

Effective Classroom Management: A Study In Three Public Junior High Schools

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Abstract: This classroom management study of nine teacher participants at three public junior high schools in Muaro Jambi Regency aimed to investigate participant teachers' implementation, efforts and hindering factors of effective classroom management. A qualitative case study approach was employed to gather the data of the study. Data were collected through interviews by using purposive sampling technique in selecting study participants. The findings showed that the effectiveness of classroom management was measured by the standards set by the teacher and student participation. Effective classroom management is achieved if two substantive elements of behavioral management and environmental management are carried out properly. The efforts made by the teachers included the use of verbal and non-verbal language, building personal relationships with students, developing relationships through social media, and changing class layouts. Furthermore, Physical environmental conditions, socio-emotional conditions, and misuse of multimedia technology were factors that inhibit the effectiveness of classroom management in this study.

Index Terms: behavioral management, classroom management, effective classroom

1. INTRODUCTION

The world of education as a media to cultivate the character of each young generation to improve the quality of human resources is very important. There are at least three main conditions that should be considered in the development of education in order to contribute in improving the quality of human resources (HR), such as building facilities, quality books, and providing professional teachers and educational personnel (Hilali, 2012). In this case, the teacher should be responsible and closest to the students in the school, the teacher becomes a pioneer in character building for the students. Professional teachers are not only tasked with conveying learning and knowing the development of each student. The teacher should also pay attention to the management of his class, hence the teaching and learning process taking place in his class is protected from disturbances that can give negative attitudes from students. Moreover, good classroom management is very important to encourage the achievement of positive educational outcomes. Numerous studies show the importance of school-focused class management by emphasizing the process of teaching and learning if it wants to succeed in improving school quality (Rutter et. al., 1979, cited in Poster, 2005; Reynolds et. al., cited In Midthassel, 2006). As the smallest formal unit in the educational system, classroom management is a substantial and core part of educational management. An orderly and organized class, the management of the learning process and social life in a dynamic and controlled classroom, the expectation of academic and social achievements is a signal of the effectiveness of a classroom management. Effective classroom management will be in turn cause a conducive learning atmosphere so as to support the development of an environment that makes teacher instruction effective and clear. An analysis of educational research conducted in the last fifty

years clearly revealed the ability of teachers to manage their classrooms to have the most dramatic effect compared to other factors. (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994, quoted in McLeod, 2003). Effective classroom management increases student involvement, decreases destructive behavior, and provides benefits for student learning time. (Sutherland & Wehby, 2001 as cited in Oliver & Reschly, 2007). Today discussions about classroom management are increasingly challenging topics especially about educational management. One reason is the class situation in the decade now very different from the previous decade. Students who come to school now have more diverse backgrounds, different levels and types of intelligence, and a variety of problems. As an example of a case in Indonesia based on data from the Ministry of Youth and Sports Information (Ministry of Youth and Sports) No. 72 of 2009 revealed in 2008 as a whole, the number of children and adolescents of criminal acts as many as 3,280 people, consisting of 2,797 men and women as many as 483 people, an increase of 4.3 percent compared to 2007 which amounted to 3,145 people. This number is suspected to have increased in the following years. The increasing tendency of students to be disrespectful becomes a challenge in class management considering that student behavior has an impact on reduced academic involvement. Students who are in a classroom with non-conducive learning environments will tend to have low achievement scores and low test scores (Oliver, Wehby, & Reschly, 2011).

Based on preliminary observations made on teachers in three Public Junior High Schools (in Indonesia, named as SMPN) in Muaro Jambi Regency, it was also revealed that the teachers felt the demands on them were very large compared to the support they received. This condition is strengthened by the opinion of some of them who state that; (1) compared to a few years ago, the teacher felt the demands of parents were greater, (2) the challenges of student behavior problems at school were more complex and varied, (3) teachers did not get enough supplies to managing student behavior problems; (4) current curriculum design is not always enough to motivate students to act well. In addition, the teacher has not fully implemented the class management component optimally and does not understand he class management theories, hence there is a gap between theory and reality in class. Seeing these initial findings, it can be inferred that the issue of classroom management actually becomes an educational issue that needs to be discussed today. The challenges to

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implementing effective classroom management not only come from the internal abilities of the teachers but also caused by the environment outside of themselves (external). In this context, this study would like to further examine how teachers are affected by internal and external aspects in the framework of effective classroom management by answering the following questions: (1) how effective classroom management is and how teachers carry it out in all three schools?, (2) what are the barriers faced in implementing classroom management to become more effective ?.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Essentials of Classroom Management

Historically, in class management, the teacher is considered as a director. Creating an effective learning environment involves organizing activities in the classroom, teaching and physical classrooms for effective time, and creating a happy and productive learning environment and minimizing distractions. Current thinking emphasizes classroom management as a whole by making each person who behaves badly increasingly rare (Evertson & Haris, 1993). Teachers who present interesting and well-organized lessons, use effective learning time, and adjust their teaching to the level of student preparation, and plan and manage their time effectively in overcoming disciplinary problems. Discipline refers to the methods used to prevent behavior problems from occurring or responding to behavioral problems with the intention of reducing their occurrence in the future (Slavin, 2009). Walters and Frei (2007) have distinguished between classroom management and class discipline because both are often used interchangeably while have different characteristics. Classroom management refers to things that are usually carried out in the classroom while class discipline is the management of specific student behavior. This perspective shows that classroom management is closely related to structured management with procedures related to classroom learning activities. Whereas, discipline is more on the management of students' self-control involved in learning activities. Therefore, classroom management and class discipline are two main concepts that can simultaneously be applied in an effective way from the teacher. Assuming classroom discipline has taken a lot of attention from the teacher so that the consideration is without classroom discipline, the effectiveness of learning will be difficult for the teacher.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study used the choice theory developed by Glasser (1998) who believe that students are motivated by four basic needs including power, freedom, fun, and belonging. In this case, if teachers can create an environment that satisfies these needs, this theory emphasizes that students will be able to exercise self-control, thereby eliminating the need for teacher-imposed discipline to manage the classroom. More specifically, there are two main dimensions of the choice theory; first, satisfaction of basic needs that fosters need satisfaction. Second, the teaching style of the teacher that proposes activities, stimulates students, and help the, privileged way to carry out the activity.

3 METHODS

This was a qualitative research with a case study approach

conducted on nine teachers from public junior high schools in Muaro Jambi Regency. Participants were selected by using a purposive sampling technique representing senior, middle and junior teachers determined by the principals. This study was conducted within 2 (two) months from the first week of July 2019 to the end of August 2019 and data were collected through interviews. Data were analyzed simultaneously along with data collection by following the steps proposed by Miles and Huberman (2008), the process of applying steps from specific to general with different levels of analysis (Creswell, 2010). Data collected is organized and sorted, decoded, and categorized (Habibi et al., 2019; Mukminin, Kamil, Muazza, & Haryanto, 2017; Syaifu et al., 2018). The patterns that emerge were studied and then displayed and drawn conclusions. Therefore, data validity was tested by member checking and triangulation. Researchers also increased perseverance by multiplying references to help finding patterns that existed.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative design with a case study tradition was used to describe and understand the effective classroom management in three public junior high school in Jambi school based on participants' perspectives of this study. Due to the nature of the study, personal knowledge and subjectivity of the teachers during their teaching practices in those three schools, a case qualitative case study approach was chosen to explore the effective classroom management in three public junior high schools. As Merriam's (1998) words, the case study tradition was an intensive and holistic description, explanation, and analysis of "a bounded system"(p. 27) on phenomenon such as a person, a program, an institution, a process, a social unit, a group, and a policy. More specifically, she further clarified that an exploratory case study was suitable when the focus of the investigation has not been examined exhaustively as is the case with the effective classroom management.

3.2 Research Site, Sampling Procedures and Participants

Three public junior high schools located in Muaro Jambi regency in Jambi Province were selected as the sites of the study. The rationale for choosing these sites was due to in one regency (Muaro Jambi regency) and the status of accreditation of each school was graded as A. Two principals and eight civil servant teachers were selected as the participants of the study. In this case, as a type under purposeful samplings, a convenience case strategy was used as the strategy to select the participants of the study; four females and six male teachers actively working in the current schools. As conveyed by Creswell (2007) and Mukminin et al. (2018), this strategy helps the researchers to easily access and collect the data from the interviewed participants because of their availability getting involved in the interview based on their high efficiency and timely volunteering in working hours and free time after teaching to be interviewed at the time of the study.

3.3 Data Collection Procedures

The first step to collect the data is to send the consent form to interviewed participants of the study. After sending the concern forms on the interviewer and the purpose of the interview, the time and place for an interview was decided with participating teachers. As few interviewees had their own office on campus, most interviews were conducted in the classroom, which offered privacy after students left. Others took place in quiet areas such as a staff room where teachers

preferred. Each semi-structured interview was approximately 30 minutes long depending on the number of questions and interviewees' availability. With permission, all interviews were audio taped and transcribed for coding, using a constant comparative analysis method (Creswell, 2007; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, Mukminin et al., 2018) to identify key themes, each of which was traced through the data to identify confirming or disconfirming segments and to avoid personal bias.

3.4 Data Analysis

In serving qualitative data, I transcribed the interview data individually and then analyzed them by using the constant comparative method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as cited in Mukminin (2013), and Mukminin, et al. (2018). All the transcripts among those participants were analyzed and compared to search similarities and differences. I read and reread the transcripts line-by-line in order to find regularities and emerging themes and sub-themes among the data. In other words, to visually displaying information regarding the data extracted, I used Miles and Huberman's (1994) strategy to analyze the data called within- and cross-case display analysis.

4 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Effective Classroom Management

Based on the findings in this study, effective classroom management is formulated as the teacher's ability to build a learning environment that is conducive to increasing student involvement and participation in learning and optimal learning outcomes automatically can be achieved. There are two supporting factors to realize effective classroom management, internal factors and external factors. Internally, effective classroom management can be carried out by teachers with the strategies presented as follows. T1 To build a positive nuanced classroom environment, my strategy as a teacher in managing student behavior is first by using effective verbal language such as humor, sentences of support are not just praise. Second, using non-verbal language is effective. The use of non-verbal technique was also noted in this study as one of the effective efforts made by the participant teacher in making the classroom atmosphere conducive. Non-verbal technique such as pausing to stop the explanation, eye contact, approaching or moving away are examples of actions taken by the participant teacher. Actions immediately stop the noise in the classroom and prevent the noise from becoming more widespread. Other non-verbal technique like typical gestures and applause is shown by the teacher to show enthusiasm for the class. This note underlined what was conveyed by Grubaugh (1989, p.39) that "All the non-verbal variables of language can be used as strategies to establish and reinforce the disciplinary message to the students". All non-verbal languages can be used as strategies to send disciplinary messages to students. One of them is by using silence effectively, a teacher can allow inferences to work with students. By using a silent strategy effectively, it can actually make teachers better understand what is expected by their students (Grubaugh, 1989). It was responded by teacher participants as follows, T4 In accordance with the implicit message delivered in teacher training, I implemented several important steps related to classroom management, such student-friendly teaching style and teacher-student sharing.

Student-friendly teaching style means that we as teachers provide the broadest opportunities for students to make various learning decisions individually and in class and provide space for students to provide input to the teacher when the teacher makes mistakes. Then what is meant by teacher-student sharing, means the teacher tells the background of life related to the topic of learning that is not just surface, but deep though. It remains within the limits of the teacher's comfort and in the context of providing motivation to students. On the other hand, the teacher also knows as much as possible about the background of student life. Both of these things will give positive feedback at the end. T6 Another thing that is not less important is the involvement of teachers and students in the class, for instance, connecting the subjects that are taught with various aspects of life both on the part of the teacher and students. This is supported by the making of class rules agreed upon together including the identification of problems such as the use of multimedia equipment in class and then making solutions as outlined in the regulations. In the context above, the findings of this study are in line with what is meant by Deming (2007,) that knowledge is a significant factor that guides a teacher to determine the choices of classroom management practices so that they are effective. Teacher's knowledge according to Demings (2007) is the result of how the teacher connects between experiences (what is done and obtained from class) with theories that are understood. This confirms that teaching experience alone is not enough to guide teachers to determine their classroom management practices. In addition, research conducted by Wright (2005) reveals the relevance between the implementation of classroom management with the teacher's professional, cognitive, practical and pedagogical knowledge. Therefore, from this point of view, the need to explore teachers' theoretical understanding of classroom management to understand their management practices becomes very important (Wright, 2005). T2 In addition, classroom strategies are also important things that teachers should pay attention to. The teacher should use a variety of classroom models such as U-shapes and restaurants. This is then related to the arrangement of the sitting room such as auditorium style, face to face, off-set, cluster, and so forth. T5 For me, the instructional strategy of the teacher in the form of using varied learning methods such as working-group and in pairs models, is equally important in classroom management, especially during the learning process. In the spatial aspect as well, this study also reports that the three schools located in Muaro Jambi regency with "traditional" classroom settings pose a greater challenge to the teachers (participants). The "traditional" classroom setting carried out singly by seven out of nine participants, is a barrier both in terms of teacher control and arousing student participation. In line with this study, Oliver and Recshly (2007) noted the importance of the relationship between teachers and students with teacher effectiveness. They emphasize that teachers who have high effectiveness are teachers who have the ability to implement appropriate strategies in behavior management in their classrooms. Class management includes management of overall class behavior, certain groups in the class and individually. In such a context, this study shows that close teacher-student relationships enhance the effectiveness of classroom management. Teachers feel more successful in mastering and directing the class when they become class leaders or they feel close to their students because the

teacher is a student advisor. On the other hand, in terms of external factors, at the level of school management, things that are found based on the results of interviews with teachers as research participants to support the implementation of effective classroom management is presented as follows, P1Related to classroom management, the existence of school rules also greatly helps teachers to anticipate barriers that occur in the classroom such as regulating how to use multimedia equipment (cellphones, laptops / internet) in learning. As authoritative figures, these participant teachers set the standards for the performance and behavior of their students. These participant teachers conveyed some rules and procedures in class that they wanted for their students as well as the minimum standard of academic achievement that had to be achieved as a condition for completing learning at the beginning of the learning process. Thus, the practice of reward and punishment also appears to be used as a way to build awareness of cause and effect relationships that lead students to perform and behave in accordance with established standards. The practice of punishment according to Dreikurs (1968, quoted in Malmgren, Trezek & Paul, 2005) will result in a "power struggle" that ignores the needs and desires of students for social recognition. Dreikurs (1968, cited in Malmgren, Trezek & Paul, 2005) emphasizes logical consequences rather than punishment, violations of the use of students' cellphones in the classroom, for example, do not have to be dealt with by the teacher who confiscates the student's cellphone before his classmates. This will only result in not achieving or even losing the sense of social recognition for the student concerned and then making him commit new offenses to seek social recognition at another opportunity.

4.2 Barriers in Classroom Management

Based on the results of interviews in this study, in general the classroom management conducted by teachers in three public Junior High Schools (SMPN) in Muaro Jambi Regency is already good. In the learning process, the teacher has carried out his duties starting to create an appropriate learning climate to manage the interaction of teaching and learning activities well. Although there are several obstacles faced by teachers in classroom management, classroom management is intended to create a conducive learning environment for students so that teaching objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. When the class is interrupted, the teacher tries to restore, then it does not become a barrier to the learning process. In this study, there were three main themes related to teacher barriers in classroom management, the physical environment, socio-emotional conditions, and organizational conditions. From these three main themes, sub themes are found regarding the obstacles felt by the teachers in class management. The results of the study carried out in three public high schools in Muaro Jambi regency were presented as follows.

4.2.1 Physical environmental conditions

The physical environmental conditions in the three public junior high schools in Muaro Jambi Regency vary, for example there are classes that have fans (buy using cash), while some do not. There are seats that are lacking, some are perforated floors. There is a good classroom arrangement and some are not, there are classes near the rest-rooms, there are classes on the second floor and it is very hot during the day. This is clearly illustrated by the participants below, T2Regarding the

obstacles in classroom management, the number of students was also considered in this case, it was found that the number of students in several classes of seventh and eighth grades exceeded the required standard. This made the classroom seem to be cramped with a very dense number of students. T6The number of students in grades of seventh and eighth ranges from 35-40 students. The number is quite large for the size of a class where the number of students in the class does not comply with the standard. Referring to the Minister of National Education, Regulation number 24 in 2007 concerning school facilities and infrastructure standards states that classrooms have a maximum capacity of 32 students. Furthermore, with regard to class size, the findings of this study reinforce Difeng Li's study of English teachers conducted in South Korea (Wright, 2005) which conclude that the large number of students per class (class size) is a major obstacle to the implementation of contextual learning that requires supervision continuous (closed monitoring). T5Very traditional classroom layout where students only listen to the teacher explain the lesson in front of the class is also another obstacle related to classroom management. Of course this limits the space for the teacher to oversee student activities. T9Sometimes, we are used to the general classroom setting conditions, the teacher stands in front of the class, then the students listen. It is very difficult to change this habit, we are well aware that the teacher should be creative in designing classroom layout, because we are used to it, we gradually forget to design a different layout. It can be inferred that the physical environment of the classes in the three public junior high schools in Muaro Jambi Regency was a barrier for teachers. This finding was also in line with the results of Difeng Li's research (Wright, 2005). The findings of this study were the statements of the teachers who said that there were two main barriers in the implementation of student-centered learning which he called "contextual learning". First, the resistance of students to participate in class activities. They are already familiar with the setting models and patterns of "traditional" class activities where students do not move much. Student activities take notes when the teacher explains and only speak when asked. Second, with regard to class size, teachers find it difficult to monitor students as part of the teaching methodology. Li's study thus, records evidence of the relationship between physical classroom management that is lay out and the number of students with pedagogical issues and calls this an obstacle (Wright, 2005).

4.2.2 Socio-Emotional Conditions

Based on the results of research analyzing socio-emotional conditions in classroom management, teachers are of the opinion that if it relates to student characteristics, the handling varies. This is consistent with the responses of the teachers below. T3Here the obstacle is that there are students who can be said to be generally lazy, diligent, stubborn, and others. For this reason the group model is perfect for combining them by combining diligent students and lazy students in one group. T6Class differences are also prominent here, for example classes whose students are dominantly smart with classes that are the opposite. It was found that students who were predominantly smart were even more easily controlled, then their interest in learning was also good. T8In socio-emotional terms, different student characters can also be obstacles in class management. Active students and students who are less active can be combined in one group if there is a discussion

about the learning theme on that day. T9Ensuring students work in groups and building an "in group" spirit. In such conditions the teacher's role as an 'instructor' is diminished and plays a more facilitating role. The response from the teachers above was also stated by Cohen (1994, quoted in Lotan, 2006). By deriving its argument from organizational sociology, Cohen (1994) claims that when a teacher chooses to use a group model to enhance peer-to-peer interactions, delegating authority to students is a must. And when this delegation of authority is carried out, it means that the teacher also shares his powers and responsibilities, gives students the opportunity to determine the intellectual content of their work and gives reinforcement to students by evaluating the results of their group work (Lotan, 2006). In addition, this study found the fact that participant teachers faced difficulties in achieving effective classroom management. Teacher participants who have 8 (eight) hours per week with a number of parallel classes of 3 (three) classes and 24 (twenty four) students per class tend to show more involvement and more effective in class management. As stated by one of the teachers below, T5Another thing that must be considered in class management is the optimization of the workload of teachers in terms of the number of students in the class that is in accordance with existing standards, which is a maximum of 24 students per class, and the number of parallel classes being taught and the time / number of teaching hours in a week. T8It was stated that, the average time taken by the participating teachers to teach was 24 hours / week, with an average number of parallel classes of 7 (seven) and the average number of students per class of more than 30 (thirty). With the average time, the number of parallel classes and the number of students per class, this study found the fact that participants' teachers faced difficulties in achieving effective classroom management. The above findings are parallel with one of the findings in a research report on teacher working hours written by the Alberta Teachers Association update. These findings reveal that on the one hand there is a need for students for increasingly diverse learning patterns, on the other hand the burden of teacher work hours is a factor in the teacher's difficulty in committing to effective classroom management. In this report it is stated that the correlation between teacher workload and the difficulty in achieving effective classroom management is a "universal problem" experienced by teachers (Alberta Teachers Association Update, 2012).

4.2.3 Misuse of multimedia technology

In another aspect of behavior, this study revealed that participant teachers faced a dilemma in the use of multimedia technology that influenced student behavior. On the one hand, the teachers feel very helped by the development of this technology, and use it in the learning process both in the classroom and in establishing closeness with students outside the classroom. But on the other hand the problems that arise in the class that are considered disturbing are also the indiscipline use of multimedia by students such as the use of cellphones clandestinely or searching the internet via laptop for things that are not related at all to the learning process (facebook, youtube, etc). and the teacher has difficulty in controlling the behavior. Thus, technological developments in schools have produced problems in terms of classroom management and discipline (Erdogan et al., 2010). This is consistent with what was conveyed by the teachers that the

misuse of multimedia technology is one of the obstacles in classroom management. T1Sometimes students ignore our reprimands regarding the use of mobile phones in the classroom. Students secretly still carry cellphones to school. Though the rules are clear that students are prohibited from bringing mobile phones to school. T3We do not allow students to bring mobile phones to school. Despite being reprimanded and confiscated many times from their mobile phones, they still carry their mobile phones secretly. T6This school allows students to bring laptops if there is an instruction or assignment that does have to use laptops as a learning support tool. However, sometimes teachers cannot fully supervise what they access. Of course it is one of the obstacles in class management despite strong rules about it. This study is in line with the results of Irving's (2003, cited in Erdogan et al., 2010) research that the misuse of technological media, ineffective management of time in the use of multi-media equipment, the use of mobile phones in class and sound / video recordings that affect personal life are some examples of cases that emerged as a result of the entry of new technology into schools. Therefore good classroom management efforts are essential to create an effective learning environment and prevent behavioral deviations and indiscipline (Brophy, 1983; Emmer, Evertson, & Worsham, 2000; Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, & Clements, 1983; Erdogan et al. , 2010). T5Another thing that must be considered in class management is the optimization of the workload of teachers in terms of the number of students in the class that is in accordance with existing standards, which is a maximum of 24 students per class, and the number of parallel classes being taught and the time / number of teaching hours in a week. T3It was stated that, the average time taken by the participating teachers to teach was 24 hours / week, with an average number of parallel classes of 7 (seven) and the average number of students per class of more than 30 (thirty). With the average time, the number of parallel classes and the number of students per class, this study found the fact that participants' teachers faced difficulties in achieving effective classroom management.

5 CONCLUSIONS

This study raises issues around classroom management namely, first, how effective classroom management is and how it is implemented in the three State Junior High Schools (SMPN) in Muaro Jambi Regency. Second, how the efforts of teachers in implementing effective classroom management. Third, what are the obstacles of these teachers in implementing effective classroom management. First, effective classroom management is the teacher's ability to build a learning environment that is conducive to increasing student involvement and participation so that optimal learning outcomes can be achieved. Effective classroom management can be achieved when three substantive elements namely behavioral management and environmental management are carried out properly. Behavioral management concerns how the teacher builds relationships with students so as to grow their intrinsic side to behave well, prevent destructive actions and arouse their participation. Whereas environmental management includes spatial planning (class), time (allocation of teaching hours) and number of students in the class. Second, some effective efforts made by teachers to create effective classroom management are the use of non-verbal language, building personal relationships with students,

developing relationships through social media and changing class layouts. Third, the condition of the physical environment, socio-emotional conditions, teacher work, and misuse of multimedia technology are factors that inhibit the effectiveness of classroom management. On the other hand, the use of multimedia technology also supports the effectiveness of classroom management in terms of the teacher and student relationship. Teachers face a dilemma in dealing with this.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future research on classroom management needs to be done to find effective ways to create a supportive learning environment in schools to deal with changing times and in accordance with the demands of technological development. Effective classroom management research that is appropriate to Indonesia's social and cultural context needs to be developed. Determination of participants with the snowball sampling method is very necessary to consider in order to deepen and sharpen the results of research in studies about class management similar to this research. A training forum for related educational institutions is needed that is not just focused on instructional course but also behavior management and environmental management that is relevant to current conditions and trends in the development of student behavior as a result of technological developments.

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