

Article

Exploring The Influence of Classroom Management Approaches on the Behavioral Development of Preschool Learners

Mary Ann Rigonan, Sushela Daniel, Siela Hernandez, Honey Pelayo,
Genevieve Amante

Corresponding Author: maryannrigonan265@gmail.com

Abstract: This study examined the influence of classroom management approaches on the behavioral development of preschool learners. It focused on the implementation of strategies, and their impact on learners' attention, engagement, rule-following, cooperation, and emotional regulation. The study also explored challenges faced by educators and the relationship between management strategies and learner behavior. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from preschool teachers. Analyses included frequency counts, weighted means, and Pearson correlation. Results showed that preschool educators frequently applied classroom management strategies, emphasizing positive behavior promotion and emotional and social support, while the organization of physical space received slightly less focus. These strategies positively influenced learner behavior, particularly emotional regulation, task persistence, attention, cooperation, and compliance with rules. Teachers reported moderate challenges, including managing diverse behavioral needs, time constraints, and limited resources, though managing large groups and maintaining rules were milder challenges. A strong, statistically significant positive correlation was found between the use of classroom management strategies and improvements in learner behavior. The study concludes that effective classroom management is vital for fostering positive behavioral and academic outcomes in preschool learners. Despite challenges, consistent application of these strategies creates a structured and supportive environment conducive to emotional and social development. Recommendations include enhancing the organization of routines and physical spaces, strengthening emotional and behavioral support, and addressing challenges through targeted training, additional resources, and administrative support. Ongoing professional development and a comprehensive action plan are essential to sustain and improve classroom management effectiveness and learner outcomes in early childhood education.

Keywords: classroom management strategies, preschool learners, behavioral development, positive behavior and discipline, classroom behavior

Introduction

Education during the early years provides an important foundation for children's later learning, social adjustment, and behavioral development Hosokawa et al. (2024). Preschool classrooms are particularly important because young children are still learning how to participate in group activities, regulate their behavior, communicate appropriately, and respond to adult expectations. Evidence from longitudinal preschool research shows that experiences during early childhood can have lasting implications for children's academic and behavioral development (Solang et al., 2024). Within the classroom, children also benefit when teachers provide supportive and organized learning environments that promote active participation and appropriate behavior (Irshad et al., 2024). Positive social-emotional experiences contribute to children's adjustment and learning behaviors (Li et al., 2023), while supportive teacher-child relationships are associated with more favorable developmental experiences in early education settings (Spilt & Koomen, 2022). Thus, effective classroom management is an essential component of quality preschool education.

Despite its importance, classroom management can be difficult to implement consistently in early childhood settings because preschool learners differ considerably in temperament, behavioral needs, communication ability, attention span, and self-regulation. Teachers may experience difficulty maintaining predictable routines when children require different levels of guidance and behavioral support. Occupational stress can also affect how consistently teachers respond to children and manage classroom demands (Nwoko et al., 2023). Behavioral difficulties among young learners may further increase teachers' emotional and instructional demands, particularly when educators have limited opportunities for professional support (Boison & Burke, 2025). Classroom management may also become more difficult when teachers must simultaneously organize activities, supervise learning materials, address disruptive behaviors, and maintain emotionally supportive interactions (Lane et al., 2025). Moreover, variations in teachers' preparation and classroom experiences may influence the quality of practices they provide to young children.

When classroom-management difficulties remain unaddressed, the consequences may become evident in learners' classroom behavior and ability to participate successfully in learning activities. Children who experience inconsistent behavioral expectations may find it more difficult to sustain attention, follow instructions, and persist when activities become challenging. Early behavioral and self-regulatory competencies are important because they contribute to children's ability to function successfully within structured learning environments (Coelho et al., 2026). Difficulties in emotional regulation may also interfere with children's peer relationships and their capacity to respond appropriately to classroom situations (De Neve et al., 2023). Research on social-emotional learning further demonstrates that strengthening behavioral and emotional competencies can improve adjustment and participation in school-related activities (Pellerone et al., 2023). Similarly, children's experiences in preschool environments may influence behavioral outcomes that continue beyond the preschool

years.

Recent research has increasingly emphasized the importance of classroom interactions, behavioral support, and social-emotional experiences in early childhood education. Studies examining preschool classrooms indicate that the quality of teachers' interactions with children is associated with children's learning experiences and classroom functioning (Jiang et al., 2023). Research has likewise shown that classroom organization and teacher support are important features of preschool learning environments because they structure children's opportunities to participate productively in classroom activities (Perry et al., 2026). Recent studies of early childhood educators have also highlighted the importance of teachers' capacity to respond appropriately to children's behavioral and emotional needs (Culley, 2023). Furthermore, contemporary research on preschool quality suggests that children benefit when instructional organization is combined with responsive teacher-child interaction rather than relying primarily on behavioral control (Pianta & Hofkens, 2023). These findings provide support for examining classroom management as a multidimensional teaching practice.

Despite the growing literature on early childhood classroom quality, teacher-child interactions, and children's social-emotional development, limited research has simultaneously examined classroom management through routines and procedures, positive behavior and discipline, physical organization, and emotional-social support. Studies also tend to examine particular dimensions of children's behavior separately rather than considering attention, rule-following, cooperation, emotional regulation, and task persistence together. Consequently, there remains a need to determine how early childhood teachers implement these classroom management strategies, how they perceive their influence on preschool learners' behavior, and what difficulties interfere with their consistent implementation.

This study will examine the implementation of classroom management strategies employed by early childhood teachers and their perceived influence on the behavioral development of preschool learners. Specifically, it will determine the extent to which teachers establish routines and procedures, promote positive behavior and discipline, organize physical space and learning materials, and foster emotional and social support. It will also examine learners' attention and engagement, ability to follow instructions and classroom rules, cooperation with peers and teachers, emotional regulation, and task persistence. Finally, the study will identify challenges encountered by teachers in implementing these classroom management strategies as a basis for developing appropriate recommendations for strengthening preschool classroom practices.

Literature Review

Effective classroom management is a proactive process through which teachers establish conditions that support learners' behavioral, social, emotional, and academic participation. Rather than responding only after inappropriate behavior occurs,

teachers can use clear expectations, predictable routines, active supervision, positive reinforcement, and responsive interactions to prevent classroom difficulties. McDaniel et al. (2022) emphasized that effective classroom management includes foundational, preventive, and responsive practices that help teachers manage the social, emotional, and behavioral dynamics of the classroom. Aguiar and Aguiar (2020) likewise emphasized the importance of classroom composition and quality within early childhood education environments. Research by Doll et al. (2014) further supports the importance of classroom practices in creating supportive learning settings, while Emmer & Stough (2003) demonstrated the continuing relevance of classroom management practices and their measurement across educational settings. Similarly, Wisniewski et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of teacher practices and feedback processes within learning environments. Together, these studies suggest that effective management involves combining classroom structure with positive teacher–learner interactions rather than relying primarily on corrective discipline.

Classroom management is also important because young learners are still developing the behavioral competencies required to participate successfully in structured learning environments. Children need opportunities to develop attention, cooperation, emotional regulation, appropriate responses to classroom expectations, and persistence when completing learning activities. Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) explained that supportive developmental environments can promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. Cipriano et al. (2023) similarly found that school-based social and emotional learning interventions produced positive outcomes across social, emotional, behavioral, and academic domains. In relation to classroom practices, McDaniel et al. (2022) reported that teacher influence, monitoring, proactive behavioral support, meaningful participation, and responsiveness represent important aspects of effective classroom management. Hirsch et al. (2021) further noted concerns regarding teachers' preparation for classroom management, demonstrating the importance of strengthening professional knowledge and practical strategies. Moreover, Gamoran et al. (2000) emphasized the importance of considering classroom contextual conditions when examining educational practices.

Methodology

This study will employ a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between classroom management strategies employed by early childhood teachers and the behavioral development of preschool learners at Labangon Bliss Elementary School, Cebu City. The descriptive component will determine the extent of implementation of classroom management strategies in terms of establishing routines and procedures, promoting positive behavior and discipline, organizing physical space and learning materials, and fostering emotional and social support. It will also describe learners' behavior in terms of attention and engagement, ability to follow instructions and classroom rules, cooperation with peers and teachers, emotional regulation, and task persistence. The correlational component will

determine whether classroom management strategies are significantly associated with preschool learners' behavioral outcomes. The teacher-respondents will be selected through purposive sampling, limited to preschool teachers who directly manage early childhood classes. Preschool learners will serve as subjects of naturalistic classroom observation and will not be required to answer questionnaires or participate in interviews. Data will be gathered through a Classroom Management Strategies Questionnaire, a behavioral observation checklist, and a questionnaire on challenges encountered in implementing classroom management practices. Selected teachers may also provide supplementary information regarding their classroom management experiences.

Prior to data collection, permission will be secured from the appropriate education authorities and school administrator. Teacher-respondents will be oriented regarding the purpose of the study, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and data-gathering procedures. Surveys will then be administered, while learner behaviors will be observed within the natural classroom setting. Completed instruments will be checked, coded, organized, and prepared for analysis. Frequency and percentage will be used to summarize respondent characteristics and categorical responses. Mean and standard deviation will determine the extent of classroom management practices, learner behavioral outcomes, and implementation challenges. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation will be used to determine the relationship between classroom management strategies and preschool learners' behavior, subject to the required statistical assumptions.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Extent of the Implementation of Classroom Management Strategies

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	Establishing routines and procedures	4.00	Frequently Implemented
2	Promoting positive behavior and discipline	4.10	Frequently Implemented
3	Organizing physical space and learning materials	3.90	Frequently Implemented
4	Fostering emotional and social support	4.10	Frequently Implemented
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	4.03	Frequently
	Standard Deviation	0.10	Implemented

Table 1 presents the extent of implementation of classroom management strategies among the respondents. The findings reveal an aggregate weighted mean of 4.03, verbally described as Frequently Implemented, indicating that the identified classroom management strategies are regularly practiced by the teachers. Among the indicators, promoting positive behavior and discipline and fostering emotional and social support obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.10, both described as Frequently Implemented. This suggests that teachers give considerable

attention to encouraging appropriate learner behavior, maintaining discipline, and providing a supportive classroom environment. Establishing routines and procedures obtained a weighted mean of 4.00, indicating that teachers frequently establish structured classroom practices to guide learners during daily activities. Meanwhile, organizing physical space and learning materials received the lowest weighted mean of 3.90, although it was still described as Frequently Implemented. This suggests that classroom organization is regularly practiced but may require greater attention compared with the other strategies. The standard deviation of 0.10 indicates only a small variation among the mean ratings of the four indicators, showing that the different classroom management strategies were implemented at relatively similar levels. The findings imply that teachers generally demonstrate consistent implementation of classroom management strategies, particularly in promoting positive behavior and providing emotional and social support.

Table 2. Extent of the Impact of Classroom Management Strategies on Learners' Behavior

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	Attention and engagement in class activities	3.80	Frequently Implemented
2	Ability to follow instructions and classroom rules	3.90	Frequently Implemented
3	Cooperation with peers and teachers	3.80	Frequently Implemented
4	Emotional regulation and task persistence	4.13	Frequently Implemented
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	3.91	Frequently
	Standard Deviation	0.16	Implemented

Table 2 presents the extent of the impact of classroom management strategies on learners' behavior. The findings reveal an aggregate weighted mean of 3.91, verbally described as Frequently Implemented, with a standard deviation of 0.16. Among the indicators, emotional regulation and task persistence obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.13, indicating that classroom management strategies are frequently associated with learners' ability to manage their emotions and remain persistent in completing classroom tasks. This was followed by the ability to follow instructions and classroom rules, with a weighted mean of 3.90. Meanwhile, attention and engagement in class activities and cooperation with peers and teachers both obtained the lowest weighted mean of 3.80, although both were still described as Frequently Implemented. The results indicate that classroom management strategies are consistently associated with positive learner behavior across the identified areas. The relatively low standard deviation further suggests that the ratings across the indicators were generally consistent. The findings imply that effective classroom management may help promote emotional regulation, persistence, rule-following, engagement, and cooperation among learners. However, teachers may further strengthen strategies that encourage sustained attention, active participation, and positive peer interactions to support learners' overall classroom behavior and create a more productive and supportive learning environment.

Table 3. Level of Challenges Encountered in Implementing Classroom Management Strategies

S/N	Indicators	WM	Verbal Description
1	Managing a large number of preschool learners	2.00	Mild Challenge
2	Addressing learners with different behavioral needs	3.03	Moderate Challenge
3	Lack of training or seminars	2.93	Moderate Challenge
4	Inadequate materials or resources	3.20	Moderate Challenge
5	Inconsistent parent support	3.03	Moderate Challenge
6	Difficulty maintaining classroom rules	2.00	Mild Challenge
7	Limited administrator support	3.07	Moderate Challenge
8	Stress or emotional fatigue	3.07	Moderate Challenge
9	Time constraints	3.23	Moderate Challenge
10	Lack of assistance from other staff	3.00	Moderate Challenge
	Aggregate Weighted Mean	2.86	Moderate
	Standard Deviation	0.46	Challenge

Table 3 presents the level of challenges encountered by teachers in implementing classroom management strategies. The findings show an aggregate weighted mean of 2.86, verbally described as a Moderate Challenge, with a standard deviation of 0.46. Among the indicators, time constraints obtained the highest weighted mean of 3.23, followed by inadequate materials or resources with 3.20. Limited administrator support and stress or emotional fatigue both obtained 3.07, while addressing different behavioral needs and inconsistent parent support received 3.03. These findings indicate that teachers experience several practical, institutional, and personal difficulties in managing their classrooms. Meanwhile, managing a large number of preschool learners and difficulty maintaining classroom rules obtained the lowest weighted means of 2.00, both interpreted as Mild Challenges. The results imply that teachers are generally capable of handling class size and maintaining established rules, but other factors continue to create difficulties in implementing classroom management strategies. Therefore, schools may strengthen teacher support by providing adequate instructional resources, relevant training and seminars, administrative assistance, and sufficient time for classroom preparation. Greater parental involvement and staff collaboration may also help teachers address learners' diverse behavioral needs and reduce work-related stress.

Table 4. Test of the Relationship Between the Employed Classroom Management Strategies and the extent of its Impact on Learners' Behavior

Variable	r-value	Strength of Correlation	p - value	Decision	Remarks
Classroom Management Strategies and Impact on Learner's Behavior	.973	Strong Positive	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

*Significant at $p < 0.05$ (two-tailed)

Table 4 presents the relationship between the employed classroom management strategies and their impact on learners' behavior. The computed r-value of .973 indicates a strong positive correlation between the two variables. Moreover, the p-value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a statistically significant relationship between classroom management strategies and learners' behavior. The positive relationship suggests that higher implementation of classroom management strategies is associated with more favorable impacts on learners' behavior. This finding implies that consistent implementation of routines, positive behavior management, classroom organization, and emotional and social support is closely associated with learners' attention, cooperation, rule-following, emotional regulation, and task persistence. Thus, strengthening classroom management practices may support more positive behavioral experiences among preschool learners.

Discussion

The findings revealed that teachers frequently implemented classroom management strategies, particularly in promoting positive behavior and discipline and fostering emotional and social support. Similarly, the reported impact on learners' behavior was frequently observed, with emotional regulation and task persistence receiving the highest rating. These findings indicate that teachers generally maintain classroom practices that support orderly routines, appropriate behavior, and positive interactions among preschool learners. However, organizing physical space and learning materials, as well as promoting learners' attention, engagement, and cooperation, received comparatively lower ratings. The results suggest the importance of continuously strengthening classroom organization and learner-centered management practices to maintain a supportive environment for young learners.

The findings further showed that teachers encountered a moderate level of challenges in implementing classroom management strategies, particularly time constraints, inadequate materials and resources, limited administrative support, and emotional fatigue. Despite these challenges, the analysis revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between classroom management strategies and their reported impact on learners' behavior ($r = .973$, $p < .001$). Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This finding indicates that greater

implementation of classroom management strategies was associated with more favorable reported learner behavior. Therefore, strengthening teachers' classroom management practices, while addressing resource, time, training, and support-related challenges, may help sustain positive behavioral outcomes among preschool learners.

Conclusion

The study concluded that multigrade pupils demonstrated high emotional boundaries, particularly in self-regulation, empathy, and respectful turn-taking. They also exhibited strong sense of belonging, role and status clarity, and peer relationship adjustment, indicating fewer manifestations of identity conflict. Furthermore, emotional boundaries and identity-related adjustment were significantly and positively related. Thus, pupils who demonstrated stronger emotional competencies also tended to experience better adjustment within the multigrade classroom. The findings underscore the importance of fostering emotional regulation, empathy, respectful interaction, belonging, role clarity, and positive peer relationships among multigrade learners.

References

- Aguiar, A. L., & Aguiar, C. (2020). Classroom composition and quality in early childhood education: A systematic review. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 115, 105086. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105086>
- Boison, B., & Burke, A. (2025). Navigating emotional and professional challenges in remote teaching: Examining teacher well-being, burnout, and socio-emotional learning through the job demands-resources model. *British Journal of Teacher Education and Pedagogy*, 4(2), 15–27.
- Cipriano, C., Strambler, M. J., Naples, L. H., Ha, C., Kirk, M., Wood, M., Sehgal, K., Zieher, A. K., Eveleigh, A., McCarthy, M., Funaro, M., Ponnock, A., Chow, J. C., & Durlak, J. (2023). The state of the evidence for social and emotional learning: A contemporary meta-analysis of universal school-based SEL interventions. *Child Development*, 94(5), 1181–1204. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13968>
- Coelho, V., Azevedo, H., Teixeira, A., Soares, M., & Grande, C. (2026). Associations between classroom quality, child self-regulation, and psychological adjustment in early childhood. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 1–12.
- Culley, C. (2023). *Early childhood educator qualification requirements and the achievement of national goals for early learning in Canada* [Doctoral dissertation, McGill University].
- Darling-Hammond, L., Flook, L., Cook-Harvey, C., Barron, B., & Osher, D. (2020). Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development. *Applied Developmental Science*, 24(2), 97–140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2018.1537791>
- De Neve, D., Bronstein, M. V., Leroy, A., Truyts, A., & Everaert, J. (2023). Emotion regulation in the classroom: A network approach to model relations among emotion regulation difficulties, engagement to learn, and relationships with peers and teachers. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 52(2), 273–286.
- Doll, B., Brehm, K., & Zucker, S. (2014). *Resilient classrooms: Creating healthy environments for learning*. Guilford Publications.
- Emmer, E. T., & Stough, L. M. (2003). Classroom management: A critical part of educational psychology, with implications for teacher education. In *Educational psychology* (pp. 103–112).

Routledge.

Gamoran, A., Secada, W. G., & Marrett, C. B. (2000). The organizational context of teaching and learning: Changing theoretical perspectives. In *Handbook of the sociology of education* (pp. 37–63). Springer.

Hirsch, S. E., et al. (2021). *Research concerning preservice teacher preparation and classroom management*.

Hosokawa, R., Matsumoto, Y., Nishida, C., Funato, K., & Mitani, A. (2024). Enhancing social-emotional skills in early childhood: Intervention study on the effectiveness of social and emotional learning. *BMC Psychology*, 12(1), 761.

Irshad, M. A., Amir, R. M., & Rafaqat, M. S. (2024). Towards inclusive classrooms: Identification of the role of teachers in creating an inclusive learning environment. *Journal of Asian Development Studies*, 13(3), 1323–1332.

Jiang, H., Justice, L. M., Lin, T. J., Purtell, K. M., & Sun, J. (2023). Peer experiences in the preschool classroom: Contribution to children's academic development. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 86, 101542.

Lane, K. L., Menzies, H. M., Bruhn, A. L., & Crnobori, M. (2025). *Managing challenging behaviors in schools: Research-based strategies that work*. Guilford Publications.

Li, S., Tang, Y., & Zheng, Y. (2023). How the home learning environment contributes to children's social-emotional competence: A moderated mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1065978.

McDaniel, H. L., Braun, S. S., Bottiani, J. H., De Lucia, D., Tolan, P. H., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2022). Examining developmental differences in teachers' observed classroom management strategies across elementary, middle, and high school. *School Psychology Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2372966X.2022.2100275>

Nwoko, J. C., Emeto, T. I., Malau-Aduli, A. E., & Malau-Aduli, B. S. (2023). A systematic review of the factors that influence teachers' occupational wellbeing. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(12), 6070.

Pellerone, M., Martinez Torvisco, J., Razza, S. G., Lo Piccolo, A., Guarnera, M., La Rosa, V. L., & Commodari, E. (2023). Relational competence, school adjustment and emotional skills: A cross-sectional study in a group of junior and high school students of the Sicilian hinterland. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(3), 2182.

Perry, N., Spektor-Levy, O., & Adi-Japha, E. (2026). Teachers', parents', and five-year-old children's perceptions of preschool classroom design and arrangement: What really matters to whom? *Frontiers in Education*, 11, 1772850.

Solang, D. J., Yunus, M., Rukmini, B. S., Kurnia, K., & Umam, K. (2024). The impact of early childhood education on long-term outcomes. *The Journal of Academic Science*, 1(4), 350–361.

Spilt, J. L., & Koomen, H. M. (2022). Three decades of research on individual teacher-child relationships: A chronological review of prominent attachment-based themes. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 920985.

What Works Clearinghouse. (2020). *Standards handbook, version 4.1*. Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks>

Wisniewski, B., Zierer, K., & Hattie, J. (2020). The power of feedback revisited: A meta-analysis of educational feedback research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 3087. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.03087>