

Why Similar Classroom Management Produces Different Student Engagement Outcomes in Islamic Schools?

Imelda Dwi Lestari*, Sadam Fajar Shodiq

Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta, Jl. Brawijaya, Geblagan, Tamantirto, Kasihan, Bantul, Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta 55183, Indonesia

*Correspondence: ✉ imelda.dwi.fai23@mail.umy.ac.id

Abstract

Background: Classroom management is widely recognised as a key factor influencing teaching effectiveness and student engagement. However, limited research has examined why similar classroom management strategies can yield different levels of student engagement within the same educational context.

Purpose: This study aims to investigate the implementation of classroom management practices and explore the factors contributing to variations in student engagement in Indonesian Islamic secondary schools.

Method: Using a qualitative case study design, data were collected through non-participant classroom observations conducted in four classes (IX B, VII F, VII E, and VII D) at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta. Observations focused on classroom organisation, behaviour management, teacher-student interactions, and student participation in learning activities. Data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and differences across the classrooms.

Findings: The findings revealed that teachers applied relatively similar classroom management strategies in all observed classes, including structured classroom organisation, time management, instructional routines, and behaviour regulation. Despite these similarities, substantial differences emerged in the levels of student engagement. Class VII E demonstrated the highest level of engagement, characterised by active participation, positive behavioural responses, and frequent interaction with the teacher, whereas Class IX B and VII D showed lower levels of engagement, characterised by passive participation, indifference, and limited responsiveness. These findings further demonstrate that teacher-student interactions and student behavioural responses play a crucial role in shaping engagement outcomes and help explain why similar classroom management practices result in differing levels of engagement.

Keyword: Classroom management; student engagement; teacher-student interaction; student behaviour; Islamic secondary education.

INTRODUCTION

Classroom management has long been acknowledged as a pivotal role in influencing the efficacy of the teaching and learning process. Effective classroom management involves several tactics aimed at establishing an organised, supportive, and productive learning environment that promotes academic success and positive student behaviour (Putra & Yanto, 2025a; Wilkins, Verlenden, Szucs, & Johns, 2024). Modern viewpoints highlight that classroom management extends beyond only ensuring discipline and order. It entails establishing learning environments that promote engagement, cultivate constructive relationships, and enhance students'



intellectual, social, and emotional growth (Mayer, 2025; Zhao, Hoque, & Omar, 2025). With the growing emphasis on student-centred learning in education systems, classroom management has emerged as an essential element of effective teaching, as it influences the environment conducive to meaningful learning experiences.

Student engagement is considered a crucial predictor of educational achievement, as it signifies the degree to which students actively participate in and are dedicated to learning activities. Prior research has repeatedly indicated that engaged students are more prone to attain superior academic achievement, exhibit heightened motivation, and cultivate favourable attitudes towards learning (Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021). Thus, fostering engagement has emerged as a primary objective of educational practice and research. Current evidence demonstrates that classroom management plays a crucial role in enhancing student engagement by governing classroom conduct, fostering a supportive learning atmosphere, and facilitating chances for active participation (Putra & Yanto, 2025a; Wilkins et al., 2024). Nonetheless, participation is a multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be elucidated only through pedagogical or administrative strategies.

Contemporary scholarship defines student engagement as a multifaceted term that includes behavioural, emotional, and cognitive characteristics. Behavioural engagement pertains to students' involvement in classroom activities; emotional engagement signifies a sense of belonging and enthusiasm in learning; whilst cognitive engagement concerns the effort students dedicate to comprehending and mastering academic material (Thornberg, Forsberg, Chiriac, & Bjereld, 2022). These characteristics interactively and collectively affect students' learning experiences. Students with elevated engagement levels typically engage actively, persist through difficult activities, and foster favourable relationships with educators and classmates. Consequently, comprehending the determinants of engagement is essential for enhancing educational quality and fostering significant learning outcomes.

The physical and social attributes of the classroom, alongside teaching approaches, substantially influence student engagement. Studies indicate that the classroom environment, encompassing seating configurations, aesthetic elements, and educational resources, affects students' focus, comfort, and engagement in learning activities (Fang, Luo, & Lu, 2023; N. A. N. Gao, 2022; Rance, Dowell, & Tomlin, 2023). An ordered learning environment enhances communication and minimises distractions, while a disorganised setting obstructs interaction and restricts engagement chances. Nonetheless, prior studies suggest that the classroom environment alone cannot ensure optimal learning results, as engagement is influenced by the interplay of environmental, pedagogical, and interpersonal elements

(Hao & Florez-Perez, 2021; Owoseni, Ibem, & Opoko, 2020). Thus, classroom management should be recognised as a multifaceted process that encompasses organisational, instructional, and relational elements.

A crucial element associated with participation is the regulation of student behaviour. Effective classroom management necessitates that educators confront disruptive behaviour while preserving a positive and supportive learning environment. Studies demonstrate that proactive strategies, including positive reinforcement, explicit expectations, and constructive feedback, are superior in fostering engagement compared to punitive disciplinary actions (Beahm, Yan, & Cook, 2021; Zoder-Martell, Floress, Skriba, & Taber, 2023). Moreover, student-centered approaches to behavioural difficulties can enhance classroom connections and promote active engagement in learning activities (Hasanah, Arafat, Barni, Raya, & Aprilianto, 2024; Karasova & Nehyba, 2023). These findings indicate that student behavioural responses are not solely a consequence of classroom management but can also affect the efficacy of management tactics in various classroom circumstances.

Recent scholarship increasingly emphasises the significance of teacher-student connections in influencing student engagement. Positive teacher-student relationships, defined by trust, emotional support, responsiveness, and effective communication, are consistently linked to enhanced student engagement and motivation (Akram & Li, 2024; Song et al., 2023). Students who view their teachers as accessible and supportive are more inclined to participate actively in classroom activities and exhibit a greater dedication to learning (Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021; Hagenauer, Muehlbacher, & Ivanova, 2023). Teacher accessibility, interpersonal ties, and emotional support were identified as key factors influencing students' willingness to engage and interact during lessons (Juma, 2022; Zhang, 2025).

Ideally, effective classroom management is expected to create a learning environment that promotes active participation, positive behaviour, and meaningful student engagement. Previous studies have consistently shown that well-managed classrooms and supportive teacher-student relationships contribute to students' motivation, academic achievement, and active involvement in learning activities (Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021; Putra & Yanto, 2025b; Wilkins et al., 2024). However, empirical observations in educational settings suggest that similar classroom management practices do not always result in comparable levels of student engagement. Students may respond differently to the same management strategies, leading to variations in participation, responsiveness, and involvement in classroom learning activities (Akram & Li, 2024; Thornberg, Forsberg, Hammar Chiriak, & Bjereld,

2022). This discrepancy between the expected outcomes of classroom management and the reality observed in classrooms highlights the need to examine factors beyond procedural management practices that may influence student engagement. These findings indicate that engagement is not solely a result of classroom management practices but is also influenced by the quality of interpersonal interactions within the classroom. This viewpoint corresponds with the research of Shodiq (Shodiq & Syamsudin, 2019), indicating that teachers' professional identity is developed through continuous social interactions with students and the educational setting. The quality of relationships established by teachers not only affects the efficacy of learning but also dictates students' responses to activities and academic expectations within the classroom.

Previous studies have extensively examined the relationship between classroom management and student engagement. Research has demonstrated that effective classroom management contributes positively to students' academic achievement, motivation, and participation in learning activities (Putra & Yanto, 2025b; Wilkins et al., 2024). Other studies have focused on the influence of classroom environments and behavioural management strategies on students' learning experiences and engagement (Beahm et al., 2021; Fang et al., 2023; Zoder-Martell et al., 2023). In addition, a growing body of research has highlighted the importance of teacher–student relationships, showing that supportive interactions, trust, and emotional support can enhance students' willingness to participate and engage in classroom learning (Akram & Li, 2024; Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021; Hagenauer et al., 2023)

However, most previous studies have examined these factors separately or have focused on identifying effective classroom management strategies and their direct relationship with student engagement. Limited attention has been given to understanding why similar classroom management practices may produce different engagement outcomes across classrooms, particularly when the same teacher applies comparable instructional and management approaches. Furthermore, research exploring this issue within the context of Islamic secondary education remains scarce.

This limitation is important because students do not respond uniformly to classroom management practices. Variations in classroom interaction patterns, teacher–student relationships, and students' behavioural responses may influence how management strategies are experienced and interpreted by learners. Therefore, investigating why similar classroom management practices yield different student engagement outcomes is necessary to provide a deeper understanding of the relational and contextual factors that shape engagement in classroom settings.

A significant portion of the current work concentrates on identifying successful management strategies or exploring direct correlations between classroom management and student involvement. Fewer research have examined how contextual and relational elements affect students' reactions to comparable management techniques. Thus, there is less empirical information concerning the mechanisms through which analogous classroom management practices provide varying engagement outcomes across different classes, especially when the same educator employs identical instructional and administrative techniques.

The correlation between classroom management and student engagement is gaining significance as educational systems strive to enhance learning quality and student outcomes. Although classroom management is typically perceived as a teacher-directed activity, modern educational theory indicates that its efficacy is significantly influenced by students' interpretations and reactions to management strategies. Students do not passively accept classroom norms and teaching methods; instead, they actively shape their learning experiences through interactions with educators, classmates, and the classroom setting. As a result, the same classroom management tactics may be interpreted differently by students across various classrooms, resulting in discrepancies in involvement, motivation, and engagement. This viewpoint contests the belief that proficient classroom management inherently produces favourable learning results and emphasises the necessity to investigate the contextual elements that affect students' reactions to classroom methodologies.

Moreover, current educational research has shown that engagement is influenced by a complex interaction of instructional, behavioural, social, and emotional elements. The willingness of students to engage in learning activities is affected by classroom organization, teachers' expectations, their sense of belonging, perceptions of teacher support, and opportunities for meaningful engagement. The teacher-student relationship is a vital mechanism connecting classroom management approaches to engagement outcomes. When students view teachers as helpful, polite, and responsive, they are more inclined to cultivate good attitudes towards learning and engage actively in classroom activities. In contrast, insufficient engagement and feeble interpersonal relationships may diminish students' motivation to participate, even when educators utilise comparable classroom management techniques. These data indicate that comprehending variations in involvement necessitates transcending the procedural elements of classroom management and scrutinising the relational dynamics present within the classroom environment.

This disparity is more pronounced in Islamic educational environments, where instructional methods are influenced by both pedagogical factors and religious as well

as moral principles. Islamic schools prioritise the cultivation of academic proficiency in conjunction with character development, accountability, respect, and constructive social interactions. Shodiq (2019), endorses this perspective, asserting that student management in modern Islamic education serves not merely as a behavioural control mechanism but also as a tool for character development, social responsibility, and fostering beneficial educational relationships. Therefore, the efficacy of classroom management in Islamic schools must be comprehended more comprehensively, including intellectual, moral, and relational aspects concurrently. Thus, classroom management in Islamic education may encompass distinct relational and cultural aspects that affect student participation. Nevertheless, a limited number of research have examined these concerns in Indonesian Islamic secondary schools. Despite the growing body of research on classroom management, student engagement, and teacher–student relationships, limited studies have investigated why similar classroom management practices may result in different engagement outcomes across classrooms, particularly when implemented by the same teacher within the same institutional context. Moreover, evidence from Indonesian Islamic secondary schools remains limited.

The novelty of this study lies in its examination of engagement variations across multiple classrooms taught by the same teacher within a single Islamic secondary school. By focusing on relatively similar classroom management practices implemented in the same educational setting, this study can minimise differences related to teacher characteristics, curriculum, and school environment. This approach provides a unique perspective for identifying the factors that explain variations in student engagement. Furthermore, this study highlights teacher–student interaction and students’ behavioural responses as important explanatory mechanisms linking classroom management practices to engagement outcomes.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the reasons for the varying degrees of student engagement resulting from similar classroom management practices in Indonesian Islamic secondary schools. Specifically, it examines the classroom management strategies employed by a single teacher across multiple classrooms, explores differences in student engagement, and analyses the role of teacher–student interactions and students’ behavioural responses in explaining these variations.

METHODS

This research utilises a qualitative multiple-case study methodology to examine the reasons behind varying levels of student involvement resulting from identical classroom management practices within the same educational environment. A

qualitative approach is appropriate for exploring complex social and educational phenomena within their natural settings and for developing an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and interactions (Naeem, Ozuem, Howell, & Ranfagni, 2023). The multiple-case study design enables researchers to compare similarities and differences across several cases while maintaining the contextual characteristics of the phenomenon under investigation. This study emphasises the exploration of the implementation of classroom management strategies and the corresponding student responses across several classes, rather than testing causal relationships through statistical procedures.

This research was carried out at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Yogyakarta, an Islamic-oriented junior secondary institution in Indonesia. This school was chosen due to its pertinent background for analysing classroom management techniques in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) sessions, characterised by reasonably consistent institutional conditions, curriculum, and learning environment. The research participants comprised four classes: IX B, VII F, VII E, and VII D. The classes were selected using purposive sampling because they were taught by the same Islamic Religious Education teacher and followed similar learning objectives. This sampling strategy allowed the researcher to examine variations in student engagement under relatively similar classroom management conditions.

Data were gathered through non-participant classroom observations conducted from April to May 2025. Observation is widely recognised in qualitative research as an effective method for capturing naturally occurring behaviours, interactions, and social processes within authentic contexts (Naeem et al., 2023). During these observations, the researcher monitored learning activities without direct involvement in the teaching and learning process to minimise disruption and preserve the authenticity of classroom interactions.

The observations focused on classroom management practices, including classroom organisation, time allocation, student behaviour management, teacher–student interactions, responses to disruptions, and student engagement in learning activities. Throughout the observation process, detailed field notes were recorded to document teacher actions, student responses, classroom conditions, and significant events occurring during the learning process.

The data were analysed using thematic analysis. The analytical process followed contemporary thematic analysis procedures involving data familiarisation, coding, theme development, theme review, and interpretation of findings (Braun & Clarke, 2023; Naeem et al., 2023). Observation notes were repeatedly reviewed to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the data. Subsequently, the data were coded

according to emerging patterns related to classroom management practices, teacher–student interactions, student behavioural responses, and student engagement.

The resulting codes were grouped into broader categories and developed into themes representing similarities and differences across the observed classrooms. In addition, cross-case analysis was conducted to compare the implementation of classroom management practices and engagement patterns across the four classes.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, observations were conducted across multiple learning sessions to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of classroom dynamics. Furthermore, observational data from the four classes were systematically compared to identify recurring patterns and ensure consistency in interpretation. Detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, and procedures were also provided to strengthen transparency and enable readers to assess the transferability of the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2023).

This study was conducted in accordance with ethical research principles. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the school and the participating teacher. All collected data were used solely for academic purposes. Participant anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout the study, and the observation process was carried out without disrupting regular classroom activities.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The analysis of classroom observations yielded several significant findings concerning the implementation of classroom management and student participation across the observed classes. Despite the utilisation of comparable classroom management strategies by the teacher, variations were observed in student engagement levels, behavioural responses, and interaction patterns during the learning process. Student engagement levels were classified based on recurring behavioural indicators observed during classroom activities, with high engagement characterised by active participation, frequent responses to teacher questions, sustained attention, and collaborative interaction; moderate engagement characterised by occasional participation and inconsistent responsiveness; low engagement characterised by limited participation, passive responses, and minimal interaction; and very low engagement characterised by persistent disengagement, frequent off-task behaviour, and limited responsiveness to classroom activities. The findings were generated through thematic analysis of observation notes, in which initial coding identified recurring patterns related to classroom management practices, teacher–student interactions, student behavioural responses, participation, and

classroom engagement. These codes were subsequently grouped into broader categories and compared across the four classes through cross-case analysis, resulting in three overarching themes: (1) consistency in classroom management practices, (2) quality of teacher–student interaction, and (3) students’ behavioural responses.

Table 1. Classroom Management and Student Engagement

Classroom Management Practices	Teacher–Student Interaction	Student Behavioural Response	Level of Student Engagement
Structured seating arrangements, clear lesson organisation, and effective time management	Predominantly teacher-centred communication with limited student participation	Passive behaviour, side conversations, and low levels of participation	Low
Well-organised classroom structure, positive reinforcement, and regular monitoring	Moderate interaction characterised by occasional questioning and feedback	Some off-task behaviour observed, but generally manageable	Moderate
Structured classroom management supported by active questioning and continuous feedback	Frequent and positive teacher–student interaction	High levels of participation and collaborative behaviour	High
Similar classroom management procedures and organisational structure	Limited interaction despite the teacher’s efforts to encourage participation	Frequent distractions, passive responses, and low levels of discipline	Very Low

The results demonstrate that classroom management strategies were largely uniform across the four classrooms. Educators utilised analogous methodologies concerning classroom organization, instructional framework, behaviour regulation, and time distribution. Nonetheless, student involvement levels fluctuated significantly. Class VII E exhibited the maximum degree of involvement, whilst Class VII D displayed the lowest levels of participation and reactivity. The findings indicate that elements beyond classroom management protocols may affect student participation during learning activities.

Similar Classroom Management Practices Across All Classrooms

Classroom observations indicated that educators uniformly implemented various classroom management tactics in all observed sessions. The tactics encompassed organised seating configurations, explicit lesson structuring, effective time management, verbal behaviour regulation, and the utilisation of instructional tools like whiteboards and projectors. Lessons generally adhered to a consistent sequence, including class preparation, presentation of learning objectives, content delivery, provision for student enquiries, and lesson conclusion. Educators exhibited consistency in upholding classroom discipline using verbal prompts, proximity management, and affirmative interactions with students. In instances of classroom disruptions, educators typically addressed the issue with vocal admonitions, direct intervention, or smart seating rearrangements. These techniques were evident in all four classes, suggesting that teachers utilised comparable classroom management strategies irrespective of the year group.

Variations in Student Engagement

Notwithstanding similarities in classroom management techniques, significant disparities were noted in student participation levels. Students in Class VII E demonstrated the highest level of engagement. They participated actively in classroom discussions, responded to the teacher's questions, interacted with peers, and maintained attention during most learning activities. During several observation sessions, students voluntarily answered questions without being directly appointed by the teacher, initiated classroom discussions, and frequently sought clarification regarding the learning material. Most students remained attentive throughout the lesson and actively collaborated with their peers during classroom activities.

Students demonstrated engagement with the class material and regularly communicated with the instructor during instructional periods. Conversely, students in Class IX B exhibited comparatively diminished levels of engagement. Despite the well-organised classroom processes, numerous students exhibited passivity throughout sessions. Several students engaged in side conversations, exhibited limited responses to the teacher's questions, and displayed a lack of initiative in participating in class discussions. Observation notes showed that students frequently remained silent after questioning sessions and often required repeated prompts before responding. In several instances, only a small number of students participated in classroom discussions while the majority remained passive. A comparable trend was noted in Class VII D, where students often exhibited off-task conduct, such as conversing with peers, disregarding the teacher's directives, and demonstrating minimal engagement in learning tasks.

Class VII F had a moderate degree of engagement. While some pupils engaged enthusiastically and answered the teacher's enquiries, others remained inactive and necessitated constant motivation. The participation level in this class exceeded that of Class IX B and VII D, although fell short of that in Class VII E. An in-depth analysis of each class uncovered unique patterns of interaction. Pupils in Class VII E consistently exhibit excitement during educational activities. They willingly react to enquiries, adhere to the teacher's directives, and engage fully in classroom discussions. The classroom environment is defined by mutual interaction, with students seeming at ease to articulate ideas and seek clarification when necessary. This behaviour demonstrates both behavioural and emotional participation in the learning process.

Conversely, students in Class IX B demonstrated diminished responsiveness while undergoing comparable educational methods. Despite the effective implementation of classroom routines, student participation was constrained during the observation sessions. Most contacts were initiated by the teacher rather than the students, leading to a predominantly teacher-centered learning environment. A like trend was observed in Class VII D, where several students exhibited indifference and minimal engagement in educational activities. Recurrent side discussions and tardy reactions to the teacher's directives diminished opportunities for substantive participation and led to decreased engagement levels.

Simultaneously, Class VII F exhibited an intermediate pattern. Students typically complied with classroom objectives and sometimes engaged in conversations; yet, their participation varied during the observation periods. Certain students engage actively in learning activities, whereas others exhibit passivity and necessitate continual motivation from the instructor. These findings indicate that engagement operates on a continuum rather than as a static state and may vary based on classroom dynamics and interaction patterns.

The Role of Teacher-Pupil Interaction

A notable distinction across the classrooms was the calibre of teacher-student interaction. In Class VII E, engagement was marked by dynamic communication, regular enquiries, prompt feedback, and affirmative exchanges between the teacher and students. Students demonstrated ease in articulating their viewpoints and engaging with classroom activities. The educator's communication approach fostered engagement and established a nurturing educational environment. Conversely, interactions in Class IX B and VII D are rather restricted. Despite the teacher's efforts to engage students with enquiries and verbal motivation, they frequently exhibit passivity or lack of response. Communication frequently occurs in a unilateral manner, with the instructor imparting information while the students

function mostly as passive listeners rather than engaged participants. This trend diminishes opportunities for substantive involvement and cooperative learning. The findings indicate that teacher-student interaction may be a crucial explanatory variable in comprehending why analogous classroom management practices produce varying engagement results among various classes.

Student Behavioural Responses as an Explanatory Factor

A further aspect that seems to affect involvement levels is students' behavioural reactions to classroom management strategies. In Class VII E, students often adhered to the teacher's directives and classroom protocols. Behavioural disturbances were negligible, and students exhibited an increased readiness to engage in learning activities. In contrast, students in Class IX B and VII D often display disruptive behaviours that hinder learning, such as side conversations, disengagement, and minimal participation. Despite the teacher employing same management tactics throughout all classrooms, student reactions exhibited considerable variability. The findings indicate that the efficacy of classroom management relies not solely on the tactics employed by educators but also on students' interpretations and reactions to those strategies within their specific classroom context.

Cross Class Engagement Patterns

Cross-class comparisons uncover multiple consistent trends that elucidate variations in student participation. Despite the teachers' implementation of identical classroom management strategies across all observed classrooms, pupils exhibited differing levels of receptivity to these practices. These findings indicate that involvement cannot be comprehended exclusively through teachers' behaviours but must also be analysed in conjunction with classroom culture and student interactions. A significant pattern pertains to pupils' readiness to engage in classroom activities. In Class VII E, students regularly engaged with the teacher, willingly answered questions, and participated actively in discussions. Participation seems to be a collective classroom standard, fostering an atmosphere in which students feel at ease articulating thoughts and interacting with course material. Such conditions promote both behavioural and emotional engagement, as students exhibit active participation and excitement for learning activities.

Participation trends in Class IX B and VII D are markedly distinct. Classroom interaction is predominantly controlled by the teacher, while students have a more passive role during instruction. Despite the availability of options for participation, numerous students exhibit reluctance to engage or contribute to debates. This trend diminishes the total degree of engagement and constrains prospects for collaborative learning. As a result, engagement levels in these classrooms remain comparatively low

despite the application of analogous classroom management practices. The study also elucidates disparities in students' reactions to teacher comments. Students in Class VII E typically respond favourably to verbal reinforcement, constructive comments, and inquiry methods. Conversely, children in Class IX B and VII D frequently necessitate multiple cues prior to reacting to the teacher's directives. These data indicate that engagement may be affected by students' views of classroom interactions and their readiness to partake in learning activities.

Themes Emerging Across Classrooms

The thematic analysis revealed three primary themes that elucidate differences in student participation among the observed classrooms: (1) consistency in classroom management procedures, (2) the quality of teacher-student interactions, and (3) students' behavioural response. The initial theme suggests that classroom management strategies are predominantly uniform across various classrooms and hence cannot entirely explain disparities in participation. The second topic emphasises the significance of human connections in fostering a helpful learning environment. The third theme indicates that students' behavioural responses substantially influence the efficacy of classroom management strategies across various circumstances.

Collectively, these themes indicate that the efficacy of classroom management ought to be perceived as a dynamic process encompassing teacher actions and student reactions. Although classroom management establishes a structural basis for learning, engagement outcomes are contingent upon students' experiences of classroom interactions and their responses to instructional methods. The findings suggest that same classroom management strategies do not necessarily provide equivalent engagement results. Engagement seems to be influenced by the interplay of classroom management strategies, teacher-student interactions, and students' behavioural reactions during learning activities.

Discussion

The study's findings indicate that analogous classroom management approaches do not consistently provide equivalent levels of student involvement. Despite the constant application of organised classroom management strategies including organization, time management, behaviour regulation, and instructional routines significant disparities in student involvement levels were detected among the four classrooms. The findings indicate that the efficacy of classroom management transcends the mere application of administrative protocols and is shaped by contextual and relational dynamics inside each classroom.

A notable conclusion pertains to discrepancies in student engagement despite the application of analogous management approaches. Students in Class VII E exhibited elevated levels of participation, responsiveness, and collaboration, while students in Class IX B and VII D had diminished engagement and more passive learning behaviours. The findings corroborate the assertion made by Putra (Putra & Yanto, 2025a), who determined that classroom management favourably influences student progress; nevertheless, this study reveals that the link is not consistently direct or uniform. Comparable management tactics may produce varied results according to students' perceptions and reactions to the learning environment. These findings bolster the increasing perspective that classroom management must be perceived as a dynamic process influenced by both teachers' actions and students' experiences, as well as the classroom culture.

The findings underscore the significance of teacher-student contact as a possible explanatory variable. Kennedy and Haydon (Kennedy & Haydon, 2021), similarly argued that sustaining high-quality teacher-student relationships contributes to reducing behavioural incidents while increasing student participation. This finding reinforces the argument that the effectiveness of classroom management is closely linked to the quality of interpersonal relationships established in the classroom. Class VII E was distinguished by enhanced communication, regular feedback, and constructive interaction between educators and students. Conversely, communication in Classes IX B and VII D was predominantly unilateral, constraining student engagement. These findings align with Wang (Wang, 2023), who underscores that excellent teacher-student connections build a supportive learning environment and enhance students' willingness to participate in classroom activities. Thornberg et al. (Thornberg, Forsberg, Chiriac, et al., 2022), similarly discovered that superior teacher-student connections correlate with enhanced student engagement. This study enhances these findings by illustrating that teacher-student interactions can elucidate why similar classroom management approaches produce varying engagement outcomes within the same educational context.

Amerstorfer et al. (Amerstorfer & Freiin von Münster-Kistner, 2021), corroborate these findings, asserting that students who view their teachers as accessible and supportive are more inclined to engage actively in learning activities. These findings are further supported by Jiali and Keat (Jiali & Keat, 2025), who reported that trust in teachers and psychological safety serve as important mediating factors between teacher-student relationships and student engagement. Their findings suggest that supportive classroom relationships create conditions that encourage active participation. Likewise, Akram (Akram & Li, 2024), discovered that constructive

teacher-student connections markedly affect student motivation and engagement. Recent findings indicate that despite the consistency of classroom management practices, variations in communication quality, feedback, and interpersonal interactions can significantly affect students' motivation to participate in learning. Consequently, teacher-student interactions must be regarded as a fundamental mechanism connecting classroom management approaches to engagement outcomes.

A significant discovery pertains to students' behavioural reactions. Although classroom management tactics were largely comparable, pupils exhibited varied responses to teachers' directives and classroom procedures. Similarly, Chelouche-Dwek et al. (Chelouche-Dwek, Clark, & Fonagy, 2025), demonstrated that positive teacher-student interactions can reduce disruptive behaviour and promote a more productive learning environment. This finding supports the view that behavioural responses are shaped not only by classroom rules but also by relational processes within the classroom. Students in Class VII E typically exhibited positive behavioural responses, while students in Class IX B and VII D often showed inattention, engaged in side conversations, and participated passively. These findings corroborate prior research highlighting the significance of positive behaviour management strategies in enhancing student engagement (Beahm et al., 2021; Zoder-Martell et al., 2023). These findings further substantiate the assertion by Karasova (Karasova & Nehyba, 2023), that student-centered approaches to classroom behaviour can enhance participation and engagement in learning. The efficacy of classroom management should be comprehended not solely via the teacher's activities but also in conjunction with students' responses to those actions.

Subsequent findings indicate that just physical organization of the classroom is inadequate to guarantee elevated levels of student involvement. Despite the classes displaying comparable seating arrangements, educational amenities, and layouts, the engagement outcomes were notably different. These findings corroborate prior studies demonstrating that the classroom environment influences the learning experience (Fang et al., 2023; W. Gao & Chen, 2022; Rance et al., 2023) and also indicate that environmental factors interact with interpersonal and behavioural characteristics. A well-organised classroom can create conducive learning settings but, meaningful engagement is ultimately contingent upon the quality of interactions and students' behavioural involvement.

The results of this study offer additional evidence that classroom management should not be seen only as a collection of strategies for preserving order. Classroom management functions as a relational process wherein teachers create conditions that

either promote or inhibit student engagement. This interpretation corresponds with contemporary views that highlight the interpersonal aspects of classroom management, asserting that effective management necessitates the cultivation of supportive relationships, constructive communication, and avenues for significant student engagement. The efficacy of classroom management relies not solely on the teacher's actions but also on the students' interpretations and reactions to those actions within a particular classroom context.

This study significantly demonstrates that engagement is influenced by classroom-level dynamics, even under generally consistent teaching conditions. He and Wen (He & Wen, 2025), also found that teacher feedback and perceived teacher support enhance student engagement through self-efficacy and learning motivation. This evidence further highlights the importance of relational and motivational factors in explaining engagement outcomes. Prior studies have predominantly investigated classroom management through comparisons among various educators, institutions, or educational frameworks. This study examines several classrooms instructed by the same teacher within a singular school setting. This approach provides a distinctive viewpoint by reducing several contextual disparities that frequently hinder the interpretation of results. The findings suggest that variations in participation may arise even when management approaches, educational content, and institutional conditions are mostly unchanged.

These data further substantiate the assertion that student participation is a socially constructed phenomenon. Engagement is not only derived from classroom frameworks or teaching methodologies but is collaboratively developed via continuous interactions between educators and learners. In classes marked by frequent communication, affirmative feedback, and active participation, students exhibit elevated levels of engagement. In contrast, classrooms marked by minimal contact and passive involvement exhibit reduced engagement levels. This trend indicates that engagement arises from relational processes rather than only from managerial techniques.

From the standpoint of Islamic education, these findings possess further importance. Islamic educational institutions prioritise academic success alongside character development, ethical growth, and the cultivation of constructive social interactions. Thus, classroom management approaches in Islamic schools are anticipated to reinforce overarching educational goals and principles. The results indicate that teacher-student relationships are essential for attaining these goals, since supportive interactions can enhance students' sense of belonging, responsibility, and engagement in learning activities. Consequently, classroom management in Islamic

education should be regarded as a cohesive process that amalgamates behavioural regulation with relational and moral advancement.

This study contributes theoretically to the relational perspective of classroom management by demonstrating that student engagement outcomes cannot be explained solely by organisational structures, behavioural regulation, or managerial techniques. While traditional classroom management perspectives often emphasise the role of rules, routines, and behavioural control in promoting engagement, the findings of this study suggest that the effectiveness of these practices is mediated by the quality of teacher–student interactions and students’ behavioural responses. The study therefore extends existing understandings of classroom management by highlighting the importance of relational processes as a mechanism linking classroom management practices and student engagement outcomes. Furthermore, the findings support contemporary student engagement theories that conceptualise engagement as a multidimensional phenomenon shaped not only by instructional and behavioural factors but also by interpersonal and social interactions within the classroom environment. The results indicate that teacher-student interactions and students’ behavioural responses serve as significant contextual factors connecting classroom management to student engagement. This viewpoint enhances current classroom management research by highlighting the relational aspects of the classroom process instead of solely concentrating on procedural management techniques. This study enhances the engagement literature by demonstrating that engagement is influenced by the simultaneous interplay of instructional, behavioural, and relational aspects within the classroom environment.

Practically, these findings suggest that educators should transcend the perception of classroom management solely as a mechanism for preserving order and discipline. Classroom management ought to be regarded as a relational technique that promotes communication, trust, engagement, and constructive interaction. The findings suggest several practical implications for teachers and schools. First, classroom management should be accompanied by deliberate efforts to strengthen teacher–student interaction rather than focusing solely on classroom organisation and behavioural control. The high-engagement classroom observed in this study was characterised by frequent questioning, continuous feedback, and active dialogue between teachers and students. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to increase opportunities for two-way communication, regularly invite student participation, and provide immediate feedback during learning activities.

Second, teachers should pay close attention to students’ behavioural responses when implementing classroom management strategies. The findings showed that

similar management practices produced different outcomes depending on how students responded to classroom routines and instructional activities. Consequently, teachers should continuously monitor student participation, identify signs of disengagement at an early stage, and adapt their interaction strategies to encourage greater involvement.

Third, schools should support professional development programmes that emphasise relational competencies alongside classroom management skills. Training should focus not only on maintaining classroom order but also on developing effective communication, constructive feedback practices, and strategies for fostering positive teacher–student relationships. Such initiatives may help create classroom environments that promote active engagement and meaningful participation in learning. Subsequent findings indicate that educators ought to implement an adaptive strategy for classroom management instead of depending solely on conventional methods. Erdel (2026), further demonstrated that teacher leadership influences students' emotional experiences and participation in classroom activities. This suggests that adaptive classroom management should incorporate relational leadership practices alongside behavioural management strategies. Although consistency is essential, educators must also take into account class features, student requirements, and interaction patterns when applying management tactics. Adaptive classroom management allows educators to adapt more efficiently to fluctuations in student involvement, fostering a learning environment that promotes participation and cooperation. This viewpoint endorses modern educational methodologies that prioritise responsiveness, adaptability, and learner centred instruction.

Another aspect pertains to the professional development of educators. This implication is supported by Rivas et al. (Rivas, Mooss, Pontier, Romillo, & Muñoz, 2023), who found that training focused on teacher student interaction improved teachers self-efficacy and classroom engagement practices. Therefore, professional development programs should address both managerial and relational competencies. Training programs frequently emphasise classroom management strategies, including rule establishment, discipline maintenance, and disruptive behaviour management. Although these competencies are significant, the findings indicate that equal emphasis should be placed on communication skills, relationship-building strategies, and methods to enhance student involvement. Educators who cultivate supportive relationships and facilitate meaningful interactions are likely to enhance engagement more effectively than those who predominantly employ procedural management strategies.

Numerous constraints must be recognised. This study was conducted in a singular Islamic secondary school, perhaps constraining the applicability of the findings to other educational settings. Secondly, the study predominantly depended on classroom observations, omitting interviews or student viewpoints that could offer more profound insights into engagement experiences. Thirdly, the limited observation duration may inadequately reflect long-term classroom dynamics and alterations in student conduct.

Future research ought to examine the correlation among classroom management, teacher-student relationships, and student involvement across various schools and educational contexts. Researchers may utilise mixed methods approaches or longitudinal designs to investigate the evolution of engagement over time and students' perceptions of classroom management tactics. Moreover, subsequent research should investigate supplementary elements such as student motivation, classroom environment, academic self-efficacy, and cultural influences that may explain discrepancies in participation across analogous classroom management contexts.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the effectiveness of classroom management in influencing student engagement is not determined solely by the uniform application of instructional and behavioural management strategies, but is fundamentally shaped by the relational dynamics that emerge within classroom interactions. This study answers the research objective by demonstrating that similar classroom management practices do not automatically produce similar student engagement outcomes, as engagement is constructed through the interaction between teacher–student relationships and students' behavioural responses within specific classroom contexts. The synthesis of data analysis and discussion highlights that teacher–student interaction functions as a key mediating mechanism that shapes how students interpret and respond to classroom management practices, thereby producing variations in engagement even under relatively similar teaching conditions. This finding contributes to the development of educational knowledge by emphasising a relational perspective of classroom management within Islamic secondary education, where engagement is understood as a socially constructed process influenced by communication, responsiveness, and behavioural reciprocity in the learning environment.

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