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Study the Classroom Management Practices at Secondary Level: Class Teacher Perception

Muhammad Latif Javed[1], Muhammad Zaman Faridi[2], Aqsa Ismail[3], Abeera Latif[4]

[1] Assistant Professor, Department of Education, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar Campus, Pakistan
Email: latif.javed@iub.edu.pk
[2] PhD Scholar, Department of Education, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar Campus, Pakistan
Email: zamanfaridi@gmail.com
[3] M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Education, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar Campus, Pakistan
Email: ismailaqsa531@gmail.com
[4] Visiting Lecturer, Department of Applied Psychology, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar Campus, Pakistan
Email: abeeralatif18@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between students' self-discipline and classroom management at the secondary school level and to assess secondary school teachers' awareness regarding effective classroom management practices. This quantitative study utilized primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to secondary school teachers in District Bahawalnagar. The data were collected during the academic year 2023–2024, using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representativeness across various schools. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure responses, and the data were analysed through descriptive statistics, reliability testing, regression and correlation analysis. The findings indicate a significant positive relationship between students' self-discipline and effective classroom management. Moreover, the study reveals that while many teachers demonstrate an adequate awareness of classroom management strategies, gaps still exist in the implementation of best practices, particularly regarding the integration of educational technology. The research highlights the importance of fostering a supportive classroom environment, strong teacher-student interactions, and the use of modern instructional strategies. These results emphasize the need for targeted teacher training programs, policy revisions to incorporate digital tools in classroom settings, and the promotion of student-centered teaching approaches to enhance learning outcomes.

Corresponding Author's Email: latif.javed@iub.edu.pk

1. Introduction

Classrooms are designated spaces equipped with desks, chairs, learning materials, and audio-visual aids for teaching at elementary, secondary, or higher levels (Smith, 2020). To put it broadly, it is any spatial setting that allows interaction between an educator and a learner, be it physical or virtual (Burden, 2012). A classroom should in principle always deal with students, otherwise, effective classroom management will be lacking and the teaching-learning cycle will be disrupted (Jones & Jones, 1986). Management in any form is a

prerequisite for the success of an organization. In all educational institutions, it is the quality of the leadership as well as the synergy in planning that determines goal attainment (Robbins & Coulter, 2021; Qurrat-ul-Aain, 2023).

Classroom management is often seen as a form of discipline, but it actually refers to a broad range of skills designed to promote order, student engagement, and a positive learning environment (Wachs et al., 2019; Owusu et al., 2021). It also involves decisions about the teaching activities, the instructional pace, and how to stop interruptions (Marzano & Marzano, 2003) (Siraj et al., 2022). As a consequence, teachers have multiple roles which include being instructors, facilitators, learning managers, and organizers (Hoy & Miskel, 1991). Among these roles, teachers struggle the most with the active supervision of student learning (Adenıran, 2020).

Effective management practices include preparing lesson materials, allocating time, setting behavior expectations, handling the physical space of the classroom, and motivating students (Bozkuş, 2021). Five key elements are identified by (Burden, 2012): rules and norms, structural components, expectation of uniformity, student involvement, and behavior management. Foundational insights to this include some well-known models like Skinner's Behavioral Management, Canter's Assertive Discipline, and Jones's Positive Discipline (Wong & Wong, 2018). Other modern views, such as that of Nawastheen (2021), highlight discipline as a structure for managing the classroom as a system and a strategy for teaching.

The challenge of managing classrooms, particularly with increasing diverse learner needs and changing educational technologies, remains an area of struggle for many teachers. There is little research on self-discipline and its relationship with the effectiveness of classroom management in secondary schools. Further, the existing literature is sparse on the teachers' knowledge and application of modern day classroom management techniques. As such, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring the relationship of student self-discipline with classroom management alongside the perception and implementation of management strategies by teachers in actual classrooms. The outcome of the study is expected to inform instructional design and professional development, thereby increasing student participation and their academic achievement. The research contributes to the broad objectives of education to enhance the overall quality at secondary education levels (Aldrup et al., 2018; Boubekri et al., 2020). The objective of the study are to find out the relationship between students' self-discipline and classroom management at the secondary level and to assess the level of awareness of classroom management among secondary school teachers. The research questions are as follows;

- Can classroom management systems encourage self-discipline among secondary level students?
- How does self-discipline among secondary school students impact classroom management and educational outcomes?
- What are the common strategies used by secondary school teachers for classroom management?
- Does the climatic condition affect classroom management in schools?

This study is structured into five main sections. Following this introduction, the second section reviews relevant literature on classroom management and student behavior. The third section outlines the research methodology, including the sampling strategy and data collection tools. The fourth section presents data analysis, while the fifth discusses the results and discussions. The final section offers conclusions, and policy recommendations for practice and future research.

2. Literature Review

The evolution of classroom management has dramatically changed over time. Research started concentrating on issues of simple control and order, later merging with psychological and instructional components. Emmer (2014) offered one of the earliest documented views of the inter persistency problems of classroom management emphasizing their context centered need for professional growth even for veteran practitioners. Emmer and Evertson were clear in their enunciation that classroom management is an important,

teachable skill which forms part of basic pedagogy and which later research could build upon. This is corroborated by Jerome Freiberg, Oviatt, & Naveira (2020) who assessed the severity of behavioral problems of students as a source of teacher stress and relayed upon its measurement and teacher's emotional health. Burden (2012) expanded these ideas and showed that the classroom is a complex system with multiple relations of management and all directions of classroom teaching interrelated. This generated teaching's relevance to the everyday classroom, marking an increase in strategic anticipation and structuring. Instructional effectiveness emerged as another consequence during this time.

Durmaz, DïNçer, & DeniZ (2020) and Ingemarson et al. (2020) bridged classroom management to learning outcomes, taking the discussion away from discipline alone towards academic achievement. Their results were precise and timely, demonstrating that managed classrooms equate to enhanced cognitive, social, and emotional outcomes—vital areas which can be measured over time. Herman et al., (2022) added a meta-analytic viewpoint, summarizing classroom management interventions across several studies. Though effect sizes were small, they were all positive. This long-term, time-sensitive evaluation created a measurable goal for ongoing research and professional growth. In the same manner, Egeberg, McConney, & Price, (2021) and Zoromski et al. (2021) noted international trends toward classroom complexity based on student diversity, changing technology, and emerging norms. Their conclusions required institutional-level action, compelling the argument for school leadership to assume a more formal role in supporting teachers—an approach both timely and feasible in policy terms.

Ormiston et al. (2021) lent credibility to this idea by calling on administrators to equip teachers with modern classroom management skills. Yopianti (2022) took it a notch further by imagining classroom management as integrating behavioural expectations, physical organisation, and emotional climate. This model is SMART-compatible, especially in its measurability and suitability for student development. Ormiston et al. (2021) substantiated this concept by calling on administrators to give teachers cutting-edge classroom management skills. Yopianti (2022) went further by envisioning classroom management as a combination of behavioural expectations, physical organisation, and emotional climate. This whole-person model is SMART-aligned, particularly in measurability and applicability to student growth.

The focus on subcomponents emerged clearly in KucukakïN & Göloğlu DemïR (2021), who highlighted the impact of classroom layout on student engagement, and in (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015), who emphasized the role of psychological climate. These aspects are highly specific and observable in classroom settings. Tomlinson (2017) and Willingham (2021) then linked differentiated instruction and engaging lessons with classroom management, arguing that student-centered pedagogies help minimize behavioral disruptions—an achievable strategy when applied with proper training and planning.

The theme of student self-discipline began to receive focused attention through the psychological lens of Baumeister & Tierney, (2012), who argued that self-control underpins all forms of success. Brundrett & Lungka, (2019) later connected this directly to classroom management, showing that students with higher self-discipline need less external control. These measurable traits serve as key variables for both researchers and practitioners. Aldrup et al., (2018) noted the school-wide effects of discipline issues, finding that student behavior affects not just classroom order but the overall school climate. (Mansfield, Fowler, & Rainbolt, 2018) added that teacher training remains insufficient in addressing real-world behavioral issues, indicating a lack of practical, time-bound application of theoretical knowledge.

Ansori (2020) presented teachers as role models and facilitators of behavioral development, suggesting the use of proactive reinforcement. This aligns with the SMART criteria as a specific, relevant, and achievable objective within daily classroom routines. Slađana and Dušica (2021), along with Subiarto et al. (2021), underscored the foundational role of discipline in educational success, advocating for early habit-building as a time-bound preventive strategy. There have been recent investigations of motivational dimensions. Bolat (2023) compared the effectiveness of rewards, but Fuad, Suyanto, & Muhammad (2021) cautioned against an overabundance of extrinsic motivators and even that they might disrupt social harmony. Wong and Wong (2018) also warned that too much focus on rewards can neglect students' emotional and social needs. This movement toward emotional intelligence

and relational management is extremely pertinent and quantifiable through observation of behavior and feedback.

Gaias et al. (2019) offered empirical support for the relationship between student self-discipline and better classroom climate, showing that disciplined students minimize the frequency of corrective measures. (Malanchini et al., 2019) and (Li et al., 2022) validated that these students are more engaged, enhancing peer relationships as well as academic performance. These findings are quantifiable with attendance, participation, and achievement metrics—certain indicators of time-specific improvement.

Burden (2012), Reeve (2016), and Wong and Wong (2018) advocated for teacher-guided modeling of behavior. Hattie (2023) added that student autonomy, when structured appropriately, enhances responsibility and ownership. These constructs are relevant, specific, and measurable through instruments like engagement rubrics and self-assessment tools. Even with these developments, there are important critical gaps. Most of the current strategies are created in high-resource settings and might not work as well in overcrowded or under-resourced schools. There is a lack of longitudinal studies that investigate the long-term effect of student self-discipline programs across several academic years. Additionally, the consolidation of reward systems, self-discipline, and instructional strategies into a coherent classroom management model remains underdeveloped. There is also a scarcity of culturally situated research, especially in South Asian or African educational systems, where classroom expectation and behavioral norms vary dramatically from Western paradigms.

3. Research Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive quantitative research design, deemed appropriate for gathering data from a large group of respondents efficiently. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire, which minimized potential biases commonly associated with qualitative methods. The research aimed to examine the relationship between students' self-discipline and classroom management at the secondary school level. It also provided detailed information on population, sampling, data sources, variables, and the reliability and validity of the research tool. The target population for this study comprised secondary school teachers working in public secondary schools within District Bahawalnagar. This group was selected due to their direct involvement in classroom management and their firsthand experience in handling students' self-discipline.

For sampling, a gender-based stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation of male and female teachers across the district. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2012), a sample is a subset of the population chosen to represent the entire group. In this study, 10% of the population was selected as the sample size. This stratified approach provided balanced representation and enhanced the generalizability of the findings, particularly in the context of secondary education in Bahawalnagar. The primary data collection tool was a structured questionnaire, based on a five-point Likert scale, where respondents could choose answers ranging from *Strongly Agree (5)* to *Strongly Disagree (1)*. The questionnaire was developed after an extensive review of relevant literature, research objectives, and existing theoretical frameworks on classroom management and student behavior. It focused on key constructs such as teacher control strategies, student engagement, lesson structure, and classroom routines.

The tool was reviewed by experts in education and classroom management, who evaluated its content and relevance. Additionally, a pilot test was conducted with a small group of secondary school teachers to assess the clarity, usability, and applicability of the items. Based on the feedback received, revisions were made to improve the instrument. The content and construct validity of the research tool were established through expert evaluation. The experts assessed the tool to ensure the items were relevant to the research objectives and accurately captured the key constructs. Their recommendations were incorporated, refining the questionnaire to enhance its precision. Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's alpha (α), and data were collected from teachers across all tehsils in District Bahawalnagar. The overall Cronbach's alpha value was 0.91, indicating a high level of internal consistency and strong reliability of the instrument.

4. Data Analysis

The researcher adopted a descriptive research design and used the survey method as the primary tool for data collection. The population of the study is the Teachers at the Secondary Level. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed using different statistical techniques to draw from the obtained data. The central emphasis of the study revolves around assessing the efficacy of classroom management practices in optimizing educational processes. Statistical methods employed include descriptive analysis, one-way ANOVA test, Reliability testing, regression analysis, Correlation analysis, were used to analyze the data.

The set of choices were given as: (Strongly Disagree =SDA, Disagree=DA, Neutral = N, Agree =A, Strongly Agree=SA). The weightage of different choices was given as, SDA=1, DA=2, N=3, A=4, DA=5

4.1 Reliability Analysis of Questionnaire

The reliability statistics table reveals a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.913, indicating strong internal consistency among 23 questionnaire items. This underscores the robustness of the instrument used for data collection.

Table 1: Classroom Management and Self Discipline

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
It is important for teachers to model good self-discipline behaviors for their student.	71.2063	357.750	.567	.909
The Rewards Approach in School is Good for Self-Disciplined Behavior	71.3688	360.234	.698	.907
Students with a sense of ownership taught by teachers can improve their self-discipline.	71.3625	358.748	.636	.908
Self-discipline in secondary school students is important for maintaining a productive classroom environment.	71.1813	353.898	.223	.932
It is easier for teacher to manage class if students are self-disciplined.	71.3500	359.411	.609	.908
Teachers have a responsibility to help their students in developing self-discipline.	71.3500	358.682	.647	.907
Students with a sense of ownership taught by teachers can improve their learning.	71.4000	365.449	.501	.910
Teachers use strategies to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom.	71.7000	355.331	.625	.908
Teachers have strategy for dealing with disruptive behavior in the classroom.	71.2688	357.078	.622	.908
Teachers are flexible in their approach to classroom management to meet the needs of different students.	71.4938	361.836	.632	.908
Teacher’s behavior has an impact on the student's behavior.	71.2625	356.522	.659	.907
Weather conditions affect the concentration of students in the classroom	71.4938	360.616	.598	.908
When the weather is pleasant, students become more engaged in the learning process.	71.5375	356.942	.670	.907
Teachers find it difficult to manage the classroom when the weather is bad.	71.5125	364.063	.558	.909
Student attendance is affected by adverse weather conditions.	71.2250	362.163	.574	.909

Table 1 presents Item-Total Reliability Statistics for a questionnaire evaluating classroom management and self-discipline. It shows that most items have moderate to high corrected item-total correlations, ranging from 0.223 to 0.698, indicating good alignment with the overall scale. Cronbach’s Alpha values, if an item is deleted, remain high (0.907 to

0.932), suggesting strong internal consistency. The item with the lowest correlation ("Self-discipline in secondary school students is important for maintaining a productive classroom environment") slightly improves Cronbach's Alpha if deleted. Overall, the questionnaire demonstrates strong reliability, with minimal variation when items are excluded.

Table 2: Classroom Management, Self-Discipline and Environmental Factor

	Statement	M	SD
1	It is important for teachers to model good self-discipline behaviors for their student.	3.55	1.48
2	The Rewards Approach in School is Good for Self-Disciplined Behavior	3.38	1.14
3	Students with a sense of ownership taught by teachers can improve their self-discipline.	3.39	1.30
4	Self-discipline in secondary school students is important for maintaining a productive classroom environment.	3.57	3.25
5	It is easier for teacher to manage class if students are self-disciplined.	3.40	1.32
6	Teachers have a responsibility to help their students in developing self-discipline.	3.40	1.28
7	Students with a sense of ownership taught by teachers can improve their learning.	3.35	1.29`1
8	Teachers use strategies to create a positive atmosphere in the classroom.	3.05	1.45
9	Teachers have strategy for dealing with disruptive behavior in the classroom.	3.48	1.39
10	Teachers are flexible in their approach to classroom management to meet the needs of different students.	3.26	1.18
11	Teacher's behavior has an impact on the student's behavior.	3.49	1.34
12	Weather conditions affect the concentration of students in the classroom	3.26	1.30
13	When the weather is pleasant, students become more engaged in the learning process.	3.21	1.31
14	Teachers find it difficult to manage the classroom when the weather is bad.	3.24	1.23
15	Student attendance is affected by adverse weather conditions.	3.53	1.28

Table Description: M: Mean, SD: Standard Deviation

The table illustrates the mean and standard deviation for 15 statements on classroom management, self-discipline, and environmental factors. Most statements have mean values ranging from 3.21 to 3.57, indicating moderate agreement. Standard deviations vary from 1.14 to 3.25, suggesting some statements have more consistent responses, while others show greater variability in opinions. For example, "Self-discipline in secondary school students is important for maintaining a productive classroom environment" has a high standard deviation (3.25), indicating varied responses, while other statements show more general agreement with lower variability.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of SD, IEO, ST and CC

		SD	**IEO**	**ST**	**CC**
SD	Pearson Correlation	1			
IEO	Pearson Correlation	.595**	1		
ST	Pearson Correlation	.679**	.613**	1	
CC	Pearson Correlation	.645**	.540**	.722**	1

Table Description: SD: Standard Deviation, IEO: Intrinsic/Extrinsic Orientation, ST: Self-Control, CC: Cognitive Control

The table 3 depicts that significant positive Pearson correlations between four variables: Self-Discipline (SD), Intrinsic/Extrinsic Orientation (IEO), Self-Control (ST), and Cognitive Control (CC). Strong correlations were found between SD and ST (0.679), SD and CC (0.645), and between ST and CC (0.722), suggesting that self-discipline, self-control, and cognitive control are closely linked. A moderate correlation was observed between IEO and

ST (0.613), and IEO and CC (0.540), indicating that motivation orientation is positively related to both self-control and cognitive control. Overall, these variables are interrelated, highlighting the connection between self-discipline, self-control, and cognitive control.

Table 4: Coefficients Analysis of IEO, ST, CC

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.416	.240		1.735	.085
IEO	.228	.064	.252	3.588	.000
ST	.331	.088	.322	3.748	.000
CC	.320	.122	.264	2.633	.009

Table Description: IEO: Intrinsic/Extrinsic Orientation, ST: Self-Control, CC: Cognitive Control

The regression analysis table reveals that **IEO** (Intrinsic/Extrinsic Orientation), **ST** (Self-Control), and **CC** (Cognitive Control) are significant predictors of the dependent variable. **IEO** has an unstandardized coefficient of 0.228 and is highly significant ($p = 0.000$), with a standardized Beta of 0.252. **ST** has a coefficient of 0.331, a Beta of 0.322, and is also highly significant ($p = 0.000$). **CC** has a coefficient of 0.320, a Beta of 0.264, and is significant at $p = 0.009$. The **constant** has a coefficient of 0.416 but is not statistically significant ($p = 0.085$). Overall, IEO and ST have the strongest effects, followed by CC.

5. Results and Discussions

The researcher employed a descriptive research design, utilizing a survey method to collect data from secondary school teachers. After compiling responses from the target population, the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis and reliability testing to examine the effectiveness of classroom management practices and their relationship with students' self-discipline. The reliability of the research instrument was tested through Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a value of 0.913. This high score indicates strong internal consistency among the 23 items on the questionnaire. The item-total correlation values ranged from 0.223 to 0.698, suggesting that each item contributed meaningfully to the overall construct. Interestingly, removing the item "Self-discipline in secondary school students is important for maintaining a productive classroom environment" slightly increased the reliability score, but the overall robustness of the instrument remained strong regardless of item deletions.

Descriptive analysis of the responses showed moderate agreement among participants on most items, with mean scores generally falling between 3.21 and 3.57. For instance, the statement "It is important for teachers to model good self-discipline behaviors for their students" received a mean score of 3.55, reflecting general agreement. Similarly, statements related to reward-based discipline, sense of ownership among students, and the influence of weather on classroom management also received moderate levels of agreement. However, variability was noted in responses, as reflected in the standard deviation values, particularly for the item on the importance of self-discipline in maintaining classroom productivity, which had a relatively high standard deviation (3.25). This indicates that while most teachers agreed, others held different opinions, suggesting a diversity of classroom experiences.

The correlation analysis further supported the interconnectedness of key constructs. Strong positive relationships were found between self-discipline (SD) and self-control (ST) ($r = 0.679$), and between self-discipline and cognitive control (CC) ($r = 0.645$). A particularly strong correlation was observed between self-control and cognitive control ($r = 0.722$), signifying that teachers perceive these constructs as closely interlinked in their impact on classroom dynamics. Motivation orientation (IEO) also showed significant positive correlations with self-discipline, self-control, and cognitive control, reinforcing the view that intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors play a critical role in shaping students' behavior.

Regression analysis confirmed the predictive strength of these variables. Intrinsic/extrinsic orientation (IEO), self-control (ST), and cognitive control (CC) significantly predicted the dependent variable. IEO had a Beta value of 0.252 ($p < .001$), ST had a Beta of 0.322 ($p < .001$), and CC had a Beta of 0.264 ($p < .01$), establishing that self-discipline and its associated factors are significant predictors of classroom management effectiveness.

Among these, self-control emerged as the strongest predictor, highlighting the pivotal role of individual regulation in achieving classroom order. The regression model thus underscores that fostering students' self-control and cognitive regulation, along with motivation, contributes significantly to effective classroom management.

The findings confirm that classroom management and self-discipline are closely related, and that factors such as teacher strategies, student motivation, and environmental conditions (like weather) all contribute to classroom dynamics. The strong reliability and statistical significance of results support the conclusion that effective classroom management practices, when integrated with student-centered discipline approaches, have the potential to enhance educational outcomes at the secondary level.

6. Conclusions

This study concludes that students' self-discipline plays a significant role in promoting effective classroom management at the secondary school level. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between self-discipline, self-control, cognitive regulation, and motivation—factors that collectively shape classroom behavior and learning dynamics. Teachers reported moderate agreement with statements related to the importance of modeling disciplined behavior and using structured routines, indicating general awareness and application of foundational management practices. The regression analysis confirmed that self-control, cognitive control, and intrinsic/extrinsic motivation significantly predict classroom management effectiveness. Among these, self-control emerged as the strongest predictor, emphasizing the need to develop students' ability to regulate their own behavior. These insights suggest that fostering self-discipline through student-centered strategies can reduce the need for external enforcement, creating a more productive and engaged learning environment.

Furthermore, the study identified variability in teachers' perceptions, influenced by classroom experiences, teaching contexts, and environmental factors such as climate. This diversity underscores the need for professional development programs tailored to local contexts. Teacher training should integrate both traditional and modern management models, equipping educators with the tools to address evolving classroom challenges effectively. In summary, enhancing student self-discipline and strengthening teacher classroom management strategies can contribute significantly to improved academic performance, emotional well-being, and school climate. Policymakers and school administrators should prioritize training initiatives, provide ongoing support, and consider contextual factors to ensure sustainable improvements in classroom practices. Based on the study's results and conclusion, the following recommendations were made.

- Teachers should focus on building students' self-control and cognitive skills through structured routines and goal-setting.
- Schools should offer training to help teachers apply motivational strategies and flexible classroom management techniques.

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