



Portrait of class management in the learning process at Muhammadiyah Kretek Middle School: A qualitative descriptive study

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Abstract

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The importance of effective classroom management has emerged as a critical factor in enhancing student learning motivation, particularly in the context of rapidly evolving educational environments. This study aims to explore the role of classroom management in improving student motivation through a qualitative descriptive approach. The research was conducted at Muhammadiyah Kretek Middle School in Bantul, with all classes at the school serving as research subjects. Data were collected using observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. The findings indicate that classroom management by teachers has not been fully optimized, and the teaching methods employed remain relatively monotonous, which leads to students' decreased engagement in the learning process. However, teachers continue to make efforts to improve classroom management through thorough preparation of learning materials, varied teaching methods, strategic seating arrangements, and incorporating playful learning activities. Additionally, teachers are working to integrate advancements in science and technology to create a more engaging and dynamic learning environment, aiming to reduce the monotony in the classroom.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a conscious effort to humanize people so they become virtuous citizens. Education prepares people to be good citizens, capable of fulfilling all obligations and recognizing their rights. Education serves as a platform for transforming people from ignorance to knowledge, thus incorporating learning activities that will lead them to the true goal of education.

Obtaining educational services is a basic right of all Indonesian citizens, as stipulated in the 1945 Constitution, which mandates the government to strive for and organize a national education system that is able to increase faith, noble morals, and devotion to God Almighty in order to educate the life of the nation and state. Furthermore, in Law Number 30 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, it is stated that education occurs through a learning process carried out in schools, and interactions between teachers and students occur, where in this process, teachers have an important role in realizing the goals of national education in general and specifically the learning goals themselves.

In practice, education is organized through a learning process that occurs through interactions between teachers and students in the school environment. Learning activities have two main components: students as the subject of learning and teachers as learning facilitators. Teachers are one of the main factors determining the success of the learning process, encompassing many roles. Teachers not only act as good role models for students, but must also be able to manage the classroom well. Teachers not only provide knowledge but also must provide other skills to students, such as opinion skills, social skills, and other skills. Teachers must be able to provide information in the form of knowledge, skills, and

values to students. Teachers as administrators must be able to manage academic activities, things that support learning activities, and must also be able to manage classroom activities, including a pleasant teaching and learning atmosphere for students. A teacher is able to create a conducive learning atmosphere that does not bore students. A pleasant learning atmosphere can increase students' curiosity in learning. Teachers act as motivators and must be able to provide a stimulus that can encourage students to grow enthusiasm for learning and can improve students' abilities. While teachers as facilitators will provide facilities and ease in learning, including by providing a learning environment that supports student development. One of the keys to a successful learning process lies in the teacher's ability to manage the class effectively.

Classroom management includes organizing students, the learning environment, and learning facilities and infrastructure to create a comfortable and focused learning environment (Mudatsir et al., 2025). In this case, the learning environment can be a classroom, school, digital platform, or other space that can be used by students for safe and conducive learning activities. Good classroom management can create a pleasant learning atmosphere, so students do not easily get bored in learning. Conditions in the field show that classroom management remains a challenge for teachers, especially at the junior high school level. The transition period between children and adolescents tends to be characterized by emotional turmoil, high enthusiasm, but unstable motivation. This condition demands appropriate classroom management strategies oriented towards character building and effective learning.

This research was conducted at Muhammadiyah Kretek Junior High School, a private school in the southern coastal area of Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region. The location was selected based on several considerations. First, the school is located in a fairly heterogeneous social environment, both in terms of economic background and student characteristics, which provides a clear picture of the complexity of classroom management. Second, based on initial observations and communication with the school, it was discovered that some students' learning motivation was still relatively low. Some teachers faced challenges in maintaining student engagement in the learning process, particularly in subjects that students considered difficult.

Various studies have shown that classroom management has a significant contribution to increasing student learning motivation (Khoiriyah, 2019) shows that teachers experience obstacles when managing classes, where teachers often feel they run out of ideas for creating lesson plans, namely in determining which learning strategies to use that are appropriate to the material and can create conducive and effective classroom conditions. Based on the results of research conducted by (Wildayanti et al., 2022) suggests that the better a teacher's classroom management, the higher students' learning motivation. Conversely, the less effective a teacher's classroom management, the lower their learning motivation. This is because learning motivation is not only influenced by internal factors but also external factors, such as the teacher's effective classroom management.

According to research (Wati & Trihantoyo, 2020), A monotonous teacher style can bore students, while uninteresting teaching methods and a lack of interaction can reduce student enthusiasm. According to research by Khoiriyah (2019), optimal learning is student-centered, well-managed, and teachers create a positive learning environment. The teacher's role as an effective facilitator and classroom manager is crucial to creating a learning environment that supports student growth. According to Rukmana and Trihantoyo in Nurpratiwiningsih & Ervina (2022), successful classroom management is a measure of a teacher's success in teaching and creating a positive relationship between them. When teachers and students interact, learning is considered effective. Good classroom management reflects the teacher's professionalism and ability to teach and interact with students. Interaction between these

individuals is crucial to creating a comfortable classroom atmosphere. Meanwhile, another study by Puspita found that several things need to be done to implement classroom management, including designing the physical environment of the classroom, good communication, and creating a positive learning environment (Widiyono, 2020). According to Nahwa and Nurfuadi (2023), classroom management is crucial for teachers to create engaging learning environments and keep students motivated. Classroom management encompasses several teaching skills, including opening and closing lessons, reinforcement, questioning, explaining, varying, guiding small group discussions, and classroom management.

Based on the problem description, this study aims to describe descriptively how teachers in junior high schools implement classroom management practices and the optimization efforts that can be made to increase student learning motivation. Furthermore, this research is expected to serve as a reference in formulating more effective and contextual classroom management strategies.

METHOD

The type of research is descriptive qualitative to describe classroom management practices in the learning process in Muhammadiyah Kretek Junior High School. The research location was at Muhammadiyah Kretek Junior High School, Bantul. The research subjects were all classes at Muhammadiyah Kretek Junior High School. Data collection techniques were carried out through three methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with ten teachers from various subjects. Observations were conducted comprehensively in all classes at Muhammadiyah Kretek Junior High School to obtain a real picture of interactions in the classroom. In addition, documentation was used to collect supporting data, such as lesson schedules, lesson plans, rules, and teacher evaluation notes. Analysis was carried out using data triangulation techniques, namely by comparing and confirming data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. This method was used to ensure that the information obtained was in accordance with the actual conditions that occurred in the field.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Classroom management is an important component in the learning process that not only includes the physical arrangement of the classroom, but also includes the teacher's efforts in creating a safe, comfortable, enjoyable, and conducive learning environment. Classroom management activities are the process of arranging, organizing the environment around students, including managing learning components that include objectives, learning materials, teaching and learning activities, methods, tools, and resources, and evaluations that are played optimally to achieve the learning objectives that have been set before the learning is carried out (Prihantini & Rustini, 2024). Classroom management functions to develop desired student behavior and reduce or eliminate undesirable behavior, develop positive interpersonal relationships and a positive socio-emotional climate, and develop and maintain an effective and productive classroom organization.

The ability to manage a class is a mandatory competency for teachers, Sudarsana in Mudatsir (2025:250). Management is a skill that must be mastered by a teacher, because with this skill a teacher can create and stabilize optimal learning conditions and restore them to their original state if something unexpected happens in the teaching process such as student discipline, study time, giving rewards as appreciation to diligent students, or establishing group norms and other things that support the creation of comfortable classroom conditions. Teachers who have skills in managing the class, that learning can run according to

expectations and increase student learning motivation. However, in reality, in the field, class management is still a challenge in itself, especially at the junior high school level.

Classroom Management Challenges

Based on the results of field research, it was found that some teachers face obstacles in managing classes effectively. This is caused by several factors, namely: 1) lack of teacher readiness both physically and non-physically, 2) lack of teacher knowledge of various learning methods, 3) lack of teacher ability in managing students, 4) lack of teacher ability in utilizing technological advances, 5) there are still teachers who feel confused regarding the learning methods to be used, 6) different student characters, 7) lack of student interest in learning, 8) student background, 9) lack of student learning motivation. Teachers also expressed that they were still confused about choosing the right method, especially when dealing with students who were less motivated, and not all students had the same learning style.

Observations confirm that weaknesses in classroom management directly impact student motivation. In practice, teachers' classroom management challenges stem from a lack of student motivation. Many students do not pay attention during class; some fall asleep while the teacher is explaining the material, some wander in and out of class, and some are busy chatting with their friends. This is due to the teacher's monotonous teaching style. Teachers often use lectures and lack creativity, which leads to boredom and a lack of enjoyment. Consequently, learning becomes boring and unmotivated.

The quality of classroom management carried out by teachers influences students' learning motivation. (Khoiriyah, 2019). In addition, it was found that there were various dynamics that illustrated the less-than-optimal learning process in the classroom. Interviews with students revealed that they still faced many obstacles during the learning process, such as feeling sleepy during the learning process, boredom, and lack of focus due to monotonous learning methods. Teachers mostly used the lecture method without interspersing a variety of interesting learning activities such as icebreakers, which play a crucial role in maintaining student attention during the learning process. This indicates a mismatch between students' expectations of learning and the teaching patterns used by teachers in the classroom.

Student Learning Motivation

Motivation is the force or drive that drives an individual to take action to achieve their goals. Motivation can make individuals more enthusiastic about learning. Motivation is one of the factors that drives the effectiveness of the learning process. Motivation is a mental drive that drives and directs human behavior, including learning behavior. Motivation is related to learning, where high motivation can encourage students to study diligently. This will also influence the learning outcomes achieved.

Learning motivation as an internal and external drive for students who are learning to make changes in behavior, generally with several indicators or supporting elements (Uno, 2013). The elements in question include students' desires or aspirations, their learning abilities, their conditions, and their learning environment. Good student conditions and a positive environment will foster student motivation to engage in learning activities.

Motivation to learn is influenced by several factors, both internal and external to the student. Changes in the environment and the student's mood can lead to changes in motivation to learn. Therefore, internal and external motivation must be balanced and complementary. The first source of motivation for a child is the family, consisting of their parents and other family members. Further motivational support comes from schoolmates and teachers at the school where the child receives formal education (Andriani & Rasto, 2019). A creative and conducive school environment, supported by a passion for learning, will

provide students with greater motivation to learn. Furthermore, students' psychological, mental, and emotional states also influence learning activities. Students in a negative mood will feel reluctant to engage in any activity, including studying. Enhancing student motivation requires a significant role for teachers in classroom management.

The function of motivation according to Sadirman in Majid (2013:309) is: a) encouraging humans to act, meaning that motivation can be used as a driver or motor that releases energy; b) determining the direction of actions towards the goals to be achieved; c) selecting actions, namely determining the actions that must be carried out in harmony to achieve goals by setting aside actions that are not useful. The level of motivation will affect human life. People who have high motivation will make it easier to achieve their ideals and goals in life. Conversely, low motivation will make people unenthusiastic in carrying out their activities.

Problems that occur in the field indicate that classroom management strategies are not yet effective, so many teachers are still not optimal in managing the class, and low student learning motivation. This is caused by various things, including: student behavior that is difficult to condition, lack of teacher ability in managing the class, lack of teacher preparedness, lack of teacher skills in utilizing technology, differences in student backgrounds, differences in student characteristics, and lack of student learning motivation. Many students feel lazy to learn. This is caused by the learning methods used by teachers are boring, the teacher's teaching style is one-way, the teacher's intonation is not loud and firm enough, lack of student interest in learning, lack of interaction in learning, student dislike towards teachers, teachers still use learning approaches that pay less attention to the needs and development of student potential, tend to be theoretical or lecture methods. This challenge must be answered with innovation in learning, improving teacher competence, implementing varied learning methods, and the need to build good collaborative relationships to achieve a more lively and enjoyable learning atmosphere.

Effective classroom management not only facilitates the learning process but also increases student motivation. The teacher's role as classroom manager is crucial in creating a learning environment that supports and empowers students according to their potential (Tunnisa & Nurfuadi, 2023). Learning will be engaging when teachers create a fun, interactive, and relevant learning environment for students. Engaging teachers generally do not rely on a single learning method, but rather combine group discussions, educational games, simulations, hands-on practice, learning media, and the use of icebreakers during lessons. Student motivation in learning can be enhanced through various models and approaches, and can also be influenced by several factors (Harahap et al., 2021). Teachers also need to use a friendly tone of voice and communication that builds positive emotional connections with students. Furthermore, teachers must be able to relate the material to their environment, thereby increasing their motivation to learn. Thus, engaging learning not only keeps students focused but also encourages them to actively ask questions, discuss topics, and engage in classroom learning.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that suboptimal classroom management is one of the causes of low student learning motivation. Teachers tend to use monotonous lecture methods, under-utilize technology, and are unable to adapt learning methods to student needs. This results in a boring learning environment and minimal active student participation. Therefore, efforts are needed to optimize classroom management by developing teacher competency in designing varied, interactive, and enjoyable learning. Teachers also need to increase their readiness to utilize technology as a learning support medium. A conducive classroom

atmosphere and appropriate learning methods can increase student motivation and engagement in the learning process.

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