

Effectiveness of Classroom Management Strategies in Reducing Off-Task Behavior

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ABSTRAK

Perilaku off-task siswa merupakan tantangan utama dalam proses pembelajaran di berbagai jenjang pendidikan, termasuk di MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. Perilaku ini dapat mengganggu konsentrasi siswa, mengurangi efektivitas proses belajar, dan berpotensi menurunkan hasil akademik. Oleh karena itu, penting untuk mengkaji strategi manajemen kelas yang diterapkan dan efektivitasnya dalam mengurangi perilaku tersebut. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis dan mengevaluasi penerapan strategi disiplin positif dan penguatan perilaku sebagai upaya mengendalikan perilaku off-task di kelas XII MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan metode pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi selama satu semester. Analisis data dilakukan secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan hubungan antara strategi yang diterapkan dengan hasil yang diperoleh. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan disiplin positif dan penguatan perilaku secara konsisten mampu meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dan mengurangi perilaku off-task secara signifikan. Guru yang membangun hubungan baik dan menciptakan suasana belajar menyenangkan menunjukkan hasil yang lebih efektif. Meski demikian, faktor lingkungan dan suasana kelas tetap mempengaruhi keberhasilan strategi tersebut. Saran dari penelitian ini adalah pentingnya pelatihan berkelanjutan bagi guru, penyesuaian strategi berdasarkan karakteristik siswa, dan peningkatan fasilitas pendukung agar lingkungan belajar semakin kondusif. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat menjadi referensi praktis dan teoritis untuk meningkatkan manajemen kelas yang efektif di lingkungan pendidikan madrasah.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Manajemen Kelas, Perilaku off-task, Disiplin Positif, Penguatan Perilaku, Lingkungan Belajar

ABSTRACT

Off-task behavior of students is a major challenge in the learning process at various levels of education, including at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. This behavior can disrupt student concentration, reduce the effectiveness of the learning process, and potentially reduce academic results. Therefore, it is important to examine the classroom management strategies applied and their effectiveness in reducing this behavior. The purpose of this study was to analyze and evaluate the implementation of positive discipline strategies and behavioral reinforcement as an effort to control off-task behavior in class XII MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. The approach used was qualitative research with data collection methods through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation for one semester. Data analysis was carried out thematically to identify patterns and relationships between the strategies applied and the results obtained. The results showed that the implementation of positive discipline and behavioral reinforcement consistently increased student engagement and significantly reduced off-task behavior. Teachers who build good relationships and create a pleasant learning atmosphere show more effective results. However, environmental factors and classroom atmosphere still influence the success of the strategy. The suggestions from this study are the importance of ongoing training for teachers, adjusting strategies based on student characteristics, and improving supporting facilities so that the learning environment is more conducive. This research is expected to be a practical and theoretical reference to improve effective classroom management in the madrasah educational environment..

Keywords: Classroom management strategies, off-task behavior, positive discipline, behavioral reinforcement, learning environment

1. INTRODUCTION

Effective learning is highly dependent on conducive classroom conditions and appropriate student behavior (Burden, 2025). One of the major obstacles often faced by educators at various levels of education is student off-task behavior, which is a situation where students are not directly involved in learning activities, talking to themselves, playing, or doing other activities that are not related to the subject matter (Liu et al., 2023). This behavior can disrupt the learning process in general and have an impact on students' academic results and a comfortable and productive learning atmosphere (Cayubit, 2022). At MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, the issue of off-task behavior often arises, becoming a major concern for teachers and schools in efforts to improve the quality of learning and student success (Gueldner et al., 2020).

The problem of off-task behavior is not new and has received a lot of attention in various literature studies (Arnesen et al., 2021). Various previous studies have given rise to various strategies and approaches to managing and reducing this behavior, including through the implementation of effective and innovative classroom management. For example, positive discipline approaches, reinforcing good behavior, and creating a supportive classroom atmosphere have been identified as key strategies that can help teachers manage student behavior (Bear, 2020). However, the success of these strategies is highly dependent on the context and characteristics of a particular environment, including social culture, student characteristics, and teacher competence in implementing these strategies (Killen & O'Toole, 2023). Therefore, it is important to examine more deeply the classroom management practices that are specifically applied in certain school environments, including MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan.

Previous studies, both national and international, tend to be general in nature and tend not to show how these strategies are specifically implemented in local contexts with different cultural, social, and educational characteristics (Li & Pilz, 2023). Many studies have examined the effectiveness of classroom management strategies globally, but few have specifically examined context-specific factors in the madrasah education environment in Indonesia (Bahri et al., 2025), especially at the high school level such as MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. This is one of the research gaps that must be filled so that classroom management practices are more relevant and effective in local environments.

The focus of this study is to understand and analyze the effectiveness of classroom management strategies applied in reducing students' off-task behavior at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. The main questions to be answered are: (1) what strategies are most effectively applied by teachers in managing students' off-task behavior, and (2) what factors influence the success of these strategies in this school environment. In addition, there are two main areas of concern in this study, namely: first, the prevention and management strategies for off-task behavior implemented by teachers in grade XII, and second, the influence of environmental factors and interpersonal factors that influence the success of these strategies.

However, this study has several limitations. First, this study was only conducted in one school, namely MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, so the results may not be fully applicable or generalizable to other schools in different areas (Timotheou et al., 2023). Second, the analysis is more focused on the strategy and environmental factors aspects, while other aspects such as the role of parents and the community may not have been fully covered (Kemp et al., 2024).

The significance of this study lies in the effort to provide a practical and theoretical overview of effective local context-based classroom management strategies, so that they can be used as a reference for teachers, principals, and other related parties in improving the quality of learning and managing student behavior more effectively (Teshager et al., 2021). In addition, the results of this study are expected to help fill the literature gap on managing student behavior in

madrasah environments that often have different social and cultural characteristics from the general education context (Mantau & Buhungo, 2024).

Referring to previous studies, various studies have shown that successful classroom management usually contains elements of positive discipline, consistency, and good relationships between teachers and students (Simonsen & Myers, 2025). For example, a study by Evertson and Emmer (2017) confirmed that positive discipline strategies can increase student engagement and reduce disruptive behavior. However, this study also showed that the success of the strategy is highly dependent on the implementation and adaptation of the local context (Damschroder, 2020). This study aims to fill this gap by looking specifically at the practices implemented at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, as well as identifying factors that influence the success and obstacles faced by teachers in implementing the strategy.

Overall, this study aims to provide a significant contribution to the development of more relevant and contextual classroom management strategies in the madrasah educational environment, especially in Indonesia (Haddade et al., 2024). The results of this study can be a practical reference for educators in adjusting their techniques and approaches in managing student behavior, as well as providing an empirical picture of the factors that support the success of these strategies. Thus, it is expected to be able to create a learning environment that is not only conducive and enjoyable, but also able to produce students who are more disciplined and focused in the learning process (Doyle, 2023).

In addition, this study also opens up opportunities for further studies that can expand the scope by involving various other schools with different characteristics, both in terms of geographical location, education level, and diverse social culture. Future research can use a quantitative approach to statistically measure the effectiveness of the identified strategies, as well as examine other factors that play a role, such as the role of parents and the community. Thus, the development of a comprehensive and adaptive classroom management model can continue to be refined and optimized to improve the success of the teaching and learning process and support for student needs more comprehensively and sustainably (Aly, 2025), (Shoaiab et al., 2024).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with the aim of in-depth understanding of the classroom management strategies implemented at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan and its effectiveness in reducing students' off-task behavior (Hofman, 2023). Relevant theories and concepts in this study include the classroom management theory of Marzano and Marzano (2003), which emphasizes the importance of positive relationships and consistent rules, as well as the positive reinforcement theory of Skinner (1953). This approach was chosen to assess real practices that take place in the field and understand the factors that influence its success contextually and in depth (SWARGIARY, 2024), (Shah, 2025).

The reason for choosing the location at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan is based on its position as a madrasah school that is committed to managing the learning environment effectively and being an example of classroom management practices in the madrasah environment. The focus of the study is on grade XII, because students at this level show behavioral challenges that are quite complex and relevant to analyze. The main unit of analysis is teacher practices in implementing positive discipline and reinforcement strategies, as well as environmental factors and interpersonal relationships that influence its success (Hargie, 2021), (Juffer et al., 2023).

This type of research is a case study with a qualitative approach, where data is collected directly from primary and secondary sources. Primary data came from direct observation for one semester, semi-structured interviews with teachers, principals, and students, as well as documentation related to policies and behavioral records. Secondary data was obtained through literature studies and related official school documents (Hancock et al., 2021), (Alam, 2020).

The data collection process was carried out through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and collection of relevant documents. Observations were carried out during the learning process to record real practices in managing student behavior and classroom dynamics. Semi-structured interviews helped understand the perceptions and direct experiences of teachers, students, and principals. All data were then analyzed using thematic analysis, namely coding and identifying the main themes that emerged from the data that had been collected, then comparing them with relevant theories and literature (Lareau, 2021). (Sahlin, 2025) This process aims to reveal patterns and links between the strategies implemented and the results obtained, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors for the success of these strategies in the field. With this method, it is hoped that the research can produce a holistic and in-depth understanding of the effectiveness and factors that influence classroom management strategies at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, as well as provide an empirical basis for the development of more effective and contextual practices..

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interview Results and Key Findings

From the in-depth interview process conducted with teachers, principals, and grade XII students at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, a number of important findings emerged regarding classroom management practices and perceptions about the effectiveness of the strategies implemented. The teachers interviewed generally applied a positive discipline approach, including giving praise, rewards for good behavior, and using consistent and communicative rules in managing the classroom. They stated that reinforcing positive behavior and creating a pleasant learning atmosphere were the main keys to reducing students' off-task behavior. One teacher said, "We emphasize more on building good relationships, giving rewards, and keeping the classroom atmosphere pleasant so that students are more focused and active.". From the students' perspective, most admitted that the strategies implemented by the teachers were quite effective in motivating them to stay focused and follow the rules. The students stated that they felt appreciated when the teacher acknowledged their efforts, and a comfortable learning atmosphere made it easier for them to concentrate. However, there were also those who stated that if the classroom atmosphere was too noisy or if the teacher was too loud, off-task behavior reappeared. This shows that environmental factors and classroom atmosphere also greatly influence the effectiveness of the strategy.

Meanwhile, from the principal's perspective, they emphasized that teacher training programs related to classroom management and positive discipline are routinely conducted and support the practices that have been implemented. They believe that the success of the strategy is highly dependent on consistency in implementation and teacher readiness to adjust the approach according to class needs.

Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

The results of the interviews showed that positive discipline strategies and behavioral reinforcement carried out consistently were able to increase student attention and reduce off-task behavior in class XII at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. This approach is in line with the theory of Marzano and Marzano (2003), that building positive relationships and creating a pleasant classroom climate can increase student motivation and engagement (Havik & Westergård, 2020). The use of rewards and recognition for positive behavior routinely also supports Skinner's theory (1953), that positive reinforcement is one of the effective methods in shaping desired behavior (Bhadouria, 2024).

In addition, the social theory of competence and the classroom management model by Evertson and Emmer (2017) are also relevant and proven to be in accordance with findings in the field (Putra & Yanto, 2025). They stated that positive relationships and an attractive learning environment can reduce disruptive behavior (Fisher et al., 2021). This can be seen from the

practice of teachers who focus on building closeness and empathetic relationships with students as one of the main strategies in managing the classroom.

However, there are significant challenges related to environmental factors and classroom dynamics that have a major impact on the success of this strategy. For example, a classroom atmosphere that is too crowded or noise outside the classroom often disrupts students' concentration, resulting in the re-emergence of off-task behavior (Oleson, 2023), (Mulvenna, 2024). This is in accordance with the social situational theory which states that student behavior is greatly influenced by the environmental context. This means that effective classroom management strategies are not only about technique, but also related to supportive classroom environmental conditions (Rogers, 2020), (Raghu & and Rodrigues, 2022).

When comparing these results with previous studies, such as those conducted by Evertson and Emmer (2017), they found that the success of behavior management is indeed very dependent on consistency and the use of a positive relationship-based approach (Jones et al., 2024). The main challenge they identified was the need for full commitment from teachers in implementing the strategy on an ongoing basis (Archambault et al., 2022). The results of this study reinforce the understanding that the success of classroom management must be balanced with ongoing training and support, as well as adaptation of strategies according to student characteristics and the surrounding environment (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2023), (Clark et al., 2023). Furthermore, a study by Wang et al. (2019) stated that the success of classroom management strategies is also influenced by external factors such as parental and community relationships. At MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, this factor seems to be still minimally optimal, so this can be a focus for developing a program to improve the effectiveness of classroom management in the future (Stronge & Xu, 2021).

Discussion: Connecting Findings with Previous Literature

The use of positive discipline strategies and positive reinforcement in the context of MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan has proven effective in reducing off-task behavior (Hott, 2023). This supports the findings of the study by Evertson and Emmer (2017) which emphasized that an approach based on positive relationships, consistency, and rewards for good behavior can create a more conducive learning environment and increase student engagement. They highlighted that the success of the strategy depends on the integrity and commitment of teachers in implementing it continuously, an aspect that was also evident in the results of the interviews in this study. Teachers who consistently apply positive discipline principles and build warm relationships with students show better results in controlling off-task behavior (Kilag et al., 2023), (Rögele et al., 2022).

However, this study also revealed that environmental factors and classroom atmosphere are important aspects that influence the success of behavior management strategies (Hanaysha et al., 2023). When the classroom atmosphere is too crowded, noisy, or not physically and socially conducive, the effectiveness of positive discipline strategies is reduced. This is in line with the situational theory proposed by Walberg (1984), which states that student behavior is greatly influenced by the context of the surrounding environment. Thus, the success of classroom management strategies depends not only on the techniques used, but also on the physical and social situations in the classroom itself (Erwin, 2024), (Hattie & Zierer, 2024).

Compared with previous studies, the findings of this study emphasize that sustainability and consistency are the main keys to the successful implementation of classroom management strategies, as suggested by Wang et al. (2019). They added that external factors such as parental support and the social environment also play an important role (Wardhani & Rahadian, 2021), (Zhou & and Zheng, 2024). In the context of MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan, the lack of

external support may be an additional obstacle that needs to be considered to improve the overall effectiveness of the strategy.

The results of this study also show that although positive discipline and behavioral reinforcement strategies have been running well, their implementation still requires adaptation to the characteristics and needs of students and the ever-changing conditions of the classroom environment (L-7 & 8, 2025), (Silver et al., 2023). Therefore, capacity development and ongoing training for teachers are important factors in ensuring long-term success (Holst, 2023), (Medicine et al., 2020). Practices and experiences from the field show that good relationships between teachers and students, as well as a pleasant and conducive classroom atmosphere, are the main foundations in managing student behavior effectively.

Conclusion Discussion

Overall, the results and discussion conclude that classroom management strategies based on positive discipline and behavioral reinforcement have great potential in reducing students' off-task behavior at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan. The success of this strategy is highly dependent on the consistency of teachers in implementing these principles, as well as supportive classroom conditions. This finding is in line with previous theories and research results showing that positive relationships, reinforcement of good behavior, and a pleasant classroom atmosphere are the main factors in increasing student engagement.

However, the main challenge that needs to be considered is the physical and social environmental factors that can affect the effectiveness of this strategy. Therefore, it is recommended that schools and related parties pay attention to this aspect through classroom arrangement, more intensive teacher training, and strengthening support from parents and the community. This study also opens up opportunities for more comprehensive follow-up studies, including aspects of external factors and local cultural influences, as well as the use of quantitative methods to measure the effectiveness of strategies statistically and generalize the results. With the development of adaptive and sustainable strategies, it is hoped that the classroom management process at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan can continue to improve, so that an effective, enjoyable learning environment is created, and is able to foster a character of discipline and responsibility in students.

4. Conclusion

This study has shown that the implementation of positive discipline-based classroom management strategies and behavioral reinforcement at MA Riyadhul Ulum Pasuruan is effective in reducing students' off-task behavior. Strategies that are carried out consistently, including building positive relationships, giving rewards, and creating a pleasant learning atmosphere, can increase student engagement and create a conducive classroom environment. The contribution of this study strengthens the findings of previous literature that positive relationship-based strategies and reinforcement are effective approaches in managing student behavior, especially in the local context and culture of madrasahs. However, this study has limitations, such as a limited focus on one school and variables that are more viewed qualitatively, so that the results cannot be generalized widely. For the development of future studies, it is recommended to conduct research involving various schools and different levels of education, and use a quantitative approach to measure the effectiveness of the strategy more statistically. The implications of this study indicate the need for ongoing training for teachers and adjustments to strategies according to student characteristics and school environments. The potential for further studies is expected to produce a more effective and adaptive classroom management model, targeting long-term success in improving the quality of student learning and behavior in various educational contexts.

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