

## Article

# Examining Classroom Management Challenges and Adjusting Schemes of Primary School Teachers

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**Abstract:** This study explored classroom management challenges and adjustment strategies of primary school teachers at Mactan Elementary School in Lapu-Lapu City, Philippines. A descriptive correlational research design was used with 30 teachers as respondents. Data were collected through a modified checklist-questionnaire assessing perceived challenges and adjustment schemes on a 5-point Likert scale. Results revealed that teachers faced moderate challenges, particularly in managing student behavior, but demonstrated very high levels of adjustment strategies, such as involving students in rule-setting and using positive reinforcement. The Pearson correlation analysis showed a negligible and non-significant relationship between the challenges encountered and the adjustments made, indicating that teachers consistently apply effective management strategies regardless of the challenges faced. These findings underscore the importance of providing ongoing support and training to help teachers address classroom management challenges, particularly in handling student behavior, while maintaining effective teaching practices.

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**Keywords:** Classroom management, primary school teachers, adjustment strategies, student behavior

## Introduction

Classroom management refers to the techniques and strategies that teachers employ to create and maintain an environment conducive to learning (Sueb et al., 2020). Effective management establishes the classroom as a space where students can focus and engage, ensuring their behavior is appropriate and aligned with learning goals (Hosan & Weiyan, 2022). By setting clear expectations and organizing resources effectively, teachers foster a positive atmosphere that promotes discipline, minimizes distractions, and supports instructional



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objectives (İşlak & Gürcan, 2022). Moreover, teachers' ability to manage time, student behavior, and the physical classroom environment is integral to optimizing student learning outcomes (Lumbantobing et al., 2020). In essence, classroom management is a foundational element of teaching, designed to guide both student engagement and overall learning progress (Hiver et al., 2020).

Effective classroom management is critical in primary education due to the developmental needs of young learners (Lazarides et al., 2020). At this stage, children are still developing self-regulation skills, making it essential for teachers to provide structured guidance (Hosan & Weiyan, 2022). When classroom management is strong, students are more likely to stay focused, leading to improved academic performance and better social-emotional development (Lumbantobing et al., 2020). It also mitigates behavioral disruptions that can detract from learning opportunities for other students (Wilks, 1996). Ultimately, effective management helps to ensure that all students, regardless of ability, can thrive in a stable and supportive learning environment (Vũ, 2022).

Primary school teachers face several challenges when managing their classrooms. These include behavioral issues such as students talking out of turn, not following instructions, or showing a lack of attention, all of which impede learning (Önder, 2019). Teachers also struggle with large class sizes, diverse learning needs, and insufficient resources, which can exacerbate classroom control issues (Lumbantobing et al., 2020). Furthermore, external factors such as family background, social issues, and emotional well-being of students can contribute to classroom challenges (Akbulut & Sadık, 2023). Addressing these challenges requires adaptive strategies from teachers to ensure the classroom remains a productive learning space.

Research into classroom management challenges and teacher adjustment strategies is crucial for improving educational outcomes. It provides valuable insights into the real-world difficulties teachers face and highlights the importance of developing flexible approaches to cope with changing classroom dynamics (Hosan & Weiyan, 2022). Understanding these challenges helps educators and policymakers design more effective training programs that equip teachers with the necessary skills to manage diverse classrooms (Warfali & Yusoff, 2014). This research is particularly significant given the evolving nature of classroom environments and the increasing demand for teachers to adopt innovative management strategies (Hang & Hiep, 2023).

The purpose of this study is to explore the core challenges that primary school teachers face in managing their classrooms and how they adapt their strategies to these challenges. This research aims to identify the most common classroom management issues and examine the effectiveness of different coping mechanisms used by teachers (Lumbantobing et al., 2020). By understanding these issues, the study

contributes to improving teacher training and support systems that foster more effective classroom environments (Akbulut & Sadik, 2023).

This research investigates the specific challenges primary school teachers encounter in classroom management and the coping mechanisms they employ to address these difficulties. This research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of classroom management and teacher adaptation strategies in primary education. The insights gathered can inform teacher training programs, enhancing their focus on equipping educators with practical management skills. The findings can also help in developing policies that support teachers in navigating classroom challenges, thereby improving student learning outcomes.

### Methodology

This research employed a descriptive correlational research design to examine the classroom management challenges faced by primary school teachers in a public-school setting, as well as the strategies they implemented to address these issues. The study was conducted at Mactan Elementary School in Lapu-Lapu City, Philippines, targeting a population of 30 primary school teachers, specifically from kindergarten to Grades 1, 2, and 3. Complete enumeration sampling was used to include all teachers from the school. A modified checklist-questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, comprising three sections: (1) teacher demographics, (2) perceived classroom management challenges, and (3) adjusting schemes. The 5-point Likert Scale was employed to gauge the level of perceived challenges and adjustments, with responses ranging from "Not Challenged" to "Extremely Challenged" for classroom management difficulties, and from "Very Low" to "Very High" for adjustment schemes. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was utilized to assess the relationship between the challenges encountered and the adjustment strategies applied. Data collection occurred in three phases: preliminary preparation, the actual data gathering stage, and post-collection analysis.

### Results and Discussion

Table 1. Age and Gender of the Respondents

Age (in years)	Female		Male		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
51-60	3	10.00	0	0.00	3	10.00
41-50	12	40.00	0	0.00	12	40.00
36-40	6	20.00	0	0.00	6	20.00
31-35	6	20.00	0	0.00	6	20.00
26-30	3	10.00	0	0.00	3	10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.00</b>

The data in Table 1 presents the age and gender distribution of the respondents, who are all primary school teachers at Mactan Elementary School. The total sample consists of 30 female teachers, with no male participants. The majority of the respondents, 40% (12 teachers), are within the 41-50 age range, indicating a significant portion of the teachers are in the later stages of their careers. Following this, 20% (6 teachers) are between the ages of 36-40, and an additional 20% (6 teachers) are in the 31-35 age group. The youngest and oldest cohorts, 26-30 years and 51-60 years, each represent 10% (3 teachers) of the sample.

Table 2. Grade Level Handled by the Respondents

Grade Level Handled	f	%
Grade 3	8	26.67
Grade 2	10	33.33
Grade 1	8	26.67
Kinder	4	13.33
Total	30	100.00

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of grade levels handled by the 30 respondents, who are primary school teachers at Mactan Elementary School. The majority of the teachers, 33.33% (10 teachers), are assigned to teach Grade 2, representing the largest proportion in the sample. Grade 1 and Grade 3 teachers each make up 26.67% (8 teachers for each grade) of the respondents, showing a balanced representation between these two grade levels. The smallest group of teachers, 13.33% (4 teachers), is responsible for handling Kindergarten. This distribution indicates that while there is a relatively even spread of teachers across the primary grades, a slightly higher number of teachers are allocated to Grade 2, possibly reflecting either the school's enrollment needs or the administrative focus on this specific grade level.

Table 3. Length of Service of the Respondents

Length of Service (in years)	f	%
16 and above	8	26.67
11-15	8	26.67
6-10	6	20.00
1-5	8	26.67
Total	30	100.00

Table 3 presents the distribution of the respondents based on their length of service as primary school teachers at Mactan Elementary School. The data shows that the respondents are evenly distributed across three categories, with 26.67% (8 teachers) having served for 16 years and above, 11-15 years, and 1-5 years, respectively. This indicates that a substantial portion of the teachers are either at the beginning of their careers or have been teaching for over a decade. The remaining 20% (6 teachers) fall within the 6-10 years of service range. This

distribution highlights a diverse range of experience levels among the teachers, with nearly three-quarters having either substantial experience (over 10 years) or being relatively new to the profession (1-5 years). This variety in teaching tenure may contribute to a wide range of perspectives on classroom management practices and challenges, providing a richer understanding of how experience influences teaching methods and strategies.

Table 4. Level of Perceived Challenges Encountered by the Respondents in Classroom Management

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	Classroom behaviors of the learners	3.70	Challenged
2	Identifying the learning disabilities and individual differences among students.	3.13	Moderately Challenged
3	Maintaining professional work ethics (positive attitude, proper behavior, emotional stability).	3.10	Moderately Challenged
4	Convincing the students to follow the established rules and regulations in the classroom.	3.03	Moderately Challenged
5	Making classroom learning meaningful.	3.17	Moderately Challenged
6	Giving consequences to violated rules and misbehavior.	3.03	Moderately Challenged
7	Establishing a conducive learning environment (lighting, ventilation, seating arrangement, etc.).	3.00	Moderately Challenged
8	Being aware on what is going on in the classroom but does not communicate the lapses to the students.	3.00	Moderately Challenged
9	Making smooth transitions between activities (can't give students warnings before transitions are made, can't bring closure to each activity, and can't maintain focus on each activity once it begins)	2.90	Moderately Challenged
10	Utilizing variety of instructional materials that cater students' needs and interests.	3.03	Moderately Challenged
11	Fostering cooperation and positive relationship among students.	3.03	Moderately Challenged
12	Preparing and organizing so that "down time" would be reduced.	3.03	Moderately Challenged
13	Considering the socio-economic status of the students (classroom activities, delivery of instructions and etc.).	3.07	Moderately Challenged
14	Utilizing classroom management practices smoothly.	3.13	Moderately Challenged
15	Persuading the students to follow the classroom management practices.	3.20	Moderately Challenged
Aggregate Weighted Mean		3.10	Moderately Challenged

Table 4 illustrates the level of perceived challenges encountered by the respondents in classroom management, with the indicators rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The aggregate weighted mean of 3.10 indicates that the teachers generally perceive themselves to be moderately challenged in managing their classrooms. Among the indicators, classroom behaviors of the learners received the highest weighted mean of 3.70, suggesting that teachers feel challenged in handling student behaviors. On the other hand, areas such as identifying learning disabilities and individual differences (3.13) and making classroom learning meaningful (3.17) were rated as moderately challenging. Additionally, managing professional work ethics (3.10) and convincing students to follow rules (3.03) were also perceived as moderately difficult by the

teachers. Challenges in maintaining smooth transitions between activities (2.90) and establishing a conducive learning environment (3.00) were also noted, albeit at a lower level. Overall, while none of the indicators were rated as extremely challenging, the results highlight a consistent perception of moderate difficulty across various aspects of classroom management, with student behavior being the most pressing issue faced by the teachers. This suggests the need for further support and strategies to help teachers manage these challenges effectively.

Table 5. Level of Adjustment Schemes of the Respondents in Classroom Management

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	I involve students in establishing rules and procedures.	4.57	Very High
2	I share with students the reasons behind the disciplinary approach(es) used.	4.50	Very High
3	I provide positive reinforcement to students for appropriate behavior (e.g. punctuality, obedience, honesty, etc.)	4.47	Very High
4	I give time to the students to reflect on their behavior as a group.	4.30	Very High
5	I redirect inappropriate behavior on the spot (verbal and non-verbal cues)	4.00	High
6	I send home Teacher-to-Parent Communication letters (digital or non-digital messages) regarding positive and negative aspects of their children's behavior.	4.13	High
7	I take into account different learning styles when preparing the lesson.	4.23	Very High
8	I take into account to relate the lesson with the students' real-life experiences to plan activities.	4.33	Very High
9	I make sure that the learning goals are clearly stated for students to understand them.	4.47	Very High
10	I use different types of seating arrangements depending on the type of activity students are assigned to do.	4.13	High
11	I create extra activities for students to work when they have completed their main task.	4.20	High
12	I start the lesson in an energetic manner to catch students' attention (telling an amusing story, starting in a very quiet or low voice, etc.).	4.43	Very High
13	I use different languages to make the delivery of instruction understandable.	4.33	Very High
14	I learn about the different types of students' personal and social needs (using 'getting to know each other activities', questionnaires, etc.)	4.43	Very High
15	I promote positive social values (helping, sharing, being patient, etc.).	4.60	Very High
Aggregate Weighted Mean		4.34	Very High

Table 5 presents the level of adjustment schemes employed by the respondents in managing their classrooms, with the results showing an overall aggregate weighted mean of 4.34, which is categorized as Very High. This indicates that the primary school teachers in Mactan Elementary School are highly proactive and effective in employing adjustment strategies to manage their classrooms. Among the individual indicators, the highest rating of 4.60 was given to promoting positive social values such as helping and sharing, reflecting the



teachers' strong focus on fostering a supportive and collaborative environment. Additionally, involving students in establishing rules (4.57) and sharing the reasoning behind disciplinary approaches (4.50) were also rated very highly, demonstrating the teachers' commitment to transparency and student participation in behavior management. Teachers also reported consistently using strategies such as providing positive reinforcement (4.47), starting lessons in an energetic manner (4.43), and tailoring lessons to different learning styles (4.23). While most indicators were rated as "Very High," a few, such as redirecting inappropriate behavior on the spot (4.00) and using different seating arrangements (4.13), were rated slightly lower but still within the "High" category. Overall, the data reflects that the teachers are well-equipped and actively utilize a variety of adjustment strategies to enhance classroom management.

Table 6. Test of Relationship between the Respondents' Challenges and Adjustment Schemes in Classroom Management

Variables	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Challenges and Adjustment Schemes	-0.136	Negligible Negative	0.474	Do not reject Ho	Not Significant

\*significant at  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed)

Table 6 shows the test of the relationship between the respondents' perceived challenges in classroom management and their adjustment schemes, with an r-value of -0.136. This negligible negative correlation indicates a very weak inverse relationship between the two variables, suggesting that as the perceived challenges increase, the adjustments made by teachers do not significantly decrease or improve. The p-value of 0.474 is greater than the significance level of 0.05, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ), meaning that there is no statistically significant relationship between the challenges encountered by the respondents and the adjustment schemes they implement. In essence, this result implies that the level of challenges faced by the teachers does not have a meaningful impact on their use of adjustment strategies in classroom management. Therefore, even though teachers may encounter challenges, these do not significantly affect how they adapt their classroom management approaches.

## Conclusion

The study reveals that primary school teachers at Mactan Elementary School, who are predominantly female and diverse in age and experience, face moderate challenges in classroom management, particularly with managing student behavior. Despite these challenges, the teachers demonstrate a very high level of adjustment schemes, indicating proactive efforts to engage students, reinforce positive

behavior, and tailor teaching strategies to different learning needs. However, the relationship between the challenges faced and the adjustment strategies implemented is found to be negligible and not statistically significant, suggesting that the level of challenges does not greatly influence how teachers modify their management approaches. This suggests that teachers, regardless of the difficulties they encounter, are consistently utilizing effective management practices to maintain a productive classroom environment.

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