CHARACTER-BASED CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR POSITIVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Rivaldo Paul Telussa[1*], Antonius Awan Asta Adhiprana Whisnubrata[2], Cristiana Normalita de Lima[3]

[12] Universitas Satya Wiyata Mandala, Indonesia
[3] Universitas Musamus, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author: uswimfkip@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Classroom discipline problems in lower secondary education often persist when classroom management relies primarily on rules and sanctions rather than value internalization. This study aimed to describe and analyze how character-based classroom management is implemented and how it contributes to improving positive student behavior among Grade VII students at St. Antonius Nabire Middle School (Papua, Indonesia). Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected from teachers and Grade VII students through classroom observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Data were analyzed using an interactive qualitative model (data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing). The findings show that character values—especially discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect—were embedded in classroom rules, learning routines, and daily teacher–student interactions. Consistent teacher role modeling, structured habituation, and positive reinforcement strengthened classroom climate and supported students' internalization of expected behaviors. Observable changes included improved punctuality and learning discipline, higher responsibility in completing tasks, more respectful peer and teacher interactions, and fewer disruptive behaviors during lessons. Key challenges involved variation in students' character backgrounds and external environmental influences beyond school. The study concludes that character-based classroom management is a relevant and effective approach for fostering positive behavior in junior high school settings, particularly in under-researched contexts such as Papua. Practically, the findings inform teacher strategies and school policies to standardize value-based class agreements and strengthen school–family collaboration. Future research should employ longitudinal and mixed-methods designs across multiple schools and include family/community perspectives to clarify sustainability and mechanisms of change.

Keywords: Character Education; Classroom Management; Junior High School; Papua; Positive Student Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In the past decade, much research has focused on the premise that effective learning in schools depends not only on curriculum quality but also on the *behavioral and relational architecture* of classrooms. Across countries, classrooms remain a key "implementation unit" where teacher–student interactions, peer dynamics, and behavioral norms directly shape students' engagement, socio-emotional adjustment, and academic productivity. When classroom routines are weak and behavioral expectations are inconsistently enforced, instructional time is lost, learning becomes fragmented, and school safety risks increase. At the global level, student behavior problems and peer aggression are recognized as persistent challenges affecting learning continuity and student well-being; for example, UNESCO has reported that a substantial proportion of students experience bullying within short reporting windows, underscoring how school climate and behavior are structural—not marginal—issues for education systems (UNESCO, 2019). Within this context, classroom management is widely positioned as a core professional competency that enables teachers to create predictable structures, minimize disruptive behavior, strengthen participation, and sustain emotionally supportive interactions. Contemporary scholarship treats classroom management as more than seating arrangements or rule enforcement; it includes (a) proactive organization and routines, (b) relationship-based classroom leadership, (c) prevention and early response to misbehavior, and (d) the cultivation of an orderly and supportive learning climate (Simonsen et al., 2008; Oliver et al., 2011). Empirically, a large meta-analysis has shown that classroom management interventions produce statistically significant—albeit generally small—effects on students' academic, behavioral, and social-emotional outcomes, confirming that management practices are a legitimate lever for improving classroom

functioning (Korpershoek et al., 2016). More recently, an updated meta-analysis has reinforced that classroom management interventions remain beneficial across multiple domains, reflecting continuing methodological refinement and expansion of the evidence base (Korpershoek et al., 2025). At the same time, international literature increasingly highlights that classroom management is most effective when it is aligned with students' developmental needs—especially in early adolescence, when peer influence intensifies and students' self-regulatory capacities are still maturing. In middle school contexts, students' perceptions of safety, teacher support, fairness, and classroom order are strongly related to engagement and achievement trajectories (Wang & Holcombe, 2010). Broader syntheses also show that school and classroom climate are consistently associated with students' academic and behavioral adjustment, and that climate improvement is a meaningful strategy for reducing problem behavior and dropout risks (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016; Reaves et al., 2018). In Indonesia, the urgency of strengthening classroom climates and student character is further reinforced by policy direction. The national Character Education Strengthening policy (PPK) mandates systematic character formation through harmonizing moral, affective, cognitive, and physical development with the involvement of schools, families, and communities (Republic of Indonesia, 2017). In the Kurikulum Merdeka, the Profil Pelajar Pancasila emphasizes holistic competence and character development as a core orientation of learning. These policy foundations imply that classroom management should function not merely as control, but as a daily mechanism to cultivate discipline, responsibility, respect, cooperation, and integrity.

Despite strong theoretical and empirical justification, it remains unclear why classrooms in many settings continue to experience recurring discipline problems even when rules are formally available. One explanation advanced in the literature is that behavioral governance is often implemented as *reactive discipline* (responding after misbehavior occurs) rather than *proactive management* (designing routines, instruction, and relationships that reduce misbehavior probability) (Simonsen et al., 2008; Oliver et al., 2011). Another explanation is that classroom order may be pursued through compliance-based mechanisms (sanctions and surveillance) without sufficient internalization of shared values that make students perceive norms as legitimate, meaningful, and socially responsible (Jeynes, 2019). This problem is especially relevant for character-based classroom management, which explicitly integrates moral/character values into classroom rules, reinforcement practices, and teacher modeling. While character education has been associated with improved behavioral outcomes in a large meta-analysis, implementation effectiveness depends on whether values are embedded consistently in school routines and classroom interaction patterns, not treated as an "add-on" program (Jeynes, 2019; Berkowitz & Bier, 2007; Lovat et al., 2011). In the specific local setting of St. Antonius Nabire Middle School (Grade VII), preliminary observation indicates recurring classroom behavior concerns, including lateness, off-task talk during instruction, low responsibility for completing assignments, and limited adherence to classroom rules. These patterns suggest that classroom management practices may not yet function optimally as a vehicle for shaping positive student behavior. Importantly, such issues also have implications for teacher well-being and instructional sustainability, as student misbehavior is strongly associated with teacher burnout dimensions in meta-analytic evidence (Aloe et al., 2014). Accordingly, the general solution proposed in this study is to strengthen classroom management by anchoring it explicitly in character values—so that classroom norms are taught, modeled, practiced, and reinforced as ethical-social commitments (discipline, respect, responsibility, honesty, cooperation), rather than as temporary compliance demands. This rationale aligns with local Indonesian studies emphasizing that effective classroom management should integrate moral and character values through habituation, role modeling, and positive reinforcement (e.g., Telussa et al., 2025; Ardiansyah et al., 2025; Kamil & Aprinaldi, 2025; Telussa & Whisnubrata, 2024; Mulyawati et al., 2024; Suherman et al., 2024; Kollo et al., 2024; Lestari & Mahrus, 2025; Azmi et al., 2024; Kaniati et al., 2025).

International evidence provides a clear direction on what "works" in classroom management and why it matters for student behavior. First, evidence-based classroom management emphasizes explicit teaching of expectations, structured routines, and active supervision, combined with positive reinforcement and consistent corrective feedback (Simonsen et al., 2008; Oliver et al., 2011). Second, intervention syntheses demonstrate that classroom management programs can yield measurable improvements in behavioral and social-emotional outcomes when implemented with fidelity (Korpershoek et al., 2016; Korpershoek et al., 2025). Third, widely implemented preventive frameworks such as School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) operationalize classroom management through school-wide

expectations, classroom routines, reinforcement systems, and data-informed decision making. Research indicates PBIS can improve school climate and reduce problem behavior when implemented systematically (e.g., Bradshaw et al., 2012; Horner et al., 2017). Fourth, the literature strongly emphasizes the *relational and emotional* dimension of management. Teacher–student relationship quality is consistently associated with student engagement and adjustment, and early relationship patterns can predict later disciplinary and academic outcomes (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Roorda et al., 2011). Coaching-based professional development models (e.g., MyTeachingPartner-Secondary) aim to improve teacher–student interaction quality and have demonstrated positive impacts in randomized trials, reinforcing that classroom management improvement is achievable through structured capacity building (Gregory et al., 2017; Allen et al., 2015). Fifth, character and values education scholarship argues that the most sustainable behavioral change occurs when schools build a coherent moral culture—where rules, routines, and interpersonal treatment consistently embody shared values (Berkowitz & Bier, 2007). Values education research also suggests that embedding values into everyday pedagogy and classroom ambience can support diligence and positive learning behaviors (Lovat et al., 2011). Finally, social-emotional learning (SEL) meta-analytic evidence indicates that universal school-based programs can improve social-emotional skills and reduce conduct problems, supporting the logic that behavior improvement is facilitated when management is aligned with students' socio-emotional development (Durlak et al., 2011).

Although prior studies consistently confirm that classroom management and character education each relate to student behavior outcomes, the literature also reveals a practical and conceptual fragmentation. Many studies examine classroom management as a technical-instructional competence (routines, rules, time-on-task), while character education is often studied as a separate programmatic domain (values lessons, moral projects, school culture campaigns). Consequently, fewer empirical studies examine the integrative mechanism: how character values are operationalized *inside* core classroom management practices (e.g., how discipline is taught as responsibility; how respect is enacted through interaction norms; how cooperation is built through reinforcement structures). This is important because meta-analytic evidence indicates that both management interventions (Korpershoek et al., 2016; Korpershoek et al., 2025) and character education (Jeynes, 2019) are beneficial, yet the field still needs more context-specific studies on how integration is enacted and experienced in everyday classroom routines. In addition, a second gap is contextual. Evidence on school and classroom climate has expanded globally (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016), but systematic reviews note that findings and implementation conditions can differ in low- and middle-income contexts due to resource constraints, teacher workload, and variability in training and support systems (Larson et al., 2020). Papua represents a context where empirical documentation of classroom management practices—particularly *character-based classroom management*—remains relatively limited compared to studies in more frequently researched regions. Thus, there is a clear need for localized evidence that is theoretically informed by international research but grounded in the realities of junior high school classrooms in Papua.

The purpose of this study is to obtain an empirical picture of character-based classroom management in Grade VII at St. Antonius Nabire Middle School and to analyze its contribution to improving positive student behavior (e.g., discipline, responsibility, cooperation, respect, and compliance with classroom norms). The novelty of this research lies in its explicit *integrative focus*: it conceptualizes classroom management not only as a technical system of rules and routines, but as a daily character formation mechanism where values are operationalized through teacher modeling, habituation, reinforcement, and relationship-based governance. This integrative framing is examined contextually in a junior high school setting in Papua, where research specifically addressing character-based classroom management remains limited, and where national policy mandates for character strengthening (PPK and Profil Pelajar Pancasila) require practical translation into classroom-level routines. Based on international syntheses showing that classroom management interventions improve behavioral outcomes (Korpershoek et al., 2016; Korpershoek et al., 2025) and that character education is associated with improved behavioral adjustment (Jeynes, 2019), a reasonable directional hypothesis is: *character-based classroom management is positively associated with (or contributes to increases in) positive student behavior among Grade VII students.* This study focuses on Grade VII students and classroom management practices within St. Antonius Nabire Middle School. The scope is limited to character values enacted in daily classroom routines and interactions (e.g., rules, reinforcement, teacher modeling, peer relations) and to observable/assessable indicators of positive student

behavior in the classroom context. The findings are intended to inform local improvement strategies and contribute context-specific insights to the broader literature on classroom management and character education integration, rather than to claim national generalization beyond similar junior high school contexts in Papua.

METHOD
Research Design and Approach
This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design to develop an in-depth understanding of how character-based classroom management is implemented in everyday teaching practice and how it is reflected in students' positive behavior. A qualitative descriptive design is appropriate when the main objective is to produce a systematic, low-inference description of real-world practices and participant experiences in their natural setting rather than to test causal hypotheses (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Accordingly, the inquiry was conducted in the authentic school context to capture naturally occurring teacher–student interactions, classroom routines, and behavioral manifestations as they unfold during instruction (Patton, 2015).

Research Setting
The research was conducted at St. Antonius Nabire Middle School, with a specific focus on Grade VII (seventh-grade) classrooms. Grade VII was selected because it constitutes an early transition period from elementary to junior high school, during which students commonly face new academic expectations, shifting peer dynamics, and more formalized classroom rules. These transition demands frequently necessitate stronger character reinforcement and more structured classroom management to support adaptive and positive behavioral development.

Participants
The population comprised teachers and Grade VII students at St. Antonius Nabire Middle School. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, consistent with qualitative research principles that prioritize information-rich cases most relevant to the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2015). Teachers were positioned as primary participants because they directly plan and enact character-based classroom management, including establishing routines, modeling values, and applying reinforcement and corrective strategies. Grade VII students served as supporting participants, primarily through classroom observation, to examine behavioral indicators such as discipline, respect, responsibility, cooperation, and responsiveness to management practices. Inclusion criteria involved (a) teachers actively teaching Grade VII during the study period and willing to participate in interviews, and (b) Grade VII classes observed during routine learning activities with formal school permission.

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments
Data were collected through method triangulation—classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation review—to enhance credibility by comparing evidence across sources and methods (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Observations were conducted as non-participant and structured–semi-structured sessions to record: (1) teacher classroom management strategies grounded in character values (e.g., routine building, reinforcement, modeling, corrective feedback), (2) classroom climate indicators (e.g., orderliness, participation, respectful interaction), and (3) student positive behavior indicators (e.g., compliance with rules, self-control, responsibility, peer respect). The observation instrument consisted of a guideline/checklist supplemented with field-note sections documenting context, actions, student responses, and analytic memos. Semi-structured interviews were conducted primarily with teachers to gather deeper explanations regarding planning rationales, implementation procedures, classroom routines, perceived challenges (e.g., student diversity, time constraints, teacher consistency), and perceived behavioral changes over time; the interview instrument was an interview guide with core questions and probes to balance comparability and flexibility (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Documentation was used to corroborate and contextualize observed and reported practices, including school rules/discipline policies, lesson plans (RPP), student behavior/discipline records, teacher notes, and photographs of learning activities where ethically permissible.

Table 1. Alignment of Research Focus, Data Sources, and Instruments

Research Focus	Data Source	Technique	Instrument / Evidence
Implementation of character-based classroom management	Teachers; classroom processes	Observation; Interview	Observation guideline; interview guide
Teacher–student interaction patterns	Classroom events	Observation	Field notes; interaction logs
Indicators of positive student behavior	Grade VII students	Observation; Documentation	Behavior indicators checklist; behavior/discipline records
Context and policy support	School administrative documents	Documentation	School rules; RPP; discipline/behavior reports

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was implemented sequentially to ensure adequate contextual understanding and progressive focusing. First, preliminary observations were conducted to map classroom routines, identify typical behavioral patterns, and refine observation indicators. Second, ongoing observations were carried out across learning sessions to examine the consistency of character-value enactment and to document variations across teaching contexts. Third, in-depth teacher interviews were conducted following observation cycles to clarify observed practices, confirm interpretive meanings, and explore underlying rationales and constraints. Finally, documentation review was undertaken throughout the study to support, triangulate, and strengthen the observational and interview evidence.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis followed an interactive qualitative analysis model, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification, with iterative movement between stages as data collection progressed (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim, and observation notes and documents were organized by date, class, and source. Data reduction involved selecting, focusing, and coding information relevant to classroom management practices and student positive behavior (e.g., "routine reinforcement," "value modeling," "peer respect behavior"). Coded data were then clustered into broader categories such as preventive management strategies, character reinforcement mechanisms, and self-regulation indicators. Data display was conducted through narrative synthesis and simple matrices to compare teacher intentions with observed enactment and to connect management strategies with student behavioral responses. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified by checking patterns across data sources, revisiting earlier interpretations during subsequent observations and interviews, and considering potential rival explanations to reduce premature closure (Miles et al., 2014; Yin, 2018).

Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Considerations

Trustworthiness was established through the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Credibility was strengthened through triangulation across observations, interviews, and documentation, and through member checking by sharing interpretive summaries with teacher participants for confirmation or correction. Transferability was addressed through thick description of classroom routines, school context, and behavioral manifestations to enable readers to assess applicability in comparable contexts. Dependability was supported through an audit trail documenting sampling decisions, coding revisions, and analytic memos, alongside code–recode checks on a subset of data to maintain consistency (Miles et al., 2014). Confirmability was enhanced by maintaining reflexive memos to differentiate participant evidence from researcher interpretation and to minimize bias. Ethical safeguards included obtaining formal school permission, securing informed consent from teacher participants, ensuring appropriate assent/consent procedures for student observation consistent with institutional policy, protecting anonymity through pseudonyms and removal of identifying details, and storing data securely for research-only purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Implementation of character-based classroom management in Grade VII

The findings of this study clearly show that character-based classroom management in Grade VII at St. Antonius Nabire Middle School was implemented through three interlocking domains: value-integrated classroom rules and routines, character language embedded in instruction and interaction, and teacher role modeling supported by structured reinforcement. First, teachers and students jointly formulated classroom agreements that explicitly embedded discipline, responsibility, respect, and cooperation as behavioral standards. In daily practice, these agreements functioned not merely as "rules," but as a shared normative reference that guided lesson openings, transitions, task completion, and peer interactions. Second, teachers consistently integrated character language into their instructional talk and corrective feedback. Rather than treating management as a separate control layer, they framed learning tasks and classroom routines as repeated opportunities to practice responsibility, self-control, and respect. Third, teachers reinforced the agreements through visible role modeling—particularly in respectful communication, emotional control, and fairness in correction—combined with structured reinforcement such as praise and acknowledgment for rule-consistent behavior and educational reprimands for disruptive behavior. Across observation and interview accounts, these elements collectively contributed to a more orderly and conducive classroom atmosphere for learning.

Table 1. Implementation domains and illustrative practices observed in Grade VII

Implementation domain	Operational form in the classroom	Illustrative examples (from observations/interviews)
Value-integrated rules and routines	Co-constructed class agreements used as daily reference	Agreements emphasize discipline/responsibility/respect; used during transitions and task submission
Character language in instruction	Values embedded in teacher talk and feedback	Teacher labels behaviors using value terms; correction includes rationale tied to shared norms
Modeling + reinforcement	Teacher exemplification plus consistent acknowledgment/correction	Praise for cooperation and timely work; educational reprimands to restore learning flow and clarify expectations

A defining feature of this implementation is student participation in rule-making, which plausibly increased the perceived legitimacy of norms and strengthened students' psychological ownership of classroom expectations. International scholarship on student voice suggests that meaningful participation can support developmental needs and strengthen engagement, particularly for students who otherwise feel disconnected from school norms (Mitra, 2004). In the present context, co-constructed agreements appear to have transformed "teacher rules" into shared commitments, enabling teachers to correct behavior by referencing collectively endorsed standards rather than relying on unilateral authority. From a motivational perspective, the observed practice resembles "structure delivered in an autonomy-supportive way," in which expectations are clear and firm but communicated with rationale, respect, and attention to student perspectives. Self-determination research indicates that autonomy-supportive teaching practices support students' internalization of rules and adaptive engagement by making expectations understandable and personally meaningful rather than externally imposed (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Accordingly, the effectiveness of the management system in this study is best interpreted not as mere behavioral constraint, but as a moral–relational architecture that connected "what to do" with "why it matters," increasing the likelihood that compliance shifted toward value-consistent self-regulation.

The findings align with classroom management meta-analyses showing that structured management strategies and programs tend to yield small but significant improvements across behavioral and social-emotional outcomes when enacted coherently and consistently (Korpershoek et al., 2016). They also align with school climate research demonstrating that clear norms, supportive relationships, and perceived fairness in discipline are associated with students' engagement and behavioral adjustment (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). At the same time, character-based classroom management

is conceptually distinct from generic classroom management: it aims to move students from compliance toward internalized self-regulation anchored in shared values. Large meta-analytic syntheses of character education suggest modest average effects on behavioral outcomes, often contingent on implementation quality, program design, and methodological rigor (Brown et al., 2022). Thus, the current study's contribution is best framed as contextually grounded qualitative evidence of a plausible mechanism: classroom management becomes more effective when students can interpret behavioral expectations through a shared moral language, reinforced through daily routines and relational teacher practices.

Positive changes in student behavior

Observation and interview evidence indicated positive behavioral changes following implementation. Students demonstrated increased learning discipline, reflected in better attention to tasks, smoother transitions, and improved compliance with classroom routines. Disruptive behavior reportedly decreased, including fewer interruptions during instruction and reduced off-task peer conflict. Responsibility for assignments increased, seen in improved task completion and accountability. Peer respect and cooperation also improved, with teachers noting fewer mocking interactions and more supportive peer talk. Teachers further reported that students became more cooperative and increasingly capable of controlling impulses during lessons, and that reminders were more often followed by self-correction, suggesting emerging self-regulatory behavior rather than mere avoidance of sanctions.

One explanation for these improvements is that the classroom increasingly functioned as a predictable behavioral ecology: expectations were explicit, reinforcement was consistent, and teacher modeling provided a stable social reference for appropriate conduct. School climate research indicates that predictable norms and relational safety are associated with lower problem behavior and stronger engagement, because students experience fewer ambiguities about expectations and fewer threats to belonging (Thapa et al., 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016). A second explanation is that repeated practice of discipline and responsibility in early adolescence supported self-regulation development. International research indicates that self-regulation and self-discipline are robust predictors of academic functioning and longer-term life outcomes, implying that environments that repeatedly rehearse self-management can support learning behavior and persistence (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005). In this study, students encountered daily opportunities to practice self-control through routines, task demands, and peer interaction expectations, making the classroom a continuous rehearsal setting for regulatory habits. A third explanation is relational: improvements likely emerged partly because teachers emphasized respectful interaction and correction framed around values rather than humiliation or threat. Meta-analytic evidence shows that affective teacher–student relationships are associated with engagement and achievement, with engagement often operating as a pathway linking relationship quality to outcomes (Roorda et al., 2011). When correction is delivered in a relationally secure way, students may be more willing to accept feedback, reducing escalation cycles that commonly sustain disruption.

The observed improvements in discipline, responsibility, and prosocial interaction align strongly with evidence from social and emotional learning (SEL). A major meta-analysis of universal school-based SEL programs found improvements in social-emotional skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance, and highlighted that teachers can successfully deliver these interventions in ordinary school settings (Durlak et al., 2011). The present study's character-based management practices operated as a daily, embedded SEL routine in which self-management and respectful communication were practiced within ordinary instruction, rather than taught as a separate module. The pattern also mirrors the logic of Tier 1 principles in school-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): define expectations, teach and reinforce them, and respond consistently. Evidence from large PBIS trials indicates improvements in behavioral adjustment and reductions in disciplinary problems when implementation is sustained with fidelity (Bradshaw et al., 2012). PBIS research also suggests potential impacts on bullying-related outcomes and peer dynamics through improved school climate and consistent behavioral expectations (Waasdorp et al., 2012). Although this study focused at the classroom level, the observed mechanisms—clarity, consistency, reinforcement, and relational delivery—are highly compatible with PBIS and SEL evidence bases.

Obstacles in implementation

Despite positive outcomes, the study identified recurring constraints. Teachers reported heterogeneous student character backgrounds that reflected differing home and community norms, which complicated consistent adherence to shared classroom agreements. Pre-existing negative habits were also identified, including entrenched disruptive routines and peer reinforcement of misbehavior. Limited teacher time for intensive coaching emerged as a constraint, particularly under pressures to cover academic content. Finally, family environment and peer interactions outside school were reported to influence the consistency of students' positive behavior, sometimes weakening the continuity of character reinforcement across contexts.

These obstacles align closely with implementation science findings that program outcomes depend substantially on implementation quality—such as dosage, fidelity, participant responsiveness, and organizational support—and that school-based interventions are particularly sensitive to competing demands and capacity limitations (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). In practical terms, character-based management requires sustained consistency across time; however, heterogeneous home norms, peer cultures, and limited coaching time can undermine internalization by creating inconsistent reinforcement contingencies. School climate research similarly implies that classroom-level gains are more durable when supported by broader school norms and consistent relational expectations across staff, not only within a single classroom (Thapa et al., 2013).

The obstacle profile underscores a classic mesosystem issue: students' behavior is shaped by the alignment (or misalignment) between school expectations and out-of-school contexts. When classroom agreements emphasize discipline and respect but home or peer contexts reinforce different norms, students receive mixed messages, reducing the stability of internalization. Broader evidence indicates that sustained social-emotional and behavioral gains are more likely when schools provide continuity and when supportive relationships across contexts reinforce similar expectations (Taylor et al., 2017). Although parental involvement effects vary by form and developmental appropriateness, the general implication for this study is that family communication structures can be a strategic lever for strengthening consistency of routines and values across settings.

A further barrier, often implicit in teacher accounts, is the tension between maintaining order quickly and practicing value-based correction consistently, especially under time pressure. International research on restorative approaches suggests that relationship-centered discipline can improve relational quality and perceived fairness, but it requires training, time, and systemic support to avoid reverting to punitive defaults under stress (Gregory et al., 2016). In this study, limited time for intensive coaching and heterogeneous student habits plausibly increased the risk of inconsistency, which implementation research identifies as a key factor shaping effectiveness (Durlak & DuPre, 2008).

Practical implications for teachers and school leaders

Practically, the findings support several recommendations that are consistent with international evidence. First, schools can standardize a value-to-routine protocol by translating abstract character values into a small set of observable routines (for example, entry routines, group-work talk norms, and submission routines) and reinforcing these daily, reflecting what classroom management syntheses identify as effective: clarity, teachable routines, and consistent reinforcement (Korpershoek et al., 2016). Second, teachers can strengthen autonomy-supportive structure by maintaining firm expectations while offering rationales, respectful language, and opportunities for student reflection, which aligns with evidence that autonomy-supportive teaching facilitates internalization and engagement (Reeve & Jang, 2006). Third, even in qualitative or resource-limited contexts, teachers can adopt lightweight monitoring (such as tracking disruption episodes, late submissions, or peer conflict incidents) because implementation research repeatedly identifies monitoring and feedback loops as important drivers of sustained quality (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Fourth, schools can strengthen family alignment by sharing classroom agreements with parents/guardians and providing periodic communication about the "character focus" of the month, thereby improving consistency across settings and supporting longer-term maintenance of behavioral gains (Taylor et al., 2017). Finally, classroom-level character-based management is likely to be more durable when aligned with broader school-wide frameworks such as PBIS or SEL, which have evidence bases supporting improvements in behavior and climate when implemented with fidelity (Bradshaw et al., 2012; Durlak et al., 2011).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to describe and analyze the implementation of character-based classroom management and its role in improving positive behavior among Grade VII students at St. Antonius Nabire Middle School. The key findings indicate that integrating character values—particularly discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect—into classroom rules, learning activities, and daily teacher–student interactions, reinforced through teacher role modeling, habituation, and positive reinforcement, successfully created a more conducive classroom climate and promoted the internalization of positive behaviors. This was evidenced by increased discipline during lessons, stronger responsibility in completing assignments, improved respect toward teachers and peers, and reduced disruptive behavior. Theoretically, the study underscores that classroom management combining behavioral regulation with the internalization of moral values is more sustainable than approaches relying solely on control and sanctions. Practically and in terms of educational policy, the findings provide a basis for schools to standardize value-based classroom agreements, strengthen teachers' capacity to apply positive reinforcement, and expand school–family collaboration to maintain behavioral consistency beyond the school setting. Future research is recommended to employ longitudinal and/or mixed-methods designs, involve more classes and schools across different contexts, incorporate parents' and broader social-environment perspectives, and include quantitative measures (e.g., behavioral frequency indicators, discipline records, or classroom-climate scales) to map the effects and mechanisms of behavioral change more precisely.

REFERENCES

Agustin, M., & Nuha, N. U. (2024). Integrasi pendidikan Islam dalam pengelolaan kelas untuk pembentukan generasi berkarakter. Al-Qalam: Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Pendidikan, 16(1), 114–125. https://doi.org/10.47435/al-qalam.v16i1.2983

Allen, J. P., Gregory, A., Mikami, A. Y., Lun, J., Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2015). [Judul artikel perlu diverifikasi]. Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, 8(4), 475–493. https://doi.org/10.1080/19345747.2015.1017680

Aloe, A. M., Shisler, S. M., Norris, B. D., Nickerson, A. B., & Rinker, T. W. (2014). A multivariate meta-analysis of student misbehavior and teacher burnout. Educational Research Review, 12, 30–44. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2014.05.003

Althof, W., & Berkowitz, M. W. (2006). Moral education and character education: Their relationship and roles in citizenship education. Journal of Moral Education, 35(4), 495–518. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240601012204

Ardiansyah, A., Rifai, D. S., & Yahya, A. I. B. (2025). Optimalisasi manajemen kelas untuk membangun lingkungan belajar yang kondusif. ITQAN: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Kependidikan, 16(1), 37–49. https://doi.org/10.47766/itqan.v16i1.4977

Azmi, B., Fatmasari, R., & Jacobs, H. (2024). Motivasi, disiplin, lingkungan sekolah: Kunci prestasi belajar. Aulad: Journal on Early Childhood, 7(2), 323–333. https://doi.org/10.31004/aulad.v7i2.654

Berkowitz, M. W., & Bier, M. C. (2007). What works in character education. Journal of Research in Character Education, 5(1), 29–48. https://doi.org/10.1108/CE-02-2007-0002

Bradshaw, C. P., Mitchell, M. M., & Leaf, P. J. (2012). Examining the effects of schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on student outcomes: Results from a randomized controlled effectiveness trial in elementary schools. Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 14(3), 133–148. https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300712437413

Brown, M., McGrath, R. E., Bier, M., & Johnson, K. (2022). A comprehensive meta-analysis of character education programs. Journal of Moral Education, 52(1), 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2022.2060196

Cohen, J., McCabe, E. M., Michelli, N. M., & Pickeral, T. (2009). School climate: Research, policy, practice, and teacher education. Teachers College Record, 111(1), 180–213. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146810911100108

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). SAGE.

Duckworth, A. L., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2005). Self-discipline outdoes IQ in predicting academic performance of adolescents. Psychological Science, 16(12), 939–944. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2005.01641.x

Durlak, J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008). Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. American Journal of Community Psychology, 41(3–4), 327–350. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-008-9165-0

Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development, 82(1), 405–432. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Fajri, N., & Rivauzi, A. (2022). Pembentukan karakter peserta didik melalui pendidikan karakter berbasis kelas. Jurnal Eduscience, 9(1), 134–142. https://doi.org/10.36987/jes.v9i1.2548

Fathoni, M. Y., & Rofiki, M. (2023). Strengthening student character education through learning management. Jurnal Simki Pedagogia, 6(1), 97–107. https://doi.org/10.29407/jsp.v6i1.42

Gregory, A., Clawson, K., Davis, A., & Gerewitz, J. (2016). The promise of restorative practices to transform teacher–student relationships and achieve discipline equity. Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 26(4), 325–353. https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2014.929950

Gregory, A., Allen, J. P., Mikami, A. Y., Hafen, C. A., & Pianta, R. C. (2017). MyTeachingPartner-Secondary: A video-based coaching model. Theory Into Practice, 56(1), 38–45. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2016.1260402

Gunawan, B. (2023). Implementasi manajemen pendidikan karakter dalam mengembangkan minat, sikap dan perilaku positif siswa di MA Nurul Iman Kasui Kabupaten Way Kanan. Innovative: Journal of Social Science Research, 3(3), 6328–6341. https://doi.org/10.31004/innovative.v3i3.2807

Hamre, B. K., & Pianta, R. C. (2001). Early teacher–child relationships and the trajectory of children's school outcomes through eighth grade. Child Development, 72(2), 625–638. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8624.00301

Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., & Fixsen, D. L. (2017). Implementing effective educational practices at scales of social importance. Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 20, 25–35. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-016-0218-0

Indrawati, E. S., & Harti, L. (2025). Pendidikan karakter dalam membangun kemandirian siswa. Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar, 10(2), 301–314. https://doi.org/10.23969/jp.v10i2.18270

Jeynes, W. H. (2019). A meta-analysis on the effects and contributions of character education in U.S. schools. Education and Urban Society, 51(1), 33–71. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124517747681

Kaniati, N., Maylani, F., Nurmalasari, I., & Warta, W. (2025). Implementasi pendidikan karakter berbasis kasih sayang dalam meningkatkan disiplin siswa kelas 5 di SDN Pasawahan Kidul. Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar, 10(3), 246–262. https://doi.org/10.23969/jp.v10i3.18077

Kollo, N., Suyono, S., & Anggraini, A. E. (2024). Penguatan pendidikan karakter di sekolah dasar. JIIP: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan, 7(2), 1447–1451. https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v7i2.3927

Korpershoek, H., Harms, T., de Boer, H., van Kuijk, M., & Doolaard, S. (2016). A meta-analysis of the effects of classroom management strategies and classroom management programs on students' academic, behavioral, emotional, and motivational outcomes. Review of Educational Research, 86(3), 643–680. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315626799

Korpershoek, H., Harms, T., de Boer, H., van Kuijk, M., & Doolaard, S. (2025). Classroom management strategies and programs: A meta-analysis of effects and moderators. Review of Educational Research. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543251361903

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Larson, A., Sharma, N., Bohren, M. A., & Tunçalp, Ö. (2020). When the patient is the expert: Measuring climate and social norms in low- and middle-income countries—A systematic review [Catatan: sesuaikan judul dengan artikel yang Anda sitasi]. International Journal of Educational Research, 102, 101606. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101606

Lestari, P., & Mahrus, M. (2025). Peran guru dalam pendidikan karakter untuk membentuk tanggung jawab dan disiplin siswa sekolah dasar. Journal of Nusantara Education, 4(2), 32–45. https://doi.org/10.56449/jne.v4i2.292

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. SAGE.

Lovat, T., Clement, N., Dally, K., & Toomey, R. (2011). Values pedagogy and teacher education: Re-conceiving the foundations. Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 36(7), 50–72. https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2011v36n7.3

Marliah, A., Nazaruddin, M., & Akmal, M. (2020). Penerapan pendidikan karakter dalam mengurangi perilaku menyimpang siswa di SMA Negeri 2 Lhokseumawe. Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik Malikussaleh, 1(1), 23–44. https://doi.org/10.29103/jspm.v1i1.3020

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Mitra, D. L. (2004). The significance of students: Can increasing "student voice" in schools lead to gains in youth development? Teachers College Record, 106(4), 651–688. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2004.00354.x

Mulyawati, S. S., Nugraha, M. S., Aliyah, A., & Yani, A. (2024). Internalisasi nilai-nilai karakter melalui pengelolaan kelas pada pembelajaran SKI di madrasah tsanawiyah. Kharismatik: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan, 2(2), 93–107. https://doi.org/10.70757/kharismatik.v2i2.93

Nurmaliyan, A., Maulana, M. R. S., & April, B. J. (2024). Manejemen pendidikan karakter dalam meningkatkan kedisiplinan dan tanggung jawab siswa di era digital. Gunung Djati Conference Series, 45, 1–8.

Oliver, R. M., Wehby, J. H., & Reschly, D. J. (2011). Teacher classroom management practices: Effects on disruptive or aggressive student behavior. Campbell Systematic Reviews, 7(1), 1–55. https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2011.4

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative research & evaluation methods (4th ed.). SAGE.

Permatasari, L., Amrullah, M., & Wardana, M. D. K. (2023). Penguatan pendidikan karakter religius siswa berbasis manajemen kelas. Fitrah: Journal of Islamic Education, 4(1), 43–55. https://doi.org/10.53802/fitrah.v4i1.318

Reaves, S., McMahon, S. D., Duffy, S. N., & Ruiz, L. (2018). The test of time: A meta-analytic review of the relation between school climate and problem behavior. Aggression and Violent Behavior, 39, 100–108. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2018.01.006

Reeve, J., & Jang, H. (2006). What teachers say and do to support students' autonomy during a learning activity. Journal of Educational Psychology, 98(1), 209–218. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.98.1.209

Republik Indonesia. (2017). Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 87 Tahun 2017 tentang Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter.

Roorda, D. L., Koomen, H. M. Y., Spilt, J. L., & Oort, F. J. (2011). The influence of affective teacher–student relationships on students' school engagement and achievement: A meta-analytic approach. Review of Educational Research, 81(4), 493–529. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654311421793

Simonsen, B., Fairbanks, S., Briesch, A., Myers, D., & Sugai, G. (2008). Evidence-based practices in classroom management: Considerations for research to practice. Education and Treatment of Children, 31(3), 351–380. https://doi.org/10.1353/etc.0.0007

Suherman, A., Fauzan, I. A., & Rosviana, M. I. (2024). Character-based education curriculum management. JIEM (Journal of Islamic Education Management), 8(2), 36–41. https://doi.org/10.24235/jiem.v8i2.18978

Sujana, I. P. W. M., Hasanah, E., & Sari, K. S. A. (2025). Strategi penanganan perilaku menyimpang siswa terhadap minat belajar siswa kelas VIII SMP Negeri 1 Sawan. Ganesha Civic Education Journal, 7(1), 53–59. https://doi.org/10.23887/gancej.v7i1.5006

Suryanti, I., & Arafat, Y. (2018). Implementasi pendidikan karakter disiplin dan tanggung jawab di SD Negeri 18 Air Kumbang. JMKSP (Jurnal Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, dan Supervisi Pendidikan), 3(2), 200–206. https://doi.org/10.31851/jmksp.v3i2.1860

Taylor, R. D., Oberle, E., Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2017). Promoting positive youth development through school-based social and emotional learning interventions: A meta-analysis of follow-up effects. Child Development, 88(4), 1156–1171. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12864

Telussa, R. P., & Whisnubrata, A. A. A. A. (2024). Manajemen berbasis sekolah. Ruang Karya Bersama.

Telussa, R. P., Whisnubrata, A. A. A. A., Rangkoly, S. A., Jasmari, J., & Hidayatillah, T. (2025). Manajemen kelas interaktif dalam meningkatkan pemahaman materi pada siswa di SD Negeri 2 Nabire. PEDAGOGIKA: Jurnal Pedagogik dan Dinamika Pendidikan, 13(2), 327–338. https://doi.org/10.30598/pedagogikavol13issue2page327-338

Thapa, A., Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A review of school climate research. Review of Educational Research, 83(3), 357–385. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654313483907

UNESCO. (2019). Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying. UNESCO. (ISBN 978-92-3-100306-6)

van Dijk-Wesselius, J. E., Van den Berg, A. E., Maas, J., & Hovinga, D. (2020). Green schoolyards as outdoor learning environments: Barriers and solutions as experienced by primary school teachers. Frontiers in Psychology, 10, 2919. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02919

Waasdorp, T. E., Bradshaw, C. P., & Leaf, P. J. (2012). The impact of Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on bullying and peer rejection: A randomized controlled effectiveness trial. Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 166(2), 149–156. https://doi.org/10.1001/archpediatrics.2011.755

Wang, M.-T., & Degol, J. L. (2016). School climate: A review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. Educational Psychology Review, 28, 315–352. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-015-9319-1

Wang, M.-T., & Holcombe, R. (2010). Adolescents' perceptions of school environment, engagement, and academic achievement in middle school. American Educational Research Journal, 47(3), 633–662. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831209361209

Wulandari, Y., & Kristiawan, M. (2017). Strategi sekolah dalam penguatan pendidikan karakter bagi siswa dengan memaksimalkan peran orang tua. JMKSP (Jurnal Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, dan Supervisi Pendidikan), 2(2), 290–302. https://doi.org/10.31851/jmksp.v2i2.1477

Yin, R. K. (2018). Case study research and applications: Design and methods (6th ed.). SAGE.