

UNDERSTANDING CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE LEARNING: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY AT SDN 20 KOTA BENGKULU

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Abstract

Effective classroom management is a fundamental component of successful learning, as it enables teachers to establish an orderly, supportive, and engaging learning environment. This study aims to examine classroom management practices employed by teachers in supporting effective learning at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu. Employing a qualitative case study design, this research explores how teachers manage classroom environments, facilitate student engagement, address behavioural challenges, and create conditions conducive to learning. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with teachers, and relevant documentation, and were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns and significant practices. The findings indicate that effective classroom management at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu is reflected in several interconnected practices, including the establishment of clear classroom rules and routines, the implementation of positive teacher–student interactions, the strategic use of instructional activities, and the application of constructive approaches to student behaviour. Teachers also demonstrate flexibility in adapting their management strategies to students’ diverse characteristics, learning needs, and classroom situations. Rather than relying predominantly on punitive measures, teachers tend to employ communication, reinforcement, guidance, and consistent expectations to encourage students’ self-discipline and active participation. These practices contribute to a more conducive classroom atmosphere and support students’ engagement in the learning process. The study concludes that classroom management should be viewed not merely as a mechanism for maintaining order but as an integral pedagogical practice that shapes students’ learning experiences and academic participation. The findings provide practical implications for strengthening teachers’ classroom management competencies and developing more student-centred learning environments in elementary schools.

Keywords: *classroom management, effective learning, teacher practices, student engagement, qualitative case study, elementary school*

Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in developing students’ intellectual, social,

emotional, and behavioural capacities (Martinez & Gomez, 2024). In the context of elementary education,

the quality of the learning process is influenced not only by the curriculum, instructional materials, and learning resources, but also by the classroom environment in which learning takes place(Dörnyei & Muir, 2019). A conducive classroom environment enables students to feel secure, respected, and motivated to participate actively in learning activities(Zajda, 2021). Therefore, teachers are required to create learning environments that are organised, supportive, inclusive, and responsive to students' diverse needs. One of the fundamental factors in achieving such an environment is effective classroom management(Clanton Harpine, 2024).

Classroom management refers to the range of strategies and practices employed by teachers to organise classroom activities, establish behavioural expectations, maintain students' attention, facilitate positive interactions, and create conditions that support learning(Patrick et al., 2014). It encompasses more than simply controlling students' behaviour or preventing classroom disruption. Effective classroom management involves the systematic organisation of the physical environment, instructional activities, classroom routines, interpersonal relationships, and students' behaviour in ways that maximise learning opportunities. In this regard, classroom management can be considered an integral part of teachers' pedagogical competence

because the manner in which a classroom is managed directly affects the quality of students' engagement with the learning process(Bačová, 2026).

The significance of classroom management becomes particularly evident at the elementary school level(Chaplain, 2016). Elementary school students are in a developmental stage in which they are still learning to regulate their emotions, behaviours, attention, and interactions with others(Yao & Abdullah, 2026). They may demonstrate different levels of academic readiness, motivation, confidence, learning preferences, and social maturity(Listiana et al., 2026). Such diversity presents teachers with complex classroom situations that cannot always be addressed through a single management strategy. Teachers need to understand students' individual characteristics and respond appropriately to their behavioural and learning needs. Consequently, effective classroom management requires teachers to demonstrate flexibility, consistency, patience, and professional judgement in dealing with various classroom situations(Zhao et al., 2026).

In addition, classroom management is closely associated with the development of an effective learning environment. A well-managed classroom provides sufficient opportunities for students to focus on instructional activities and participate meaningfully in the learning process.

When classroom routines and expectations are clearly established, students are more likely to understand what is expected of them and to develop a sense of responsibility for their behaviour. Similarly, positive teacher-student relationships can promote students' sense of belonging and encourage them to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities (Shikha et al., 2026). Thus, classroom management should be viewed as a pedagogical process that supports not only classroom order but also students' academic, social, and emotional development (Shetty & Padmakumari, 2026).

The changing orientation of education also requires teachers to reconsider traditional approaches to classroom management. Contemporary learning increasingly emphasises student participation, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, creativity, and learner autonomy (Ramaila, 2026). These approaches require students to interact with teachers and peers, work collaboratively, ask questions, express opinions, and engage in various forms of learning activities. Although such practices can provide valuable learning experiences, they may also create challenges in maintaining classroom organisation and discipline. Teachers therefore need to develop management strategies that allow students to be actively involved in learning while ensuring that classroom activities

remain structured and purposeful. This indicates that effective classroom management is not necessarily characterised by strict control, but by the teacher's ability to establish

Research Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a case study design to explore classroom management practices in supporting effective learning at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to obtain an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences, practices, interactions, and strategies within the natural classroom setting. Rather than measuring classroom management through numerical indicators, this study focused on describing and interpreting how classroom management was implemented and how such practices contributed to the learning process.

The case study design was considered appropriate because the research focused on a specific educational setting, namely SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu, and examined classroom management as a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. This design enabled the researcher to investigate classroom management practices comprehensively by considering the perspectives of teachers, classroom interactions, student behaviour, and the

conditions in which learning activities occurred.

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia. The school was selected as the research setting because it provides a relevant context for examining classroom management practices at the elementary school level. The study focused on classroom activities and the ways in which teachers created and maintained a learning environment that supported students' participation and learning.

The participants were selected using purposive sampling (Zrineh, 2026). The primary participants consisted of teachers who were directly involved in classroom instruction at the school. The selection of participants was based on their direct experience in managing classroom activities and their willingness to participate in the study. Where relevant, additional information was obtained from school personnel and classroom documentation to strengthen the interpretation of the findings. The number of participants was determined based on the relevance and adequacy of the information obtained rather than on statistical representation.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through three main techniques: classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The use of multiple data collection

techniques was intended to obtain comprehensive information and facilitate data triangulation.

First, classroom observations were conducted to examine classroom management practices as they occurred during actual learning activities. The observations focused on several aspects, including the organisation of the classroom environment, the establishment and implementation of classroom rules and routines, teacher-student interactions, students' participation, teachers' responses to disruptive behaviour, classroom transitions, and the strategies used to maintain students' attention. The researcher recorded relevant classroom events and interactions in field notes. The observations were conducted in a non-participatory manner to minimise interference with the natural learning process.

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected teachers. The interviews aimed to explore teachers' perceptions, experiences, considerations, and strategies concerning classroom management. The interview questions addressed topics such as the establishment of classroom rules, strategies for maintaining student engagement, approaches to managing student behaviour, challenges encountered in classroom management, and teachers' perceptions of the relationship between classroom management and effective learning.

The semi-structured format provided sufficient flexibility for participants to elaborate on their experiences and for the researcher to explore issues that emerged during the interviews.

Third, documentation was used as a complementary data source. Relevant documents included classroom rules, lesson plans, learning materials, school policies, photographs of classroom activities where appropriate, and other records related to classroom management and learning activities. Documentary evidence was used to provide contextual information and to support the interpretation of data obtained through observations and interviews.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using thematic analysis (Al Khalifa & Danish, 2026). The analysis was conducted systematically through several stages. First, the researcher organised and familiarised themselves with the collected data by repeatedly reading the observation notes, interview transcripts, and relevant documents. This process enabled the researcher to develop an initial understanding of the patterns and issues emerging from the data.

Second, the researcher conducted initial coding by identifying meaningful statements, actions, interactions, and descriptions related to classroom management. The codes were subsequently compared and grouped according to similarities and conceptual

relationships. From these categories, broader themes were developed to represent significant patterns in the data.

The emerging themes were then reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately represented the collected evidence. Particular attention was given to the consistency between teachers' reported practices and the practices observed in the classroom. The final themes were interpreted in relation to the research objectives and the broader concept of effective classroom management. The findings were subsequently presented descriptively and interpretively to provide an in-depth account of classroom management practices at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu.

Data Trustworthiness

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the study employed triangulation, member checking, and persistent observation (Worku, 2025). Data triangulation was achieved by comparing information obtained from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and documentation. This process allowed the researcher to identify consistencies and discrepancies among different sources of evidence.

Member checking was conducted by providing participants with opportunities to review and clarify relevant information obtained from the interviews. This procedure was intended to ensure that the researcher's

interpretation accurately reflected the participants' perspectives. In addition, persistent observation was used to develop a deeper understanding of classroom interactions and management practices.

The researcher also maintained detailed field notes and an organised record of the research process to enhance the transparency and consistency of data interpretation. These procedures were implemented to strengthen the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the research findings.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the research process (Newman et al., 2021). Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the relevant school authorities and informed consent was obtained from the participating teachers. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their right to participate voluntarily. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by avoiding the disclosure of personal information that could identify individual participants. The data collected during the research process were used solely for academic purposes and were stored securely. The researcher also sought to ensure that the observation and interview processes did not disrupt teaching and learning activities or negatively affect

the participants and students involved in the study.

Results and Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that classroom management at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu plays an important role in creating a conducive learning environment and supporting students' participation in the learning process. Based on classroom observations, teacher interviews, and supporting documentation, several major themes emerged from the data: (1) the establishment of classroom rules and routines, (2) the organisation of the classroom environment and learning activities, (3) positive teacher–student interaction, (4) the management of student behaviour, and (5) strategies for maintaining student engagement. These themes demonstrate that classroom management is implemented as an integrated pedagogical practice rather than merely as a mechanism for maintaining classroom discipline.

Establishment of Classroom Rules and Routines

One of the prominent classroom management practices identified in this study was the establishment of clear classroom rules and routines. Teachers introduced expectations concerning students' behaviour, participation, classroom responsibilities, and procedures during learning activities. These expectations provided students with a clear understanding of

appropriate behaviour and helped create a more predictable classroom environment.

The implementation of classroom routines was also evident in several stages of the learning process, particularly at the beginning and end of lessons. Teachers encouraged students to prepare their learning materials, pay attention to instructions, participate in classroom activities, and maintain classroom cleanliness. Consistent routines appeared to help students understand the sequence of classroom activities and reduce unnecessary disruptions.

From a pedagogical perspective, clear rules and routines provide an important foundation for effective classroom management. Rules become more meaningful when they are communicated clearly and applied consistently rather than being imposed only when behavioural problems occur. In this context, classroom management functions as a preventive strategy because students are given explicit behavioural expectations before problems emerge.

The findings further suggest that consistency is an important factor in the implementation of classroom rules. When teachers consistently reinforce established expectations, students gradually become familiar with classroom procedures and are encouraged to regulate their own behaviour. This indicates that effective classroom management does not

depend exclusively on teachers' direct control but also involves developing students' sense of responsibility and self-discipline.

Organisation of the Classroom Environment and Learning Activities

The second theme concerns the organisation of the classroom environment and learning activities. Classroom organisation was reflected in the arrangement of learning resources, students' seating, instructional materials, and the allocation of time for different learning activities. Teachers attempted to ensure that the physical and instructional environment supported students' concentration and participation.

The organisation of learning activities was also closely related to teachers' ability to manage instructional time. Teachers provided explanations, individual or group activities, questions and answers, and other learning tasks according to the objectives of the lesson. Transitions between activities were managed through verbal instructions and reminders so that students understood what they were expected to do.

These findings demonstrate that classroom management and instructional management are closely interconnected. Effective classroom management cannot be separated from the way teachers design and implement learning activities. When students are provided with meaningful and

appropriately structured tasks, they have fewer opportunities to become disengaged or disruptive. Therefore, teachers' instructional decisions can function as an important classroom management strategy.

The findings also indicate that flexibility is necessary in classroom organisation. Although teachers may prepare lesson plans and classroom routines in advance, actual classroom situations may require immediate adjustments. Students may respond differently to particular activities, and unexpected situations may occur during instruction. Teachers therefore need to modify their strategies according to classroom conditions while maintaining the main learning objectives.

Positive Teacher-Student Interaction

Positive teacher-student interaction emerged as another significant aspect of classroom management. The teachers demonstrated efforts to establish respectful communication with students and to create an atmosphere in which students could participate without excessive fear of making mistakes. Teacher communication included giving instructions, providing encouragement, asking questions, offering feedback, and responding to students' difficulties.

The findings suggest that interpersonal relationships influence the effectiveness of classroom management. Students are more likely

to respond positively to classroom expectations when they perceive their teachers as supportive and fair. Positive interactions can also strengthen students' willingness to communicate with teachers and participate in learning activities.

Rather than positioning themselves solely as authority figures, teachers appeared to perform multiple roles as instructors, facilitators, motivators, and classroom leaders. This relational dimension is important because classroom management involves human interaction, not simply the application of rules and procedures. A classroom may have well-defined rules, but the effectiveness of those rules can be weakened if they are implemented through communication that students perceive as excessively authoritarian or unsupportive.

The findings therefore suggest that effective classroom management requires a balance between authority and approachability. Teachers need to maintain appropriate boundaries while simultaneously demonstrating empathy and respect towards students. Such an approach can contribute to a positive classroom climate in which students understand that classroom expectations are intended to support their learning rather than merely restrict their behaviour.

Management of Student Behaviour

Managing student behaviour was one of the challenges identified in the classroom management process.

Students demonstrated different levels of attention, participation, discipline, and responsiveness during learning activities. Minor disruptions, such as talking with peers, losing concentration, or failing to follow instructions, required teachers to respond appropriately without interrupting the overall learning process.

The teachers employed several strategies to address such situations, including verbal reminders, direct communication, guidance, positive reinforcement, and individual attention. These approaches indicate a tendency to address behavioural problems through constructive intervention rather than relying exclusively on punitive measures.

An important finding is that teachers appeared to consider the circumstances underlying students' behaviour before determining an appropriate response. Such an approach demonstrates that classroom management involves professional judgement. The same behaviour may require different responses depending on its frequency, intensity, context, and potential impact on other students.

Constructive behaviour management is particularly relevant in elementary education because students are still developing their ability to regulate emotions and behaviour. Teachers therefore have an important role in helping students understand classroom expectations and the

consequences of their actions. Behaviour management can consequently serve an educational purpose by developing students' responsibility and self-regulation.

However, the findings also indicate that behaviour management requires consistency. If classroom rules are applied inconsistently, students may have difficulty understanding which behaviours are acceptable. Teachers therefore need to establish clear expectations while applying consequences and corrective measures fairly and proportionately.

Strategies for Maintaining Student Engagement

The fifth theme concerns teachers' efforts to maintain student engagement during learning activities. Student engagement was supported through the use of questions, classroom discussions, individual tasks, collaborative activities, and variations in instructional approaches. These strategies provided students with opportunities to interact with the learning content and with their peers.

The findings indicate that student engagement is closely connected to classroom management. Students who are actively involved in meaningful learning activities are generally more likely to remain focused on instructional tasks. Consequently, classroom management should not be viewed separately from instructional design. Teachers' ability to provide clear, relevant, and appropriately

challenging activities can contribute to both learning effectiveness and behavioural management.

Teachers also needed to monitor students continuously during learning activities. Monitoring enabled teachers to identify students who were experiencing difficulties, losing concentration, or becoming disengaged. Immediate intervention could then be provided before minor problems developed into more significant classroom disruptions.

This finding highlights the importance of teachers' responsiveness. Effective classroom management requires continuous observation and adjustment rather than the rigid implementation of predetermined procedures. Teachers need to interpret students' responses and adapt their instructional and management strategies accordingly.

Classroom Management as a Support for Effective Learning

The overall findings demonstrate that classroom management at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu contributes to effective learning through several interconnected mechanisms. First, clear rules and routines provide structure and reduce uncertainty. Second, organised learning activities enable instructional time to be used more effectively. Third, positive teacher-student interactions contribute to a supportive classroom climate. Fourth, constructive behaviour management helps minimise disruptions while

encouraging students to develop self-discipline. Finally, strategies that promote student engagement increase students' opportunities to participate actively in learning.

These findings suggest that classroom management should be understood as an integral element of teaching rather than as a separate activity performed when discipline problems occur. Effective classroom management is embedded in teachers' daily instructional decisions, communication patterns, classroom organisation, and relationships with students.

The findings are also consistent with the view that effective classroom management involves both preventive and responsive strategies. Preventive practices include establishing clear expectations, developing routines, preparing learning activities, and creating positive relationships. Responsive practices involve addressing behavioural difficulties, providing individual guidance, and modifying instructional approaches when classroom conditions change. The combination of these practices enables teachers to maintain classroom order while continuing to support students' learning needs.

Discussion

The findings of this study reinforce the argument that classroom management is a multidimensional component of effective

teaching(Alasmari & Althaqafi, 2024). It involves physical organisation, behavioural expectations, instructional planning, interpersonal relationships, student engagement, and teachers' responses to classroom situations(Frempomaa Gyamfi, 2026). The findings from SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu indicate that these dimensions cannot be considered independently because changes in one dimension may influence others.

For example, classroom rules are more likely to be effective when they are supported by positive teacher-student relationships. Similarly, student engagement may be easier to maintain when learning activities are well organised and classroom routines are clearly established. Behavioural problems may also be reduced when students are provided with meaningful activities and receive sufficient guidance during the learning process(Amigo-López et al., 2026). This interconnectedness demonstrates that classroom management is fundamentally a pedagogical process(Qulub, 2026).

Another important implication concerns the shift from control-oriented to supportive classroom management. The findings suggest that maintaining discipline does not necessarily require excessive punishment or authoritarian practices(Twum, 2026). Instead, teachers can establish authority through consistency, clear

communication, fairness, positive reinforcement, and constructive guidance(Rasyid et al., 2026). Such practices may contribute to the development of students' self-regulation and responsibility.

The context of elementary education makes this approach particularly important. Students are not only expected to acquire academic knowledge but also to develop social and behavioural competencies(Schlesier et al., 2026). Classroom management therefore provides opportunities for teachers to model appropriate communication, cooperation, responsibility, and respect(Kahar et al., 2026). In this sense, classroom management contributes to broader educational objectives beyond the immediate maintenance of classroom order.

Nevertheless, effective classroom management remains dependent on teachers' contextual understanding and professional competence. There is no single strategy that can be applied universally to all students or classroom situations. Teachers need to recognise differences among students and adjust their approaches accordingly. The findings from SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu consequently demonstrate the importance of teacher adaptability in managing classroom dynamics.

Overall, the results indicate that effective classroom management at SDN 20 Kota Bengkulu is characterised by the integration of structure, positive

relationships, behavioural guidance, instructional organisation, and student engagement. These practices create a classroom environment that is more conducive to learning and provide students with opportunities to participate actively in educational activities. Classroom management, therefore, should be positioned as a core pedagogical competence that supports both the effectiveness of instruction and the holistic development of elementary school students.

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