejection, stigmatization or devaluation, workplace or school discrimination, and experiences of threat or aggression. Lastly, physical appearance, community services, entertainment opportunities, and the social environment indicated the school's image.

Hence, this study is delimited to input, process, and output characteristics and aspects explained in the theory. The researcher excluded the outcome of this study.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

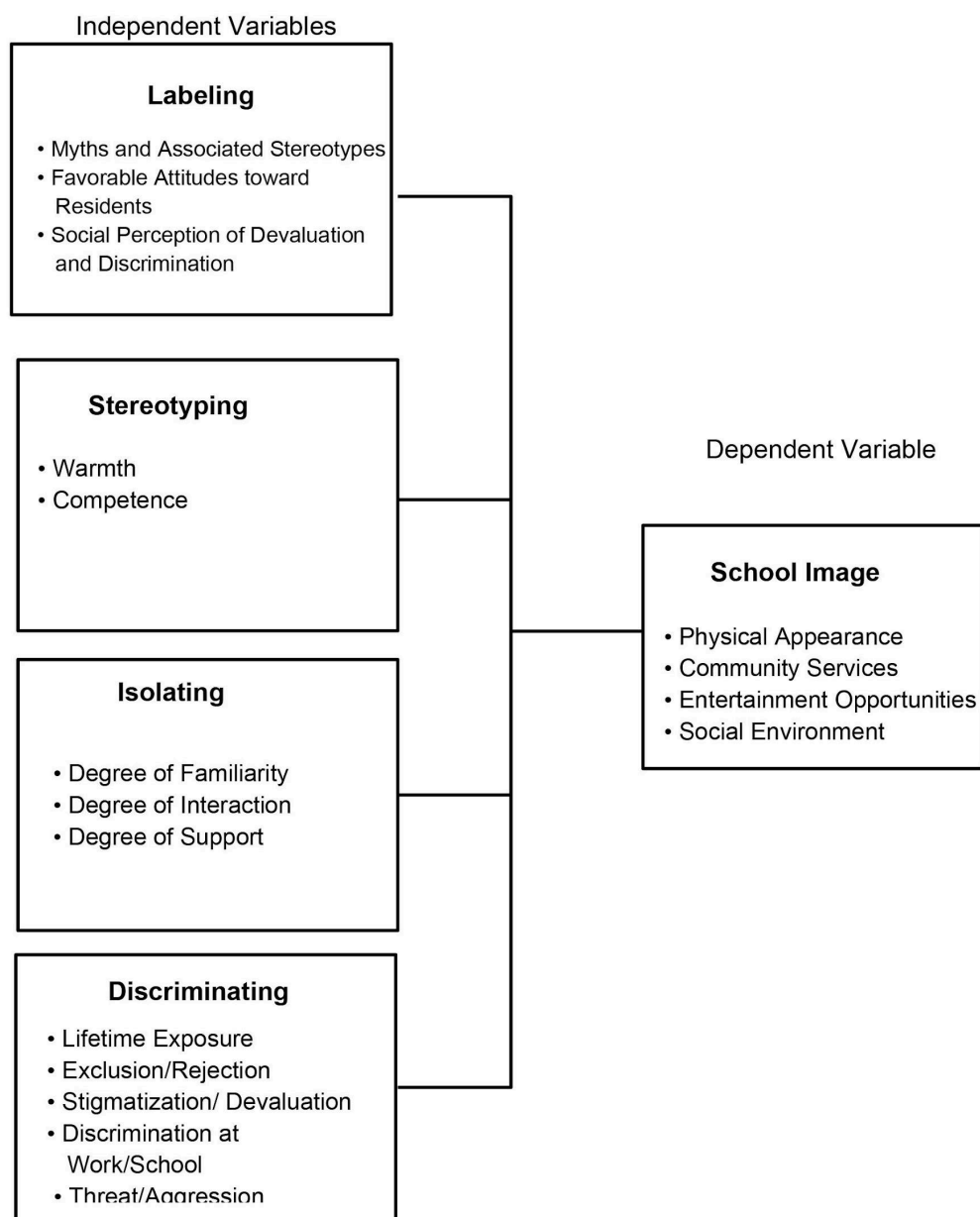


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the study

2. Methodology

This chapter included the study's research design, locale, sample, sampling, data-gathering technique, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a predictive research design. A predictive correlational research design is a quantitative research design used to determine whether one or more variables can predict an outcome variable based on their relationships. It examines correlations between variables to forecast future results without manipulating the variables (Fraenkel et al., 2023). The predictive–correlational method was used in this study because it investigated the relationships among labelling, stereotyping, separation, and discrimination, and determined whether these variables are significant predictors of the school image.

2.2. Locale of the Study

The researcher conducted the study in the Municipality of Sto. Tomas, Davao del Norte, Philippines. The locale consists of three major secondary schools under the supervision of the Department of Education, Division of Davao del Norte, namely Kimamon National High School, Talomo National High School, and La Libertad National High School. Over the years, certain areas within the municipality, particularly Barangay Kimamon, have been associated with negative labels that contributed to an unfavourable public image. The researcher selected the locale because the community's reputation may influence how educational institutions within the area are perceived. The stigma attached to Barangay Kimamon may affect outsiders' views not only of the community itself but also of Kimamon National High School and its students.

2.3. Sample and Sampling Technique

The study included 241 non-resident senior high school students from a total population of 378 across three schools enrolled in School Year 2025-2026. The sample size was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator with 99% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. After calculating the sample size, the study employed stratified random sampling. The use of this stratification method ensured that all important population groups were properly represented, thereby making the study results more accurate and dependable. Since this technique allows variation in key characteristics by dividing the population into strata and randomly selecting respondents from each stratum, it is particularly applicable when the difference between subgroups is large (Ahmed, 2024).

2.4. Data Gathering Technique

The researcher employed the survey technique in this study. The researcher used the survey method in this study to collect data from respondents via questionnaires designed to elicit relevant views and attitudes regarding the research. The method is effective because it allows researchers to collect data from many participants and conduct statistical analyses of the results (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Five adopted and modified questionnaires were used in this study, all employing a four-point Likert scale to ensure consistent measurement of responses.

Labeling was assessed in the study using the Perceived Devaluation and Discrimination Scale developed by Mora-Rios et al. (2021), comprising 18 items with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.912. Stereotyping was measured using the Measurement Scales for Cities' Warmth and Competence by Zait et al. (2016), comprising 18 items ($\alpha = 0.972$). Isolation was assessed in the study using the Social Distance Scale developed by Chen et al. (2020), comprising 16 items and yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.921. The Discrimination Questionnaire measured discrimination–Community Version (Brondolo et

al., 2005), which consists of 17 items and has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.979. Finally, the school image was measured using the Perception of Place Image Scale by Styliadis et al. (2016), comprising 25 items with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.963.

All questionnaires were modified, adapted, and validated based on the characteristics of the respondents and the study's objectives. The instruments used Likert-type scales with statements grounded in respondents' real-life experiences. A reliability test for the combined instruments yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.961, indicating excellent internal consistency.

2.5 Data Analysis Technique

The survey data were analyzed using descriptive, correlational, and multiple regression analyses. Descriptive statistics summarize and present data in a meaningful way (Nichols et al, 2023). Descriptive statistics, particularly mean and standard deviation, were used to interpret respondents' perceptions. Correlational analysis is a statistical method used to determine the relationship between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). To identify any relationship between the stigmatized variables and the concept of school image, the study used the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient is a statistical measure used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between variables (Field, 2024).

In addition, to examine the relationships among several predictor variables and a criterion variable, multiple regression was used. Regression analysis with unstandardized beta coefficients is a statistical approach used to estimate the effect of one variable on another (Mizumoto, 2023).

2.6. Ethical Considerations

Before the survey, the researcher fully informed the respondents about the study's purposes and procedures, as well as their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequences. The researcher obtained informed consent from participants by providing a consent form describing the study's goals, procedures, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation prior to data collection. For respondents who were minors, the researcher also provided an assent form to confirm that they understood their participation in the study and were willing to participate. The researcher keeps the respondents' identities secret and accessible only to the research team. The researcher conducted this research truthfully and ethically to ensure a secure setting for all participants, particularly when dealing with sensitive themes such as stigmatization and a negative place image. The researcher also secured Ethical approval for the study from the Society for Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE). The researcher also obtained permission from the Department of Education (DepEd) to conduct the study. The study was conducted in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 to ensure that the researchers treated all respondents fairly and respected their rights.

3. Results

This chapter presents the study's results. Specifically presented are descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and a summary of findings.

3.1 Descriptive Results

Table 1 is the descriptive table. It contains the variables involved in the study, namely institutional labeling, stereotyping, isolating, discriminating, and school image, as well as their respective indicators. It also contains the number of samples, the standard deviation, the mean, and their corresponding descriptive Interpretation.

Table 1. Descriptive Table (n=241)

Variables	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
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Labeling	0.502	2.84	High
Myths and Associated Stereotypes	0.654	2.71	High
Favorable Attitudes toward Residents	0.581	3.07	High
Social Perceptions of Devaluation and Discrimination	0.663	2.74	High
Stereotyping	0.590	3.05	High
Warmth	0.618	3.04	High
Competence	0.624	3.08	High
Isolating	0.501	2.89	High
Degree of Familiarity	0.595	2.75	High
Degree of Interaction	0.577	2.90	High
Degree of Support	0.562	3.01	High
Discriminating	0.588	2.72	High
Exclusion / Rejection	0.666	2.71	High
Stigmatization / Devaluation	0.688	2.78	High
Discrimination at School / Work	0.674	2.67	High
Threat / Aggression	0.661	2.72	High
School Image	0.607	2.99	High
Physical Appearance	0.681	3.02	High
Community Service	0.674	2.97	High
Entertainment Opportunities	0.643	2.97	High
Social Environment	0.693	3.00	High

1.00-1.75 Very Low, 1.76-2.50 Low, 2.51-3.25 High, 3.26-4.00 Very High

Table 1 shows that the Labeling variable had a mean of 2.84, indicating it was categorized as high. It indicates that respondents have strong labeling. All indicators under this variable also obtained high mean scores. The corresponding standard deviation of 0.502 indicates moderate consistency across respondents and is acceptable. Similarly, the Stereotyping variable recorded a mean of 3.05, also classified as high. It indicates that respondents have a strong tendency toward stereotyping. All indicators were likewise rated high. The corresponding standard deviation of 0.590 reflects moderate consistency across respondents, indicating acceptable consistency. Moreover, the isolating variable recorded a mean of 2.89, considered high, indicating a weak degree of separation. The corresponding standard deviation of 0.501 indicates moderately consistent responses and acceptable consistency among respondents. Finally, the Discriminating variable recorded a mean of 2.72, which was categorized as high, indicating that respondents have a strong manifestation of discrimination. The corresponding standard deviation of 0.588 reflects moderate consistency across respondents, indicating acceptable consistency. The study's results revealed that all indicators under this variable were at a high level.

Meanwhile, School Image dimensions recorded a mean of 2.99, indicating a positive place image. The corresponding standard deviation of 0.501 reflects moderately consistent responses across respondents. It indicates an acceptable consistency among respondents. The study's results revealed that all variables were at a high level. It indicates strong manifestations of labelling, stereotyping, isolation, and discrimination among respondents. Meanwhile, respondents also demonstrated a positive perception of school image.

3.2. Correlation Results

Table 2 is a correlation table. It specifically contained the predictive variables and the criterion variable. It also contained the r-value and the p-value.

Table 2. Correlation Table

Table 2. Correlation Table (n = 241)

<i>School Image (DV)</i>				
	r	p-value	Decision on Ho @ 0.05 level of significance	Interpretation
<i>Labeling</i>	0.389	0.000	Reject Ho	Moderately Low, Positive Significant Correlation
<i>Stereotype</i>	0.700	0.000	Reject Ho	Moderately High, Positive Significant Correlation
<i>Separation</i>	0.556	0.000	Reject Ho	Moderately High, Positive Significant Correlation
<i>Discrimination</i>	0.201	0.002	Reject Ho	Low, Positive Significant Correlation

Table 2 specifically shows that the correlation between labelling and school image variables yielded a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 level of significance; thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. It indicates a statistically significant correlation. The corresponding r-value of 0.389 suggests a moderately low and positive correlation. It implies that increased labeling is associated with a greater place image. Similarly, the correlation between stereotyping and school image variables has a p-value of 0.00. Such a value is less than the 0.05 level of significance; thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. It indicates a statistically significant correlation. The corresponding r-value of 0.700 indicates a moderately strong, positive correlation. It implies that stereotypes are strongly associated with how individuals perceive a place. Moreover, the correlation between isolating and school image has a p-value of 0.000. Such a value is less than the 0.05 level of significance; thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. It indicates a statistically significant correlation. The corresponding r-value is 0.556. It implies that the degree of perceived closeness or separation is significantly associated with school image.

Furthermore, the correlation between discriminating and school image has a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 level of significance; thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis, indicating a statistically significant correlation. The corresponding r-value of 0.201 indicates that discriminatory practices do relate to school image. It implies that increased discrimination is associated with a stronger school image. The results revealed that all factors showed a strong positive correlation with school image. It implies that social perception and prejudice influence how people view places. Among the factors, labelling, stereotyping, and isolation were more strongly associated with school image, whereas discrimination was less strongly associated.

3.3. Regression Analysis

Presented in Table 3 are the predictors and the criterion variable. The standardized and unstandardized beta coefficients, including the p-value, the decision on the hypothesis, and the interpretations, are also shown.

Table 3. Regression Analysis

<i>School Image</i>

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		P value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t			
Constant	0.678	0.186		3.639	0.000		
<i>Labeling</i>	-0.123	0.096	-0.102	-1.284	0.200	Failed to reject Ho	Not significant
<i>Stereotyping</i>	0.694	0.078	0.675	8.870	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
<i>Isolating</i>	0.106	0.089	0.087	1.192	0.234	Failed to reject Ho	Not significant
<i>Discriminating</i>	0.087	0.073	0.084	1.201	0.231	Failed to reject Ho	Not significant

Model Summary:

$R = 0.706$; $R^2 = 0.498$; $Adjusted\ R^2 = 0.490$; $F\text{-value} = 58.63$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000$

Level of Significance: 0.05

Decision Rule: Reject H_0 if $p > 0.05$

Regression Formula9: $PI = -0.123 L + 0.694 S + 0.106 I + 0.087 D + 0.678$

Specifically, the table shows that the model outcome for school image using predictive variables, labelling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating is $PI = -0.123 L + 0.694 S + 0.106 I + 0.087 D + 0.678$. The model obtained a nan R- square of 0.498, indicating moderate predictive strength for school image. The corresponding p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. It

denotes that the researcher rejected the hypothesis. Furthermore, the model to predict school image is statistically significant. It implies that for every change in the model, School Image changes by 0.498 units, with stereotyping contributing more significantly to the model. The regression model was statistically significant and revealed that the stigma variables had strong explanatory power for differences in school images, with stereotyping as the most important predictor.

Summary of Findings

1. The correlation between labelling, stereotyping, isolating, discriminating, and the school image was significant.
2. The model predicting school image with labelling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating as predictors is significant.

4. Discussion

Discussed in this chapter are the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

4.1. Correlation of Labeling, Stereotyping, Isolating, Discriminating, and School Image

The current study found a significant correlation between labeling, stereotyping, isolating, discriminating, and the school image. The above finding is consistent with the research conducted by Charlesworth et al. (2024). The researchers assert that stigma involves labelling, stereotyping, separation, and discrimination. In turn, influences social perception. Biddau et al. (2023) also emphasize that negative labeling leads to territorial stigma, ambiguous community perceptions, and reduced respect for place identity. Moreover, Wei et al. (2024) explained that place stigmatization arises from inaccurate and subjective perceptions that negatively affect place identity and the community's sense of worth. In contrast, the current finding contradicts Dragin et al. (2021), who found that local

identity and attachment may be resilient and not always substantially influenced by negative place perceptions, despite the presence of place stigma and negative social labels. Their research indicated that communities and institutions may continue to retain positive social significance despite external stigma and stereotyping.

4.2. School Image as Predicted by Labeling, Stereotyping, Isolating, and Discriminating

The finding revealed that the model's ability to predict school images using labeling, stereotyping, isolation, and discrimination as predictors was statistically significant. This current finding corroborates prior studies suggesting that stigma-related processes contribute to negative school image. The research findings indicated that both labeling processes and stigma lead to greater negativity associated with places and organizations. This, in turn, affects how people form impressions of them in society (Seyfi et al., 2024). In like manner, the present research findings confirm Rojas-Méndez et al. (2024) since a negative image is positively associated with humanistic evaluation and social judgment of places. Moreover, Collins et al. (2024) showed that stereotypes tend to be more positive when evaluations of competence and affection are strongly visible, thereby emphasizing the importance of stereotyping in the study of place image. The claims support the current findings of the study

In contrast, the current finding contradicts the study of Kotzur and Wagner (2021), denoting that stereotypes and stigma-related components are highly dependent on personal experiences and contextual interactions rather than on stereotypes alone. Their findings suggested that positive and negative experiences may alter how individuals perceive social groups and places. Moreover, Allstadt Torras et al. (2023) stressed that stereotyping does not necessarily produce uniformly negative or favorable evaluations, as people in the same context may still face unfair categorization.

4.3. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that school image is significantly predicted by labelling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating. This conclusion partially and partly supported Stigma Theory, which posits that stigma is a social process in which people are labeled, stereotyped, separated, and discriminated against within the system of power, resulting in unequal outcomes.

4.4. Recommendations

Future research may include other variables not included in the study to account for the remaining 50.2% of the variance in the model's strength not explained by the variables used in the study. Furthermore, qualitative research may help identify other relevant themes and generate deeper insights, from which corresponding variables and indicators can be developed and extracted for future studies.

School administration, students, and local government officers may reduce labeling, stereotyping, isolating, and discriminating by strengthening positive perceptions of the school involved in the study through outreach activities and positive social media campaigns to achieve a more favorable school image.

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