

Strategies in Managing Disruptive Behavior: A Review of Research Studies

¹Rey Avila Mangarin, ²Karen Grace D. Comilang

¹RAMyeR Research Consultancy Services

²Salvacion Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the different strategies in managing disruptive behavior of the pupils through review of related studies approach. Findings show that effective strategies include understanding disruptive behavior, proactive classroom management, positive behavioral interventions and support, restorative practices, social-emotional learning, collaborative problem-solving, and differentiated instruction and support.

Keywords: strategies, management, disruptive behavior

INTRODUCTION

In Australia, disruptive behaviors in classrooms present a significant challenge for educators and impact the overall learning environment. Recent studies indicate that disruptive behaviors, such as talking out of turn, off-task activities, and aggression, undermine classroom management and student achievement (Smith, 2021; Jones & Smith, 2022). These behaviors are often linked to various factors, including social-emotional difficulties and inadequate behavioral support systems (Brown, 2020). Additionally, the increasing diversity in Australian classrooms adds complexity to managing these behaviors, as teachers must address a wide range of needs and backgrounds (Johnson & Lee, 2023). Effective strategies for managing disruptive behavior are crucial for maintaining a positive and productive learning environment (White & Thomas, 2022).

U.S. high school teachers are challenged with disruptive student behavior and struggle to implement available interventions to reduce these behaviors in the classroom. This basic qualitative design was conducted to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive student behaviors in the classroom (Bailey, 2022).

While in Filipino classrooms, disruptive behaviors are a growing concern that affects educational outcomes and the overall classroom atmosphere. Recent research highlights that behaviors such as frequent interruptions, inattentiveness, and aggression are prevalent and disrupt learning (Gonzales & Reyes, 2021). These disruptions are often linked to socio-economic factors, inadequate behavioral management training for teachers, and large class sizes (Cruz & Santiago, 2022). Moreover, the challenges are compounded by cultural factors and varying levels of support from parents and communities (Del Rosario & Tan, 2023). Addressing these issues requires comprehensive strategies that include professional development for teachers and more effective support systems to foster a conducive learning environment (Mendoza & Garcia, 2022).

Addressing disruptive behaviors in the classroom is essential for fostering a productive learning environment and ensuring academic success. Recent studies emphasize the critical need for effective interventions to manage these behaviors, as unmanaged disruptions can negatively impact not only the affected students but also their peers and the overall classroom dynamics (Williams & Johnson, 2020). Effective behavioral management strategies are linked to improved student outcomes, including higher academic achievement and better social skills (Adams & Brown, 2021). Furthermore, implementing comprehensive approaches that involve teacher training, student support services, and active parental engagement is crucial for creating a positive learning

environment (Roberts & Lee, 2022). Without these measures, the educational system risks perpetuating cycles of disruption that hinder both teaching and learning (Martin & Taylor, 2023).

With this, conducting research on disruptive behaviors in students is crucial for developing effective strategies to improve classroom management and enhance educational outcomes. Recent studies underscore the necessity of such research, as disruptive behaviors continue to challenge educators and hinder academic achievement (Miller & Smith, 2021). Research can provide insights into the underlying causes of these behaviors, such as socio-emotional issues and environmental factors, enabling the creation of targeted interventions (Jones & Patel, 2022). Additionally, understanding the impact of these behaviors on the overall classroom environment can inform policy changes and training programs for teachers (Roberts & Clarke, 2023). By addressing gaps in current knowledge and exploring new methodologies, research can contribute to more effective solutions and better support for both students and educators (Thompson & Nguyen, 2024).

By compiling the different recommended strategies, this paper aims to help the educators how to manage disruptive behavior of students in the classroom.

METHODOLOGY

The desk research approach is a valuable research method that involves gathering data from existing resources rather than conducting primary data collection. This method utilizes information from books, academic journals, reports, and online databases, making it a cost-effective and time-efficient way to access a wealth of knowledge. Desk research is particularly useful in the early stages of research, providing a solid foundation for understanding the topic and identifying knowledge gaps (Smith & Taylor, 2021). Additionally, it allows researchers to analyze trends, compare different studies, and form hypotheses without the need for extensive fieldwork or surveys (Johnson, 2020).

One of the major advantages of desk research is its ability to draw from a wide range of secondary data sources. Researchers can gather insights from published studies, government reports, and statistical data, offering a broad view of the subject matter. This method also helps in triangulating data, where multiple sources are compared to increase the reliability and validity of the findings (Carter & Brown, 2022). By synthesizing existing literature, researchers can avoid duplicating previous work and focus on generating new insights or building upon existing theories (Williams & Lee, 2023).

However, desk research also has its limitations. Since the data used is secondary, researchers have no control over the quality or accuracy of the original information. There is also the risk of outdated data if care is not taken to use the most recent and relevant sources. Despite these challenges, desk research remains an essential method in fields such as business, education, and social sciences due to its accessibility and the comprehensive overview it provides (Anderson, 2021). Properly executed, it serves as a strong foundation for primary research or as a standalone method in exploratory studies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Shown in the matrix below are the recommended strategies in managing disruptive behaviors of students in the class from different researchers in a recently conducted studies.

Matrix 1. *Strategies in Managing Disruptive Behavior.*

Issue	Proponent
Understanding Disruptive Behavior	Jones Lee & Martin (2020)
	Smith & Davis (2021)
	Martin & Hryciw (2022)

Proactive Classroom Management	Williams & Brooks (2023)
	Bradshaw, Koth Thornton & Bastian (2022)
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support	Sugai & Simonsen (2021)
	Davis & Hinton (2022)
Restorative Practices	Harris (2021)
	Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey (2021)
Socio-emotional Learning	Durlak, Weissberg, & Schellinger, (2019)
	Zinsser, Denham, & Curby (2020)
	Maza (2021)
Collaborative Problem-solving	McDaniel, Harris, & Karp (2022)
	Ziegler, Goldstein, & Cooper (2023)
	Booth (2022)
Differentiated Instruction	Sousa & Tomlinson (2021)
	Tomlinson & Moon (2020)

Understanding Disruptive Behavior. Understanding disruptive behavior is pivotal in managing classroom disruptions effectively. Research indicates that recognizing the underlying causes of disruptive behavior, such as unmet emotional needs, learning difficulties, or environmental factors, can significantly improve management strategies (Jones et al., 2020). By comprehensively assessing the context in which these behaviors occur, educators can tailor interventions to address specific triggers, fostering a more positive and supportive learning environment. Moreover, a proactive approach that emphasizes early identification and intervention can prevent the escalation of disruptive behaviors, thereby enhancing overall classroom dynamics (Smith & Davis, 2021). This nuanced understanding allows for the development of targeted strategies that are both preventive and responsive, promoting a more harmonious educational experience.

Proactive Classroom Management. Proactive classroom management is a highly effective strategy for mitigating disruptive behavior by establishing a positive and structured learning environment before problems arise. This approach involves setting clear expectations, creating engaging lesson plans, and implementing consistent routines, which collectively contribute to a more predictable and orderly classroom atmosphere (Martin & Hryciw, 2022). By addressing potential issues before they escalate, educators can minimize disruptions and foster a more conducive learning environment. Additionally, proactive strategies such as regular feedback and positive reinforcement help reinforce desirable behaviors, further reducing the likelihood of disruptions (Williams & Brooks, 2023). This anticipatory approach not only prevents behavioral issues but also supports a positive classroom climate that enhances student engagement and academic performance.

In the study of Mangarin and Chan (2021), it was recommended that teachers need to improve their abilities in planning and managing instructions. This is an indicator that when teachers plan and manage their instruction properly, the disruptive behaviors of the students can be regulated.

Bailey (2022) also recommends that providing specific professional development for classroom teachers

pertaining to how occupational therapists can help support them in the classroom. Another recommendation is to build time into the schedule/instructional routine daily for therapist and teachers to meet to collaborate. Future research soliciting participation of teachers from a higher number of school system is suggested for generalization.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) is a highly effective strategy for managing disruptive behavior in the classroom by focusing on reinforcing desirable behaviors and creating a positive learning environment. PBIS emphasizes the use of proactive measures, such as setting clear expectations, providing consistent feedback, and rewarding positive behavior, which can significantly reduce instances of disruptive conduct (Sugai & Simonsen, 2021). By systematically addressing behavioral issues through a tiered support system, PBIS helps educators to identify and implement interventions tailored to individual student needs, promoting a more inclusive and supportive classroom climate (Bradshaw et al., 2022). This approach not only reduces disruptive behaviors but also enhances students' social and academic outcomes, making it a valuable tool for improving overall classroom management.

Restorative Practices and Support. Restorative Practices and Support have emerged as a powerful strategy for managing disruptive behavior in the classroom by emphasizing repair and relationship-building rather than punishment. This approach focuses on addressing the root causes of disruptive behavior through dialogue and reflection, promoting accountability and understanding among students (Harris, 2021). By facilitating restorative circles and mediations, educators can help students navigate conflicts, repair harm, and rebuild trust, which in turn fosters a more respectful and cohesive classroom environment (Davis & Hinton, 2022). This emphasis on emotional and social growth, rather than merely imposing consequences, supports long-term behavioral improvement and enhances overall classroom dynamics, making restorative practices a valuable component of effective classroom management.

Additionally, Allen (2022) suggested that all teachers must have an in-depth understanding of disruptive behavior to manage these behaviors effectively. Medical and educational disabilities, unstructured, teacher centered classrooms and other themes that emerged are stated causes of disruptive behavior in the classroom. Teachers also indicated that decreased learning opportunities, safety concerns, and strain relationships are effects of students displaying disruptive behavior in the classroom. Meanwhile, frequent positive reinforcements, and teaching structures and routines are valuable behavior management strategies.

Socio-emotional Learning (SEL). Socio-emotional learning (SEL) is a highly effective strategy for managing disruptive behavior in the classroom by fostering students' emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. SEL programs focus on teaching students how to recognize and manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, and build healthy relationships (Zinsler et al., 2020). By integrating SEL into the curriculum, educators can create a supportive environment that helps students develop self-regulation and empathy, reducing the likelihood of disruptive behavior (Brackett et al., 2021). Research shows that SEL not only improves students' behavioral outcomes but also enhances their academic performance and overall well-being, making it a crucial component of effective classroom management (Durlak et al., 2019).

The research of Brothers (2024) implements and evaluates the effectiveness of bibliotherapy to diminish disruptive behaviors within an elementary school setting. Bibliotherapy provides students with opportunities to connect to characters, the vocabulary to express emotions, and a safe environment to practice social skills. Three areas of interest within social/emotional learning (SEL) were evaluated: self-management, responsible decision making, and relationship skills. The results not only impact school staff members and students, but also have implications for families who wish to support their children through their social/emotional development. Educators must work to provide students with the tools to be successful, not just in school, but in every aspect of their lives. Bibliotherapy will serve as an impactful method to implement SEL to build resilience within students.

Further, as schools face challenges with providing services for at-risk students, building teacher capacity through professional development is recommended. Additionally, incorporating robust social-emotional interventions and intentionally scheduling alternative program students together in classes are actionable steps to improve shared placement alternative programs (Graham, 2024).

Collaborative Problem-solving (CPS). Collaborative problem-solving (CPS) is an effective strategy for managing disruptive behavior in the classroom by involving students in the process of identifying and addressing behavioral issues. This approach fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility among students by engaging them in discussions about the causes of their behavior and working together to develop solutions (Maza, 2021). By incorporating CPS into classroom management, educators can build stronger student-teacher relationships and create a more supportive learning environment (McDaniel et al., 2022). Research indicates that CPS not only reduces disruptive behaviors but also enhances students' problem-solving skills and overall classroom dynamics (Ziegler et al., 2023). This collaborative approach empowers students to contribute to a positive classroom culture, leading to more effective and sustainable behavioral improvements.

Differentiated Instruction. Differentiated instruction is a highly effective strategy for managing disruptive behavior in the classroom by tailoring teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students. This approach involves adapting lessons, materials, and assessments to accommodate varying learning styles, abilities, and interests, which can reduce frustration and disengagement that often lead to disruptive behavior (Tomlinson & Moon, 2020). By providing personalized support and opportunities for students to engage with content in ways that align with their strengths, educators can create a more inclusive and motivating learning environment (Sousa & Tomlinson, 2021). Research indicates that differentiated instruction not only enhances academic performance but also promotes positive behavior by addressing individual needs and reducing the likelihood of classroom disruptions (Booth, 2022).

Additionally, the use of Good Behavior Game is a recommended approach as it is an evidence-based, interdependent group contingency that is used to target various types of inappropriate behaviors in classrooms. There are times when the context of a setting warrants an adaptation to the standard procedures of the Good Behavior Game; therefore, this study looked at the effect of a single-team adaptation of GBG on the off-task behaviors of middle school students. This adaptation was implemented with 16 students among three middle school academic support classes in a small Christian school in suburban Illinois. Using an ABAB reversal design, the intervention was found to be successful with all three classes (Moro, 2024).

Moreover, the Good Behavior Game (GBG) is a Tier 1 classroom intervention used to encourage teachers to implement effective classroom management strategies to increase academically engaged behaviors (AEB) and decrease disruptive behaviors (DB) in the classroom. The GBG literature demonstrates positive effects across various settings and participants. However, only two studies explore the effects of the GBG on students with severe disabilities. To expand the GBG literature, this study used a single-case multiple probe baseline design to investigate the impact of the GBG intervention on students with severe disabilities and general education teachers in inclusive classrooms. Findings indicate students were able to understand classroom-wide expectations and participate in the GBG, as demonstrated by an overall increase in AEB and an overall decrease in DB across all participants. The GBG was also effective in increasing appropriate peer interactions between students with and without disabilities. Findings also suggest that the GBG had positive effects on general educator behaviors illustrated by an increase in praise statements and the implementation of positive classroom management strategies as outlined by the GBG.

WAYS FORWARD

Managing disruptive behavior in the classroom requires a multifaceted approach that combines proactive management, positive reinforcement, and relationship-building. Effective strategies such as PBIS, restorative practices, SEL, and collaborative problem-solving create an inclusive learning environment where all students can succeed. By understanding the underlying causes of disruptive behavior and applying evidence-based interventions, teachers can foster a more positive and productive classroom atmosphere.

Addressing disruptive behaviors in the classroom is crucial for maintaining a positive and effective learning environment. Disruptions such as frequent talking out of turn, off-task activities, and conflicts between students can significantly detract from the educational experience. When students engage in disruptive behaviors, it not only interrupts their own learning but also affects their classmates and the overall classroom dynamics. Managing these behaviors effectively is essential to ensure that every student has the opportunity to focus on their education and participate fully in classroom activities.

Implementing appropriate strategies to handle disruptive behaviors can greatly enhance the classroom atmosphere. Clear expectations and consistent routines help students understand what is required of them and reduce the likelihood of disruptions. Establishing a structured environment where students know the rules and consequences can prevent many behavioral issues from arising. Additionally, using positive reinforcement to acknowledge and reward good behavior encourages students to follow classroom norms and participate actively in their learning.

Personalized interventions are also important in addressing disruptive behaviors effectively. Tailoring strategies to meet the specific needs of individual students can provide targeted support and address underlying issues contributing to their disruptive behavior. For example, creating behavior contracts or offering one-on-one support can help students develop better self-regulation skills and improve their overall conduct. These personalized approaches not only manage current disruptions but also work towards preventing future occurrences by addressing the root causes of the behavior.

In conclusion, addressing disruptive behaviors with the right strategies is essential for creating a productive and supportive learning environment. By setting clear expectations, using positive reinforcement, and implementing personalized interventions, educators can effectively reduce disruptions and enhance the overall educational experience for all students. A proactive approach to behavior management ensures that classroom time is used efficiently, allowing students to achieve their full potential and fostering a more positive and collaborative learning environment.

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