Classroom Management and Student Behavior in Primary Schools: A Systematic Review of Strategies and Practices

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Abstract: This study aimed to explore effective classroom management strategies and their impact on student behavior in primary schools. A systematic review of literature published between 2020 and 2025 focused on classroom management techniques such as positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and classroom environment organization. The findings revealed positive reinforcement significantly reduced disruptive behaviors and enhanced student engagement in learning activities. Restorative practices, prioritizing relationship-building over punitive measures, were found to improve student-teacher relationships and reduce aggression. Additionally, the physical arrangement of the classroom played a crucial role in minimizing disruptions and supporting student focus. The study also highlighted the importance of teacher training in classroom management, which improved teachers' confidence and effectiveness. Based on these findings, practical recommendations for teachers and policymakers were provided, emphasizing the need for ongoing professional development, integrating restorative practices, and creating conducive learning environments. Future research should further explore the implementation of these strategies in diverse educational contexts, considering cultural and social factors that may influence their success.

Keywords: Classroom management, Positive reinforcement, Restorative practices, Student behavior, Teacher training

INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of classroom management has long been recognized as a key factor in fostering a conducive learning environment that supports both academic achievement and students' social-emotional development. A study conducted by Sankalaite et al. (2021) in Frontiers in Psychology emphasized that executive functions and self-regulation are foundational competencies that develop optimally in environments where classroom management practices stimulate these areas continuously. According to the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring (UNESCO, 2024), effective classroom management structures are essential to creating an environment that nurtures primary school students' overall well-being and engagement. A research result by Aadland et al. (2018)founded that while various standardized instruments exist for assessing classroom management, their reliability and validity remain under-explored in primary education. These findings highlight the need for context-specific strategies addressing educators' distinct challenges.

In the global context, the PISA 2022 assessment illustrated that approximately 25% of students in Indonesia reported being unable to learn effectively in most lessons due to unfavorable disciplinary climates. A significant portion of students, 24%, frequently failed to listen to their teachers, substantially lowering the effectiveness of academic interactions. Moreover, PISA findings revealed that 25% of female students and 30% of male students experienced bullying at least once a month, underscoring the urgency of preventative and remedial interventions (OECD, 2023). In response, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture introduced "Permendikbudristek" Number 46 of 2023 on the Prevention and Management of Violence in Educational Environments, mandating primary schools to form anti-violence teams and implement comprehensive reporting, handling, and

evaluation procedures for incidents of violence (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, Dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 46 Tahun 2023 Tentang Pencegahan Dan Penanganan Kekerasan Di Lingkungan Satuan Pendidikan, 2023).

However, implementing classroom management practices in Indonesian primary schools faces several challenges, including variations in teachers' competencies in applying restorative and proactive strategies, as highlighted by research on teachers' self-efficacy (Wilkins et al., 2023). Moreover, the rise of digital distractions post-pandemic, as reflected in PISA 2022, where 27% of students in Indonesia were distracted by digital devices during lessons, adds complexity to managing student behavior. Furthermore, PISA data noted that 18% of students attended schools where teaching capacity was hindered by a shortage of qualified staff, emphasizing the resource gap between schools (OECD, 2023). Studies have also shown that many classroom management instruments have not fully accounted for local cultural and structural contexts, suggesting the need for more contextually appropriate approaches (Chow et al., 2024).

Despite some existing studies, such as those in Iran Seyyedkalan (2024), a comprehensive systematic review mapping primary school classroom management practices in Indonesia, particularly after implementing the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, has yet to be conducted. The absence of such a synthesis impedes educators and policymakers from formulating evidence-based guidelines that align with the demands of Permendikbudristek No. 46 of 2023 and the challenges arising from the post-pandemic era (OECD, 2023). The urgency for this research is further underscored by the goals of SDG 4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all children from an early age. Without a systematic review, the risk of declining educational quality persists, as seen in numerous education systems plagued by insufficient resources and inconsistent classroom management practices (UNESCO, 2024).

The purpose of this study was to: (1) summarize recent research findings on classroom management strategies and student behavior in primary schools, and (2) provide practical recommendations for teachers and policymakers based on this scientific evidence. By synthesizing the findings from research (2020–2025),

identifying theoretical frameworks, research designs, and instruments, and formulating recommendations for practice and future research agendas, this study is expected to serve as a foundation for adaptive and sustainable classroom management policies and practices in Indonesia.

METHODS

Research Methodology: Systematic Literature Review

This study adopted a systematic literature review approach to summarize and analyze findings related to classroom management and student behavior in primary schools. The primary objective of this study was to identify and evaluate effective classroom management strategies and their impact on student behavior. The study focused on reviewing literature published between 2020 and 2025. The literature sources selected for analysis were drawn from reputable databases such as Scopus, SAGE, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. This approach allowed the research to provide a more comprehensive overview of evidence-based classroom management practices relevant to educational policies in Indonesia.

Research Steps
Selection Based on Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The first step involved selecting the literature based on strict inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the quality and relevance of the articles being analyzed. The inclusion criteria for this study comprised articles published between 2020 and 2025, indexed in international databases such as Scopus, SAGE, ScienceDirect, or Google Scholar. Articles that addressed topics related to classroom management in primary schools, student behavior, and the impact of educational policies, which regulate the prevention and management of violence in primary school environments, were considered for further analysis. Furthermore, articles that employed valid scientific methodologies and provided accountable data were accepted. Articles published before 2020 or those that were not relevant to the research topic, such as those focusing on secondary or higher education, were excluded. Additionally, articles not available in full text or failed to meet scientific quality standards were excluded from analysis. This

selection process was designed to ensure that the articles analyzed would provide valuable contributions to understanding classroom management in primary schools within the Indonesian context (OECD, 2022; Wilkins et al., 2022).

Literature Search and Selection Process

The literature search was conducted using relevant keywords such as "classroom management primary school," "student behavior primary education," "discipline strategies in primary schools," and "Permendikbudristek No. 46 of 2023." The search was carried out across various leading databases, including Scopus, SAGE, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar, focusing on research published in Indonesia. From the initial search, approximately 200 relevant articles concerning classroom management and student behavior were expected to be found. After the search, articles that met the inclusion criteria were selected for further screening. Articles that were irrelevant to the topic, such as those focusing on classroom management at the secondary or higher education levels, were excluded from the analysis. At this stage, articles that met the inclusion criteria were filtered to ensure their alignment with the research objectives. Articles that failed to meet these criteria were excluded from the analysis. Of the total articles found, approximately 50 to 70 articles were expected to meet the inclusion criteria and be suitable for further analysis. This search and selection process ensured that the articles analyzed were both relevant and of high quality, contributing significantly to the understanding of classroom management at the primary school level in Indonesia.

Categorization and Data Analysis

Once the articles meeting the inclusion criteria were selected, the next step involved categorizing these articles into relevant categories to facilitate analysis. The selected articles were grouped into three main categories: (1) Classroom Management Strategies, (2) Impact on Student Behavior, and (3) The Role of Policy and Teachers in Classroom Management. The first category included articles discussing various techniques and approaches teachers use to manage student behavior, such as preventive, restorative, and proactive discipline strategies. The category analyzed articles to identify the most effective methods for increasing student engagement and discipline while minimizing disruptive behavior. The second category focused on the impact of classroom management strategies on student behavior. This category included an analysis of how classroom management techniques affected student discipline, engagement in learning, and the reduction of classroom disruptions. The third category examined the role of educational policies, specifically in Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia Number 46 of 2023 concerning the Prevention and Handling of Violence in Educational Units, in influencing classroom management practices in Indonesian primary schools. This analysis explored how the policy supported or hindered the implementation of effective classroom management strategies in primary schools. Each article was analyzed carefully to uncover the key findings that provided greater insight into classroom management practices and student behavior in the Indonesian context (OECD, 2023).

Report Writing and Recommendations

After analyzing the data collected, the final step in the research was preparing a systematic and structured report. This report presented the main findings from the reviewed literature, including identifying the most effective classroom management strategies and their impact on student behavior in primary schools. The report also included an analysis of the role of educational policies, such as *Permendikbudristek No. 46 of 2023*, in enhancing the effectiveness of classroom management in Indonesia. Additionally, practical recommendations based on the findings from the literature analysis were provided to assist teachers and policymakers in designing more effective strategies to improve classroom management and student behavior. These recommendations focused on applying strategies that have proven effective in improving student discipline, reducing disruptions, and increasing their involvement in learning. The recommendations also included suggestions for educational policies to better support the implementation of improved classroom management practices across Indonesia, with the ultimate goal of creating a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable learning environment for students. This report is expected to significantly contribute to developing educational policies and

implementing more effective classroom management practices in Indonesia (Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, Dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 46 Tahun 2023 Tentang Pencegahan Dan Penanganan Kekerasan di Lingkungan Satuan Pendidikan, 2023; UNESCO, 2024).

Flowchart of the Research Process

The following flowchart outlines the research process in a visual format. It represents each study stage, starting from identifying articles and progressing to synthesizing findings and reporting them in Figure 1.
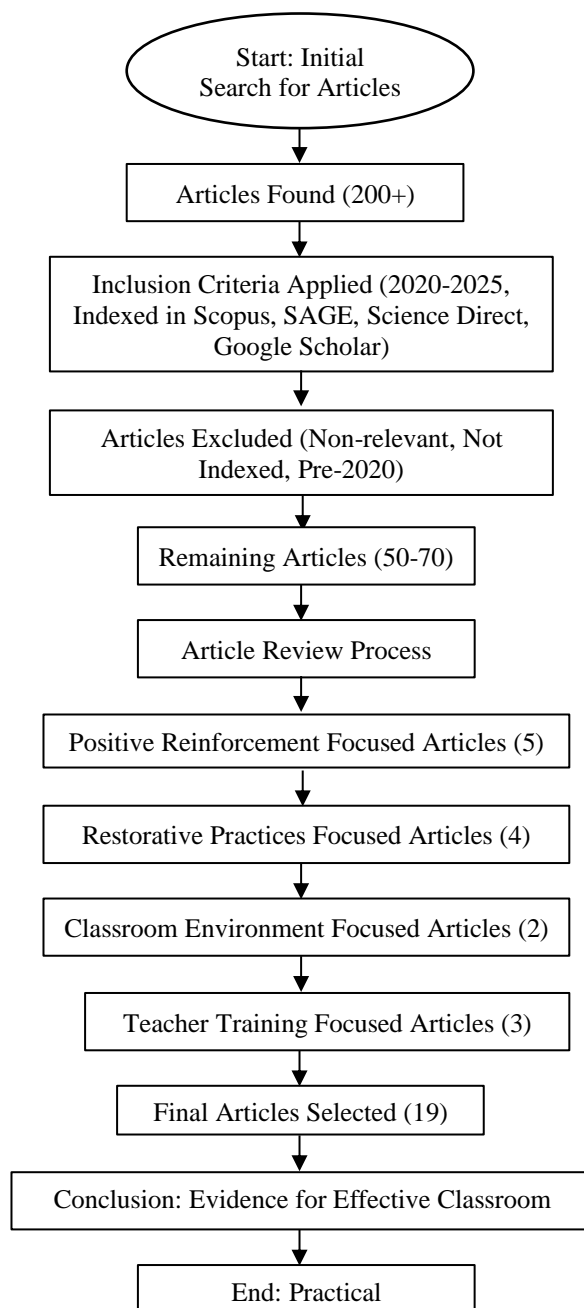

Figure 1. Research Flowchart: Article Selection and Review Process

Explanation of the Research Process
Identification of Articles
The first stage involved searching for relevant literature across major academic databases such as Scopus, SAGE Journal, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar. This search used key terms related to classroom management and student behavior in primary schools. Approximately 200 articles were identified.

1. **Start: Initial Search for Articles**

The research began with a broad search for articles in multiple databases, including Scopus, SAGE, and Google Scholar. The goal was to identify many articles on classroom management and student behavior.

2. **Articles Found (200+)**

An initial set of over 200 articles was found in these databases. These articles covered various aspects of classroom management, including strategies for managing student behavior, teacher-student relationships, and the impact of classroom environments on student outcomes.

3. **Inclusion Criteria Applied (2020-2025, Indexed in Scopus, SAGE, Sinta 2)**

Inclusion criteria were applied to ensure that the research was up-to-date and relevant. Articles were selected based on published between 2020 and 2025 and indexed in reputable databases such as Scopus, SAGE, and Sinta 2. This selection process aimed to ensure the inclusion of high-quality, contemporary research.

4. **Articles Excluded (Non-relevant, Not Indexed, Pre-2020)**

After applying the inclusion criteria, articles that did not meet these requirements were excluded. This included articles not indexed in the specified databases or those published before 2020, as they did not reflect the latest findings on classroom management.

5. **Remaining Articles (50-70)**

After filtering out the non-relevant and outdated articles, approximately 50-70 remain for further review. These articles were considered more relevant and suitable for the research objectives.

6. **Article Review Process**

The remaining articles underwent a detailed review process. This step categorizes and analyzes the content based on specific themes such as positive reinforcement, restorative practices, classroom environment, and teacher training. Articles were assessed based on their contributions to these themes and methodological rigor.

7. **Positive Reinforcement Focused Articles (5)**

The review identified articles focusing on positive reinforcement as a classroom management strategy. Five articles examine how positive reinforcement impacts student engagement and behavior, making this an essential strategy for improving classroom management.

8. **Restorative Practices Focused Articles (4)**

Another subset of articles focuses on restorative practices, which aim to rebuild relationships between students and teachers and among students. Four articles were selected that provided evidence on how restorative practices reduce aggressive behaviors and promote healthier interpersonal relationships in classrooms.

9. **Classroom Environment Focused Articles (7)**

A smaller set of articles focuses explicitly on the classroom's physical environment and its influence on student behavior. Two articles were selected that explored how classroom organization and design can reduce disruptions and enhance student concentration.

10. **Teacher Training Focused Articles (3)**

Three articles were selected that emphasize the importance of teacher training in classroom management. These studies highlighted the impact of structured training on teachers' abilities to manage classroom dynamics and address disruptive behaviors more effectively.

11. **Final Articles Selected (19)**

After categorizing and analyzing the articles, 12 were selected as the most relevant for the study. These articles covered various strategies for managing student behavior, and their findings provided a comprehensive understanding of effective classroom management techniques.

12. **Conclusion: Evidence for Effective Classroom Management**

Based on the review of the selected articles, a conclusion was drawn that effective classroom management is a multifaceted approach involving positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and a well-organized classroom environment. These strategies significantly improved student behavior, engagement, and overall academic performance.

13. **End: Practical Recommendations**

The final step involves formulating practical recommendations for teachers and policymakers. These recommendations were based on the evidence found in the reviewed articles, suggesting that teachers should incorporate positive reinforcement and

restorative practices, design inclusive and well-organized classrooms, and prioritize continuous professional development to improve their classroom management skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results
Classroom Management Strategies and Student Behavior

One of the main findings derived from the reviewed articles is that positive reinforcement is one of the most effective strategies for increasing student engagement and reducing behavioral disruptions in the classroom (Tantu & Eleison Oloi Marina, 2023). For instance Ismail (2023) demonstrated that teachers who implemented a positive reinforcement approach were able to reduce disruptive behavior and enhance student engagement. Positive reinforcement, which provides rewards and constructive feedback, strengthens desired behaviors and encourages students to engage more actively in learning (Ghafar, 2023).

Furthermore, Martinez & Wighting (2023) researched Positive Behavior Support (PBS), supporting this finding. PBS, when applied in schools to reduce negative behaviors and foster positive ones, has proven to be effective in creating a more conducive learning environment (Kusumaningtyas & Aprianto, 2025). PBS interventions focus on reinforcing positive behavior and applying clear consequences for negative behaviors, significantly reducing disruptions and enhancing students' emotional well-being (Caingcoy, 2022).

Another prominent approach highlighted in the study is restorative practices, which aim to rebuild relationships between students and teachers and among students. Alonso-Rodríguez et al. (2025) revealed that implementing restorative practices in the classroom reduced aggressive behaviors and improved interpersonal relationships between students and teachers. This approach involves open dialogues between the parties involved in a conflict, allowing them to address issues more constructively. This method provides a more positive alternative than punitive approaches, often exacerbating tensions between students and teachers (Perrella et al., 2024).

The classroom's physical environment also plays an important role in classroom management. Cole et al. (2021) noted that a well-organized classroom can reduce disruptive behaviors. Strategic seating arrangements and using tools and learning materials that support the lesson can help students focus better and reduce the tendency to engage in disruptive behavior (Cole et al., 2021). This finding underscores that classroom management is not only about directly managing behavior but also involves designing a classroom space that supports effective learning (Amiruddin et al., 2024).

Additionally, Fatmawati et al. (2023), in their study on classroom management in multicultural settings, demonstrated that culture-inclusive strategies and positive reinforcement are more effective in classrooms with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. In multicultural schools, teachers must understand their students' cultural backgrounds and implement approaches that respect differences and facilitate healthy interactions among students (Ashrafova, 2024). In this context, inclusive strategies were found to reduce tensions and increase student engagement in learning (Hariyadi & Rodiyah, 2023; Marvi, 2023).

Training provided to teachers also significantly influences their management skills (Pozo-Rico et al., 2023). Pozo-Rico et al. (2023) revealed that teachers who participated in structured classroom management training tended to better manage their classrooms and handle student behavior. This training provided teachers with the necessary managerial techniques to address challenging situations and increased their confidence in managing classrooms more effectively (Ahmed et al., 2021; Pratiwi et al., 2020).

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that effective classroom management involves not only the application of specific strategies to manage student behavior but also includes factors such as positive teacher-student relationships, classroom physical arrangements, and teacher training to enhance their managerial skills. Positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and inclusive strategies are key approaches that can improve students' positive behavior and create a conducive learning environment. Therefore, educators must consider implementing these various strategies in daily classroom management practices to achieve optimal learning outcomes. These findings also suggest the importance of continuously reviewing and updating classroom management strategies to address the ever-evolving challenges in educational environments effectively. This

includes the need to pay more attention to students' social, cultural, and emotional contexts, as well as utilizing evidence-based approaches when designing educational policies that support effective classroom management.

Practical Recommendations Based on Scientific Evidence

Based on the findings derived from the reviewed articles, several practical recommendations were proposed for teachers and policymakers to improve classroom management and student behavior.

1. **Implementation of Positive Reinforcement in Classroom Management**

   One of the main findings from this study was the importance of positive reinforcement in classroom management. Positive reinforcement has proven to be highly effective in increasing student engagement and reducing behavioral disruptions in the classroom. Therefore, teachers were recommended to regularly provide praise and rewards to students demonstrating positive behaviors through verbal encouragement or a points-based system (Ghafar, 2023). The praise should be specific and directly related to students' actions, ensuring they feel valued and motivated to maintain positive behavior. On the other hand, policymakers were advised to ensure that training on using positive reinforcement techniques for teachers is regularly available. This would enable teachers to be better prepared and more effective in managing their classrooms and fostering positive relationships with students (Ismail, 2023).

2. **Use of Restorative Practices to Manage Conflict**

   In addition to positive reinforcement, the research highlighted the significant impact of restorative practices in the classroom. Restorative practices focus on restoring relationships disrupted due to conflict, rather than simply applying punitive measures. Teachers were encouraged to implement this approach by facilitating open discussions between students involved in conflicts, helping them understand the impact of their actions, and working together to find solutions. Policymakers were recommended to support this by developing more comprehensive restorative policies in schools and providing guidelines on integrating this practice into school disciplinary policies. This approach reduced aggressive behaviors and improved interpersonal relationships among students and between students and teachers, providing a more constructive alternative to punitive methods that often exacerbate tensions (Wilson & Ferguson, 2020).

3. **Improving Physical Classroom Arrangement to Support Learning**

   Another key finding was the role of the physical classroom environment in managing student behavior. A well-organized classroom setting can contribute significantly to reducing disruptive behaviors. Teachers were advised to consider seating arrangements supporting group work while allowing students to work individually without distractions (Khasinah et al., 2024). The use of relevant learning materials and engaging tools was also recommended to enhance students' involvement in lessons. Policymakers were encouraged to develop guidelines for classroom design that prioritize flexibility and accommodate various learning activities, thus fostering a more active and interactive learning environment (Rahmawati & Sholeh, 2021).

4. **Continuous Teacher Training on Classroom Management**

   According to Ahmed et al. (2021)findings, classroom management training significantly improved teachers' abilities to manage their classrooms. Teachers should be engaged in continuous training focused on developing their management skills, particularly in handling challenging situations such as dealing with disruptive students or students with special needs. This training would also provide teachers with new techniques to address various classroom challenges, ranging from minor distractions to more complex behavioral issues. Policymakers were urged to ensure that professional development programs included structured classroom management training and provided adequate support for teachers to apply these newly acquired skills in their daily classroom practices (Pozo-Rico et al., 2023).

5. Implementing Inclusive Strategies in Multicultural Classrooms

In multicultural classrooms, as found by Azhari et al. (2024), teachers must understand and appreciate their students' cultural backgrounds. Teachers should adopt inclusive teaching strategies where each student feels valued and recognized. Using materials that reflect the diversity of the students' cultures and histories can enhance their engagement in learning. Additionally, teachers should be mindful of the different learning styles that may arise due to cultural differences and adjust their teaching methods to ensure that all students can participate actively. For policymakers, providing cultural awareness training for teachers was essential, enabling them to manage diverse classrooms effectively and impartially while avoiding biases in handling student behavior (Fatmawati et al., 2023).

6. Policymaking to Support Positive Reinforcement and Restorative Practices

To ensure long-term success in classroom management, policymakers were advised to integrate positive reinforcement and restorative practices into school policies. These policies should provide clear guidelines for teachers to implement both strategies consistently (Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018). For example, schools could introduce a reward system emphasizing positive behavior and allowing students to repair relationships through constructive dialogues rather than punitive actions. Furthermore, school policies should emphasize the importance of evidence-based approaches in managing student behavior and support the use of restorative practices as a solution for resolving conflicts in the classroom. Policymakers must ensure that these strategies are implemented by adequate resources, such as teacher training programs and facilities that promote the effective implementation of these policies (Alonso-Rodríguez et al., 2025).

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the pivotal role of positive reinforcement and restorative practices in shaping student behavior and enhancing classroom management. According to Ghafar (2023) and Ismail (2023),
positive reinforcement has proven to be one of the most effective strategies in fostering student engagement and reducing disruptive behaviors. By providing rewards and constructive feedback, teachers can strengthen desirable behaviors and encourage students to participate more actively in learning activities. This finding is consistent with Social Learning Theory, which suggests that behaviors reinforced through positive consequences are more likely to be repeated Bandura in (Cassidy, 2015). Hence, educators should consider integrating positive reinforcement strategies into daily teaching practices to maintain a positive and productive classroom environment (Utaminingsih & Hermasari, 2024).

Moreover, incorporating restorative practices significantly improved student-teacher relationships and reduced aggressive behaviors in the classroom (Pratiwi et al., 2020). Utaminingsih et al (2025) emphasized that restorative practices, which focus on repairing relationships through dialogue rather than imposing punitive measures, offer a constructive approach to resolving conflicts. This aligns with restorative justice, which aims to restore harmony by addressing the underlying causes of conflicts. In contrast to traditional disciplinary measures, which may increase student tension and alienation, restorative practices foster empathy and accountability (Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018),. This approach is convenient in classrooms where student behavior issues are rooted in social or emotional distress (Utaminingsih, 2023).

The classroom's physical environment also plays a crucial role in supporting effective classroom management. Rahmawati & Sholeh (2021) demonstrated that a well-organized classroom setting improves student focus and reduces disruptions. Classroom design, including seating arrangements and engaging educational tools, can help students stay attentive and minimize off-task behaviors. This finding resonates with Environmental Psychology, which suggests that the physical environment significantly influences cognitive and emotional responses (Whitburn et al., 2023). Therefore, teachers and policymakers should ensure that classroom layouts facilitate individual and collaborative learning, creating an environment conducive to academic success and positive student behavior (Amiruddin et al., 2024).

Furthermore, the importance of teacher training in enhancing classroom management practices cannot be overstated. Wilkins et al. (2023)highlighted those teachers who participated in structured classroom management training exhibited higher confidence levels and effectiveness in handling behavioral challenges. This is supported by the Teacher Self-Efficacy Theory, which posits that teachers who feel capable of managing their classrooms are more likely to implement effective strategies and achieve better student outcomes (Almajnuni & Alwerthan, 2024). Policymakers should prioritize professional development opportunities for teachers, equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to address diverse classroom challenges. By doing so, schools can ensure that teachers are well-prepared to implement evidence-based strategies, fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment (Utaminingsih & Purwati, 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that effective classroom management is a key factor in creating a learning environment that supports student engagement and improves academic achievement. Positive reinforcement was one of the most effective strategies for reducing disruptive behavior and increasing student participation in learning activities. Additionally, restorative practices, which focus on repairing relationships between students and teachers, significantly reduce aggressive behaviors and improve interpersonal relationships. The study also highlighted the importance of the physical arrangement of the classroom, such as seating arrangements and the use of relevant learning materials, in enhancing student focus and reducing disruptions. Furthermore, continuous classroom management training improved teachers' ability to manage classrooms effectively. Therefore, it is recommended that future research explore implementing these strategies in a broader context, considering the cultural and social factors that may influence the success of classroom management practices in different school settings.

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