

The Teacher's Strategies in Overcoming Student Discipline Issues at SMP M 57 Medan

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Abstract: This study explores the strategies employed by teachers in overcoming student discipline issues at SMP M 57 Medan. Discipline problems in schools are common and can affect the learning environment, making it essential for teachers to apply effective strategies to manage and reduce disruptive behavior. This research aims to identify the approaches and methods teachers use to maintain discipline, create a positive classroom environment, and improve student behavior. Through interviews and observations, the study reveals that teachers at SMP M 57 Medan utilize a combination of preventive measures, consistent enforcement of rules, and restorative practices to address discipline issues. The results suggest that teacher-student relationships, clear expectations, and active involvement in the students' social-emotional development are crucial components of an effective discipline strategy.

Keywords: Teacher strategies; student discipline; classroom management; education.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi strategi yang diterapkan oleh guru dalam mengatasi masalah disiplin siswa di SMP M 57 Medan. Masalah disiplin di sekolah merupakan hal yang umum terjadi dan dapat mempengaruhi lingkungan pembelajaran, sehingga sangat penting bagi guru untuk menerapkan strategi yang efektif dalam mengelola dan mengurangi perilaku yang mengganggu. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi pendekatan dan metode yang digunakan guru dalam menjaga disiplin, menciptakan lingkungan kelas yang positif, dan meningkatkan perilaku siswa. Melalui wawancara dan observasi, penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa guru di SMP M 57 Medan menggunakan kombinasi langkah preventif, penegakan aturan yang konsisten, dan praktik restoratif untuk mengatasi masalah disiplin. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan

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bahwa hubungan guru-siswa, ekspektasi yang jelas, dan keterlibatan aktif dalam pengembangan sosial-emosional siswa adalah komponen penting dari strategi disiplin yang efektif.

Kata Kunci: Strategi guru; disiplin siswa; manajemen kelas; pendidikan.

A. Introduction

Student discipline is a critical issue that affects the effectiveness of the learning environment in schools. Discipline is not only about enforcing rules but also about fostering an atmosphere where students feel safe, respected, and supported in their educational journey. The role of teachers in managing student behavior is paramount, as they serve as role models and have the ability to influence student attitudes and behaviors. At SMP M 57 Medan, teachers face challenges related to student discipline, and it is crucial to understand the strategies they implement to overcome these challenges.

The importance of maintaining discipline in the classroom cannot be overstated. Discipline problems can disrupt the flow of teaching and learning, leading to a decrease in student engagement, academic performance, and overall school climate (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). Effective discipline strategies are essential in ensuring that students not only adhere to rules but also develop the self-regulation and emotional intelligence necessary for their personal and academic growth. According to Jones and Jones (2012), teachers' ability to manage classroom behavior directly influences the success of the learning process.

At SMP M 57 Medan, a school known for its diverse student body, maintaining discipline requires a multifaceted approach. Teachers employ various strategies, including clear rule-setting, communication, and restorative practices, to manage disruptive behaviors and create a positive classroom atmosphere. Understanding the strategies used by teachers at this institution is important, as it can provide valuable insights for improving discipline management in other schools as well. Teachers' individual approaches to discipline can have significant effects on students' behavior and their academic success (Simonsen et al., 2008).

One of the most fundamental aspects of managing student discipline is setting clear expectations from the outset. Teachers at SMP M 57 Medan establish classroom rules that are communicated consistently to students. These rules serve as a foundation for behavior expectations and help students understand what is acceptable and what is not. By providing clear guidance on acceptable behavior, teachers create an environment where students know the boundaries and the consequences of their actions. In their study, Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003) emphasize the importance of setting clear expectations for student behavior as an effective strategy for promoting discipline.

Additionally, fostering positive teacher-student relationships is an essential component of managing student discipline. According to Pianta (1999), positive relationships between teachers and students are associated with better student behavior and higher levels of academic achievement. Teachers at SMP M 57 Medan make an effort to develop strong relationships with their students by engaging with them both academically and personally. By building rapport and trust, teachers create an environment where students are more likely to respect the rules and feel motivated to behave appropriately.

Restorative practices are another strategy that teachers at SMP M 57 Medan employ to address student discipline issues. Restorative practices focus on repairing harm, fostering empathy, and encouraging accountability for one's actions. This approach is based on the belief that students are more likely to engage in positive behaviors when they are given the opportunity to reflect on their actions and make amends (Zehr, 2002). Teachers use restorative practices to help students understand the impact of their behavior on others and to guide them in taking responsibility for their actions.

Effective classroom management is not just about addressing discipline issues as they arise but also about preventing them from happening in the first place. Preventive strategies, such as engaging lessons, promoting student involvement, and using proactive classroom management techniques, are essential in reducing the likelihood of disruptive behaviors. According to Evertson and Weinstein (2006), effective classroom

management includes both preventative measures and responsive strategies to ensure that students remain engaged and that their behavior remains appropriate.

Furthermore, teachers at SMP M 57 Medan emphasize the importance of consistency in their approach to discipline. Consistency is key in ensuring that students understand the consequences of their actions and that discipline is applied fairly and equitably. As noted by Emmer and Sabornie (2015), inconsistency in discipline can lead to confusion among students and undermine the authority of the teacher. Teachers at this school ensure that rules are consistently enforced, creating a sense of fairness and predictability that helps students understand what is expected of them.

It is also important to recognize the role of classroom environment in discipline management. A well-organized, structured classroom can contribute to better behavior and fewer discipline problems. Teachers at SMP M 57 Medan work to create an environment that is conducive to learning by organizing the classroom in a way that minimizes distractions and encourages students to stay focused. According to Wong and Wong (2009), a well-organized classroom reduces the likelihood of disruptive behaviors and promotes positive student engagement.

Student discipline is not solely the responsibility of the teacher. It is a shared responsibility between the teacher, students, parents, and the school community. Effective communication between teachers and parents plays a crucial role in addressing discipline issues and ensuring that students receive the support they need both at school and at home. Teachers at SMP M 57 Medan actively involve parents in the process of managing their children's behavior, ensuring that students receive consistent reinforcement of behavioral expectations across both environments (Epstein & Sheldon, 2002).

Another important consideration in discipline management is the cultural context in which the school operates. The diversity of students at SMP M 57 Medan means that teachers must be sensitive to the various cultural backgrounds and values that students bring to the classroom. Culturally responsive teaching practices are essential in ensuring that all students feel respected and understood. According to Gay (2010), culturally responsive teaching enhances students' sense of belonging and helps to minimize behavioral problems by creating an inclusive classroom environment.

In addition to cultural sensitivity, teachers at SMP M 57 Medan also focus on the social-emotional development of their students. Social-emotional learning (SEL) programs have been shown to improve student behavior, enhance emotional regulation, and promote positive interpersonal relationships (Durlak et al., 2011). Teachers at SMP M 57 Medan incorporate SEL principles into their lessons to help students develop the skills they need to manage their emotions and behavior effectively.

Finally, professional development is a critical component of enhancing teachers' ability to manage student discipline. Teachers at SMP M 57 Medan participate in training and workshops that focus on classroom management techniques, conflict resolution, and strategies for fostering positive student behavior. According to Blasé and Blasé (2004), ongoing professional development helps teachers refine their skills and stay updated on best practices in classroom management. By investing in professional growth, schools can equip teachers with the tools they need to address discipline issues effectively.

In conclusion, the strategies employed by teachers at SMP M 57 Medan to manage student discipline are varied and multifaceted. Through a combination of clear expectations, positive relationships, restorative practices, consistency, and proactive classroom management, teachers create an environment that fosters positive behavior and supports students' academic success. These strategies not only address immediate discipline issues but also contribute to the overall development of students' social-emotional skills and character.

B. Methods

This study used a qualitative research design to explore the strategies employed by teachers to address student discipline issues at SMP M 57 Medan. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena and provides a rich description of the experiences and perspectives of the participants (Creswell, 2013). In this case, the researchers aimed to understand the various strategies employed by teachers to manage student behavior and maintain discipline in the classroom.

The participants in this study were selected through purposive sampling, a non-random technique that focuses on selecting individuals who have specific knowledge or

experience related to the research topic (Palinkas et al., 2015). The sample consisted of five teachers who were actively involved in the teaching process at SMP M 57 Medan. These teachers were selected based on their experience in managing student discipline and their willingness to participate in the study.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which provided an opportunity for the researchers to ask open-ended questions and allow participants to share their experiences and insights regarding discipline management. Semi-structured interviews are particularly useful in qualitative research because they provide flexibility and allow for follow-up questions to explore topics in greater depth (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interviews were conducted in the teachers' natural work environment, allowing the researchers to observe their interactions and gather contextual information about their practices.

In addition to interviews, classroom observations were conducted to further understand the strategies used by teachers in real-time. Observations allowed the researchers to examine the classroom environment, teacher-student interactions, and the implementation of discipline strategies. Observation is a powerful data collection method in educational research as it provides firsthand insight into teaching practices and the classroom dynamic (Merriam, 2009).

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, a widely used method in qualitative research that involves identifying and analyzing patterns or themes within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The first step in the analysis process was transcribing the interviews and organizing the observation notes. The researchers then coded the data, categorizing the information into meaningful themes. Once the data was coded, the researchers reviewed the themes and identified key strategies employed by the teachers in managing student discipline.

To ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the study, several steps were taken. Member checking was used to validate the findings, where the researchers shared the results with the participants and sought their feedback on the accuracy of the interpretation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Additionally, triangulation was employed by comparing data from interviews and observations to enhance the credibility of the

results (Denzin, 1978). By using multiple sources of data and validation techniques, the researchers ensured the reliability and validity of the study.

In summary, this study used a qualitative approach with purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations to investigate the strategies teachers use to address student discipline at SMP M 57 Medan. Thematic analysis was applied to analyze the data and identify key strategies for discipline management. The combination of these methods allowed the researchers to gain a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' practices and the effectiveness of their approaches in managing student behavior.

C. Results and Discussion

The results of this study reveal that teachers at SMP M 57 Medan employ a variety of strategies to manage student discipline, and these strategies have significant impacts on the overall classroom environment. Through interviews and observations, several key themes emerged related to teacher discipline strategies, the challenges faced in maintaining discipline, and the outcomes of these strategies on student behavior and classroom dynamics.

One of the main strategies identified in the study was the use of proactive classroom management. Teachers emphasized the importance of setting clear expectations and rules at the beginning of the academic year. As one teacher stated, "We make sure that students understand the rules and what is expected of them from day one. This helps minimize issues later on" (Participant A, personal communication, 2024). This strategy aligns with research by Emmer and Sabornie (2015), who argue that clear expectations and consistency in enforcement are critical to maintaining discipline in the classroom.

The study also revealed that positive reinforcement plays a significant role in managing student behavior. Teachers reported using praise, rewards, and recognition to encourage desirable behavior. For instance, one teacher mentioned, "I always try to catch my students doing something right and acknowledge them for it. Positive reinforcement goes a long way in motivating students" (Participant B, personal

communication, 2024). This finding supports the work of Skinner (1953), who emphasized the importance of reinforcement in shaping behavior.

However, while positive reinforcement was commonly used, teachers also noted that it is not always effective for all students. Some students, particularly those who are more disruptive or have more challenging behavioral issues, require additional interventions. Teachers explained that for these students, corrective strategies, such as time-outs or meetings with parents, were often necessary. As one teacher noted, “For students who continue to disrupt the class, we sometimes need to involve their parents or give them consequences to help them understand the seriousness of their actions” (Participant C, personal communication, 2024). This aligns with the approach outlined by Mayer (2019), who suggests that behavior modification techniques, including consequences for misbehavior, are essential for managing classroom discipline.

Another significant theme that emerged was the role of teacher-student relationships in maintaining discipline. Teachers expressed that building trust and rapport with students is essential in fostering a positive classroom environment. One teacher shared, “I make it a point to get to know my students personally. When students feel respected and understood, they are more likely to follow the rules” (Participant D, personal communication, 2024). This finding supports the work of Pianta (2013), who emphasizes that positive teacher-student relationships contribute to improved behavior and learning outcomes.

The study also highlighted the importance of consistency in applying discipline strategies. Teachers noted that being consistent in enforcing rules and consequences helps to establish a predictable classroom environment where students know what to expect. One teacher commented, “It’s important that students know that the rules apply to everyone equally. If you’re inconsistent, they’ll take advantage of it” (Participant E, personal communication, 2024). Research by Marzano et al. (2003) confirms that consistency is key to effective classroom management and discipline.

In addition to these strategies, the study found that teachers face several challenges in managing student discipline. One of the primary challenges identified was the lack of parental involvement. Several teachers mentioned that when parents are not supportive of the school’s discipline policies, it becomes difficult to manage students

effectively. As one teacher noted, “It’s hard to discipline students when their parents don’t reinforce what we’re teaching them at school” (Participant A, personal communication, 2024). This challenge is consistent with the findings of Epstein (2011), who argues that parental involvement is crucial for reinforcing discipline strategies at school.

Another challenge mentioned by teachers was the large class size, which can make it difficult to give individual attention to students who need it most. One teacher explained, “With over 30 students in a class, it’s hard to monitor everyone and address issues as they arise. Some students slip through the cracks” (Participant B, personal communication, 2024). This finding is consistent with the research by Berliner (2011), which suggests that large class sizes can significantly hinder a teacher’s ability to manage classroom behavior effectively.

Despite these challenges, the study found that the teachers’ strategies were generally effective in improving student behavior. The majority of teachers reported a decrease in disruptive behavior over the course of the school year. As one teacher stated, “We’ve seen a lot of progress. There are fewer students disrupting the class, and they’re more focused on their studies” (Participant C, personal communication, 2024). This is consistent with the findings of Wong and Wong (2009), who suggest that effective classroom management leads to improved student behavior and academic performance.

Moreover, the study found that teachers were able to create a positive classroom climate by implementing strategies such as fostering mutual respect, setting clear expectations, and promoting student involvement in the learning process. One teacher observed, “When students feel like they are part of the classroom community, they are more likely to follow the rules and be engaged in learning” (Participant D, personal communication, 2024). This observation aligns with the work of Kounin (1977), who argued that student engagement and a positive classroom atmosphere are essential for managing behavior effectively.

The study also revealed that teachers continuously reflect on and adapt their discipline strategies to meet the needs of their students. Teachers mentioned that they regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies and make adjustments as needed.

One teacher shared, “I’m always looking for ways to improve. If something isn’t working, I try to find a different approach” (Participant E, personal communication, 2024). This emphasis on reflection and adaptability aligns with the research of Hattie (2009), who emphasizes the importance of teacher self-reflection in improving teaching effectiveness.

Additionally, teachers mentioned that they collaborate with their colleagues to share ideas and strategies for managing discipline. One teacher explained, “We often discuss what works and what doesn’t during staff meetings. It’s helpful to hear other teachers’ perspectives” (Participant A, personal communication, 2024). This collaborative approach to discipline is consistent with the work of Vygotsky (1978), who emphasized the importance of social interaction and collaboration in the learning process.

The results of this study also indicate that professional development plays a crucial role in enhancing teachers' ability to manage discipline effectively. Teachers who had attended workshops or training on classroom management were more likely to report success in managing student behavior. One teacher noted, “The training I received really helped me understand different approaches to managing discipline. It gave me new tools to use in the classroom” (Participant B, personal communication, 2024). This finding aligns with the research of Ingersoll and Strong (2011), who found that ongoing professional development is associated with better classroom management and student outcomes.

In conclusion, the study found that teachers at SMP M 57 Medan use a combination of proactive strategies, positive reinforcement, corrective measures, and teacher-student relationships to manage student discipline. These strategies were generally effective in improving student behavior, although challenges such as large class sizes and lack of parental involvement were identified. The findings suggest that ongoing professional development and collaboration among teachers are essential for improving discipline management in schools.

D. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of various strategies employed by teachers at SMP M 57 Medan to address student discipline. Proactive classroom management, such as setting clear expectations, positive reinforcement, and fostering teacher-student relationships, were identified as essential elements for maintaining discipline. These strategies contributed significantly to reducing disruptive behaviors and creating a conducive learning environment. The findings align with existing literature on effective classroom management, reinforcing the idea that a structured and supportive classroom atmosphere is key to managing student behavior effectively.

However, despite the effectiveness of these strategies, the study also uncovered challenges that teachers face in managing student discipline. Large class sizes and lack of parental involvement emerged as significant barriers to maintaining consistency and effectiveness in discipline practices. As noted by several teachers, parental support plays a critical role in reinforcing school discipline, and the lack of it often leads to difficulties in managing students' behavior. These challenges are consistent with findings from other studies, which suggest that teacher effectiveness in classroom management is heavily influenced by external factors such as family involvement and class size.

The study suggests that ongoing professional development, collaboration among teachers, and a focus on building positive teacher-student relationships are essential for improving discipline management in schools. By attending training programs and reflecting on their practices, teachers can adapt and refine their approaches to discipline. Furthermore, fostering a collaborative environment where teachers share strategies and experiences can enhance the overall effectiveness of discipline management. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the strategies that can help improve student behavior and create a more productive classroom environment, ultimately contributing to better learning outcomes.

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