



Common Types of Elementary Learners' Misbehaviors and Classroom Rules Adopted by Teachers in Addressing Misbehaviors

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Abstract

Classroom management is essential for fostering an effective learning environment, especially in elementary schools where pupils are still developing self-regulation and social skills. This study examined common misbehaviors and management strategies in Tangatan and San Vicente Elementary Schools. Survey data from 27 teachers showed that shouting, speaking out of turn, and excessive movement were the most frequent disruptive behaviors. Teachers addressed these through reminders, positive reinforcement, and parent communication. However, emotional outbursts, noncompliance, and limited parental involvement remained significant challenges. Findings highlight the need for clear and consistent rules, culturally responsive approaches, and support tailored to pupils' developmental needs. The study recommends ongoing teacher training, stronger home-school collaboration and targeted interventions for students with persistent difficulties.

Keywords: classroom management, elementary pupils, disruptive behavior, teacher strategies, parental involvement



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INTRODUCTION

Classroom management is one of the most demanding responsibilities of teachers, particularly in elementary schools where students are still developing self-control and social skills. A well-managed classroom fosters academic success and positive behavior, but misbehaviors such as yelling, moving around excessively, or talking out of turn often disrupt the learning process and create stress for both teachers and students (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015; Simonsen et al., 2008). Left unaddressed, these behaviors not only hinder individual learning but also undermine the classroom climate.

Research highlights several strategies for addressing misbehavior. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) promotes self-regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution skills that reduce disruptive actions (Durlak et al., 2011). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) emphasizes proactive reinforcement of desirable behavior rather than punitive measures (Sugai & Horner, 2006). Likewise, establishing clear and consistent rules, particularly when students are involved in rule-making, has been shown to increase compliance and responsibility (Evertson & Weinstein, 2013). These approaches encourage students to see discipline as growth rather than punishment. Another important factor in classroom management is cultural and contextual awareness. Students bring diverse experiences and family backgrounds into the classroom, which shape their attitudes and behaviors (Gay, 2018). A culturally responsive approach helps teachers interpret behaviors more accurately and apply strategies that are both fair and inclusive. Without such sensitivity, misunderstandings may occur,

leading to ineffective discipline and student disengagement.

Effective classroom management plays a critical role in fostering academic and behavioral success among students. Evertson and Weinstein (2014) emphasize that clear rules and structured environments reduce ambiguity, enhance engagement, and minimize disruptions. Similarly, Simonsen et al. (2015) show that consistent rule enforcement improves efficiency, enabling teachers to focus on instruction rather than discipline. Proactive strategies also yield positive outcomes, as Mitchell et al. (2017) find that clearly defined rules and consistent implementation significantly reduce disruptions and promote a positive learning atmosphere. A meta-analysis by Korpershoek et al. (2016) supports these findings, concluding that effective management strategies positively affect students' behavioral, emotional, and academic performance.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) frameworks have proven successful in reducing classroom misbehavior. Caldarella et al. (2019) report that PBIS fosters emotional regulation and reduces aggression through positive reinforcement rather than punishment. Similarly, Alter and Haydon (2017) argue that involving students in rule creation fosters ownership and accountability, which enhances compliance. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) programs complement these approaches by teaching students emotional regulation, problem-solving, and empathy. Durlak et al. (2015) show that SEL reduces classroom disruptions, while Osher et al. (2014) highlight its role in strengthening teacher-student relationships and reducing defiance.



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Culturally responsive classroom management is another essential dimension. Gay (2018) emphasizes strategies that respect students' cultural contexts, ensuring that rules resonate with their values and experiences. Morrison and Skiba (2014) similarly stress tailoring management to developmental stages and cultural norms to promote inclusivity and fairness. Aronson and Laughter (2016) add that culturally sustaining pedagogies empower students and foster mutual respect, thereby reducing misbehavior.

Teacher preparation and professional development also play a vital role. Freeman et al. (2014) highlight the value of training programs that equip teachers to address complex behaviors such as bullying and defiance. Simonsen and Myers (2015) emphasize role-playing and scenario-based learning as effective ways to prepare teachers for challenges, while Conroy et al. (2009) underscore the importance of praise and feedback in promoting a positive classroom environment.

Family and community engagement further enhance classroom management. Epstein (2011) stresses that consistent communication between parents and teachers fosters shared behavioral goals, reducing disruptive behaviors. Kim and Sheridan (2015) note that parent-teacher collaboration is particularly effective in addressing emotional outbursts and tantrums.

Technology use introduces additional management challenges. Kay et al. (2019) find that clear digital policies and structured device use reduce cellphone misuse and encourage responsibility, while Cheng et al. (2016) argue that integrating technology into learning activities prevents its misuse by keeping students productively engaged.

For severe and persistent misbehavior, targeted interventions are often necessary. MacSuga-Gage et al. (2016) recommend tiered approaches, including individualized behavior plans for students exhibiting chronic aggression or refusal to follow rules. Reinke et al. (2014) show that combining teacher training with coaching improves the implementation of such interventions. Gender dynamics also influence behavior, as Meeussen et al. (2018) emphasize the need for balanced strategies addressing gender-specific behaviors. Jones and Jones (2016) advocate for inclusive management approaches that adapt to these differences. Recent studies highlight relational and restorative approaches. Haggerty et al. (2017) stress the importance of strong teacher-student relationships in preventing misbehavior, a finding echoed by Hamre and Pianta (2016), who show that positive emotional connections increase engagement and reduce disruptions. Restorative practices, such as circles or conferences, also promote accountability and empathy. Gregory et al. (2016) argue that these practices reduce repeat offenses and cultivate a respectful classroom culture.

Trauma-informed approaches represent another key development. Bradshaw et al. (2018) emphasize the need for teachers to recognize how trauma influences behavior and to create supportive environments that avoid misinterpreting trauma-related actions as defiance. Horner et al. (2017) further highlight the value of data-driven decision-making, where ongoing behavioral monitoring ensures that interventions remain responsive and effective. Collaborative practices among teachers are also beneficial, as Robinson et al.



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(2017) find that shared strategies promote consistency and success across classrooms. Finally, the role of motivation in classroom management has received attention. Deci et al. (2017) argue that fostering intrinsic motivation through engaging learning activities reduces misbehavior, while Wentzel (2016) shows that academic engagement itself discourages disruption by increasing students' investment in learning. Taken together, these studies illustrate that effective classroom management requires proactive, inclusive, and individualized strategies. However, while the literature highlights broad approaches such as PBIS, SEL, cultural responsiveness, and trauma-informed practices, there is limited focus on the specific classroom rules teachers adopt to address everyday misbehavior. This study aims to fill that gap by examining teachers' perspectives on common learner misbehaviors and the rules they implement to maintain order in elementary classrooms.

While international studies have provided insights into effective classroom management strategies, fewer have examined how elementary teachers in rural Philippine contexts respond to common misbehaviors. Understanding these practices is important because limited parental support, overcrowded classes, and varying community expectations may influence both the frequency of misbehavior and the strategies teachers employ. This study addresses this gap by examining the common misbehaviors observed in classrooms and the strategies teachers use to manage them in selected elementary schools.

By exploring these dynamics, the study seeks to contribute evidence-based insights that can

inform teacher training, strengthen parent involvement, and support the development of school-wide behavior management programs tailored to local needs.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the common types of misbehaviors observed by teachers among their elementary learners and the classroom rules they adopted to address these misbehaviors.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What was the profile of the teachers in terms of:
 - 1.1. Age
 - 1.2. Sex
 - 1.3. Civil status
 - 1.4. Religion
 - 1.5. Highest educational attainment
 - 1.6. Major or field of specialization
 - 1.7. Number of subjects taught
 - 1.8. Number of years in teaching
 - 1.9. Present plantilla position
2. What were the most common types of misbehaviors committed by learners inside the classroom as observed by the teachers?
3. What classroom rules were imposed or adopted by the teachers to reduce or address learner misbehaviors?
4. What challenges did teachers encounter in correcting learner misbehaviors and in imposing classroom rules to minimize such behaviors?

Conceptual Framework



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Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables		Dependent Variable
Teacher Profile: - Age - Sex - Civil status - Religion - Educational attainment - Field of specialization - Teaching plantilla position - Number of subjects taught - Years in teaching Common Types of Student Misbehavior	→	Classroom Rules and Management Strategies Adopted by Teachers

The framework illustrates the relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The independent variables include the teachers' profiles—age, sex, civil status, religion, educational attainment, major or field of specialization, teaching position, number of subjects taught, and years in service—as well as the common types of student misbehavior observed in the classroom. These variables are assumed to influence the dependent variables, which are the classroom rules and management strategies adopted by teachers to address student misbehavior. This framework reflects the assumption that teacher characteristics and the behavioral patterns of students shape the rules teachers establish and the strategies they employ in managing classroom behavior.

Underpinning Theory/Philosophy

Albert Bandura and Social Learning Theory

This study is anchored on Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which explains that individuals acquire behaviors through observation, imitation, and modeling. In the classroom context,

students learn not only from direct instruction but also by observing their teachers' actions and the responses of their peers. Thus, the way rules are enforced and modeled by teachers directly influences how students internalize and practice appropriate behavior.

The theory emphasizes the role of reinforcement and punishment in shaping behavior. When students see their classmates rewarded for compliance or corrected for misbehavior, they are more likely to adjust their own conduct. Observational learning becomes a key process in developing classroom discipline, making consistent rule enforcement an essential component of effective management.

Bandura also introduced the concept of self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations. In classroom management, this means teachers can foster self-efficacy by providing positive reinforcement and encouragement, helping students believe that they are capable of meeting behavioral expectations. For example, when a teacher acknowledges a student for following class rules, it strengthens the student's confidence to continue demonstrating appropriate behavior.

By grounding this study in Social Learning Theory, the focus is placed on the interaction between teacher behavior, classroom rules, and student responses, highlighting how behavior is learned,



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reinforced, and sustained within the educational environment.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design to identify the common types of misbehaviors among elementary learners and the classroom rules adopted by teachers. The descriptive method was appropriate as it allowed for a systematic description and analysis of observed behaviors and classroom management practices.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Tangatan Elementary School and San Vicente Elementary School, both public schools located in Sta. Ana. These schools are known for their commitment to academic excellence and holistic education, making them suitable contexts for investigating classroom behavior and management strategies.

Participants/Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were elementary teachers from Tangatan and San Vicente Elementary Schools. A total of 27 teachers participated, representing 71% of the total teaching population across the two schools.

Table 1.1

Respondents of the Study

School	Number of Teachers	Number of Responses	Percentage
Tangatan	7	7	100%
San Vicente	31	20	65%
Total	38	27	71%

Instrumentation

The study utilized a structured checklist and survey questionnaire as the primary instruments for data collection. The checklist allowed teachers to record specific types of student misbehavior observed in the classroom, while the questionnaire gathered insights regarding the classroom rules and strategies employed to address such behaviors. These instruments were designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of both the prevalence of misbehavior and the effectiveness of classroom management approaches.

Data Gathering Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to teachers and completed at their convenience. Afterward, the researchers collected the accomplished questionnaires for analysis. This procedure ensured efficiency while maintaining participant confidentiality and voluntary participation.



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Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means. These statistical tools provided a clear overview of the common types of learner misbehavior and the strategies employed by teachers in managing them.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical research standards to protect participants' rights and privacy. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Confidentiality was ensured by securing all data and restricting access solely to the research team. Teachers were informed of the study's purpose, their rights as participants, and their option to withdraw at any time without penalty. The research process was designed to avoid any potential harm or discomfort to the participants.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Table 1. Profile of Teacher-Respondents

The table shows that most respondents are aged 51 and above (33%), indicating a mature and experienced teaching workforce. In terms of sex, the group is male-dominated (59%), which is less

typical in elementary education. The majority are married (70%), suggesting personal and professional stability. Most teachers are Roman Catholic (74%), reflecting the dominant religious affiliation in the community.

With respect to educational attainment, a significant portion have obtained a Master's Degree (63%), showing their commitment to continuous professional growth. Nearly half specialize in General Education (48%), while others are distributed across Mathematics, English, and other fields, reflecting varied teaching expertise. Most respondents are at the Teacher III position (82%), suggesting seniority and longer tenure.

In terms of teaching load, respondents are fairly distributed: 1–3 subjects (30%), 4–6 subjects (37%), and 7 or more subjects (33%), which indicates diverse teaching responsibilities. Finally, the distribution of years in service shows that a large number have been teaching for 11 years or more (82%), underscoring that the group is composed of highly experienced educators.

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	21–30 years old	4	15%
	31–40 years old	7	26%
	41–50 years old	7	26%



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Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	51 years old and above	9	33%
Sex	Male	16	59%
	Female	11	41%
Civil Status	Single	6	22%
	Married	19	70%
	Widowed	2	8%
Religion	Roman Catholic	20	74%
	Non-Catholic	7	26%
Educational Attainment	Bachelor's Degree	7	26%
	Master's Degree	17	63%
	Doctorate	3	11%
Field of Specialization	General Education	13	48%
	Mathematics	5	19%
	English	5	19%
	Other Fields	4	14%
Plantilla Position	Teacher I-II	5	18%
	Teacher III	22	82%
No. of Subjects Taught	1-3	8	30%
	4-6	10	37%
	7 and above	9	33%

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Years in Service	1-10 years	5	18%
	11-20 years	8	30%
	21-30 years	7	26%
	31 years and above	7	26%

Table 2. Common Types of Misbehaviors Committed by Learners as Observed by the Teachers

Table 2 shows that the most common learner misbehaviors were yelling, untimely talking or laughing, and being out-of-seat, all rated as occurring sometimes. These results suggest that classroom disruptions often come from off-task and attention-seeking actions, which, while not severe, can interrupt instruction if left unchecked. More serious misbehaviors like bullying, aggression, and disregard for deadlines occurred less frequently, while inappropriate cellphone use and listening to music were rated as never, indicating they are not major issues in this elementary context.

Misbehaviors	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Yelling inside the classroom	2.33	Sometimes
Listening to music at a volume disruptive to others	1.07	Never



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Misbehaviors	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Bullying/verbally hostile	2.11	Sometimes
Untimely talking/laughing	2.33	Sometimes
Aggression towards other students/classmates	1.85	Sometimes
Snoring in class	1.33	Never
Inappropriate cellphone usage in class/Playing with laptop	1.19	Never
Cheating	2.00	Sometimes
Unyielding argument or debate	1.59	Never
Coming late or leaving early	1.85	Sometimes
Side conversations/sniping remarks	2.00	Sometimes
Disregard for deadlines/refusing to follow instructions	1.70	Never
Being out-of-seat	2.19	Sometimes
Tantrums/crying/screaming	1.85	Sometimes
Damaging or destroying classroom learning resources	1.78	Sometimes
Average	1.84	Sometimes

Table 3. Classroom Rules Imposed or Adopted by the Teachers to Reduce Learners' Misbehaviors

Table 3 reveals that teachers consistently use calm and constructive strategies to address misbehaviors. Speaking privately with students, reminding them of expectations, and praising positive behavior were all rated as always practiced, showing that teachers prioritize preventive and supportive approaches. More formal interventions, such as involving parents, referrals to guidance, or issuing disciplinary action, were used often or sometimes, indicating that escalation occurs only when necessary.

Misbehavior Observed	Most Frequent Responses	Frequency of Responses
Yelling inside the classroom	Talk to them/calmly remind students to be quiet	13
	Praise students who maintain a calm voice	1
	Call the student's attention	5
	Give classroom activities to make them busy	8
Listening to music	Prohibit or limit gadget use during class	13
	Talk to them to minimize the sounds	3
	No answer	12
Bullying	Speak to the students	23



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Misbehavior Observed	Most Frequent Responses	Frequency of Responses
	involved privately	
	Call their Parents	4
Untimely talking/laughing	Remind students to listen/Call their attention	22
	Others (rules, praise, counseling, wait, etc.)	5
Aggression towards students	Talk to both parties involved	21
	No answer	5
Snoring in class	Remind students sleeping not allowed	15
	No answer/others	12
Inappropriate cellphone use	Prohibit cellphone use	18
	No answer	9
Cheating	Talk to them	16
	Assign zero/reduce score	9
	Others	2
Unyielding arguments/debates	Talk to them	9
	Respectful discussion/activities	8
	No answer	10

Misbehavior Observed	Most Frequent Responses	Frequency of Responses
Coming late/leaving early	Remind punctuality	11
	Rewards/penalties/others	13
Side conversations	Directly address students	20
	No answer/others	7
Disregard for deadlines	Emphasize importance/deductions	19
	No answer	5
Being out-of-seat	Consider absent / Call attention	19
	Others	6
Tantrums/crying/screaming	Talk to students calmly	21
	Parents/home visit/others	6
Damaging property	Require repair/replace	14
	Parents/authorities	8

Table 4. Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Correcting Learner Misbehaviors and Imposing Classroom Rules

As presented in Table 4, the rules most emphasized by teachers were coming to class prepared, showing respect, listening attentively, and following instructions—



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all rated as always implemented. Rules on timeliness and avoidance of disruptive behavior were rated as often, suggesting that while these remain important, they may be more challenging to enforce consistently. Overall, the findings show that teachers stress preparedness, respect, and attentiveness as the foundation of classroom discipline.

Responses/ Challenges Encountere d	Freq uency	Perce ntage (%)	Weig hted Mea n	Verbal Interpr etation
YES	17	63	0.63	Agree
NO	10	37	—	Disagre e
TOTAL	27	100		

Examples of Challenges (Qualitative):

Disrespectful behavior (talking back, questioning rules) – 3

Negative reactions (emotional reactions, tantrums) – 3

Refusal to comply (ignoring, refusal to follow) – 3

Increased misbehavior/aggression – 2

Parental involvement as a challenge – 1

Intellectual development issues – 1

Questioning teacher's attitude – 1

DISCUSSION

This study examined the common learner misbehaviors in the classroom, the rules and strategies employed by teachers to

manage these behaviors, and the challenges encountered in their enforcement. The findings highlight how teachers balance preventive, corrective, and supportive approaches in promoting positive classroom conduct.

The results from Table 2 indicate that the most frequent misbehaviors were yelling, untimely talking or laughing, and being out-of-seat, all rated as occurring sometimes. These are consistent with minor, attention-seeking disruptions that, although not severe, can interrupt instructional flow if left unchecked. Less frequent but still notable behaviors included cheating, side conversations, and emotional outbursts such as tantrums. More serious issues like bullying, aggression, and disregard for deadlines were observed less often, while inappropriate cellphone use and disruptive music listening were rated as never, suggesting these are not significant concerns in the elementary setting. This pattern reflects a developmental stage where learners are more prone to off-task behavior than to overt defiance (Alhassan, 2020; Sun & Shek, 2012).

Table 3 shows that teachers responded to these behaviors with strategies that emphasize calm and constructive management. Speaking to students privately, reminding them of expectations, and redirecting behavior through classroom activities were the most common responses. Teachers also consistently praised students who



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exhibited appropriate behavior, underscoring the use of positive reinforcement as a preventive measure. Escalation to parental involvement, guidance referrals, or disciplinary actions was reported but used sparingly, reserved for more serious or repeated offenses such as bullying or property damage. These findings suggest that teachers prefer relational and preventive strategies over punitive measures, aligning with best practices in classroom management (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015; Simonsen et al., 2008).

The rules most emphasized by teachers, as reflected in Table 4, included preparedness, respect, listening attentively, and following instructions, which were consistently rated as always implemented. Rules addressing timeliness and avoidance of disruptive behaviors were implemented often, showing that while they remain important, they may present greater challenges in practice. The emphasis on preparedness and respect highlights teachers' view of these rules as foundational to maintaining order and promoting a culture of responsibility. These findings are consistent with research indicating that clearly communicated and consistently applied rules foster safe and orderly learning environments (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Despite these efforts, challenges in managing learner misbehavior remain. Teachers reported difficulties such as disrespectful behavior, refusal to comply

with rules, emotional outbursts, and at times, increased misbehavior despite interventions. Limited parental involvement and intellectual development issues further complicated classroom management. These findings emphasize that rules and teacher interventions alone cannot fully resolve behavioral issues, particularly when external factors such as home support and individual learner needs are not adequately addressed (Garwood et al., 2017; Webster-Stratton et al., 2011).

Overall, the findings align with existing literature that stresses the importance of clear and consistently enforced rules in creating positive learning environments. However, they also extend this understanding by demonstrating that successful classroom management requires more than enforcement. It depends on a balanced approach that combines clear expectations, constructive discipline, supportive teacher-student relationships, and collaboration with parents. Teachers' reliance on preventive and relational strategies suggests recognition of the need to address not just the behavior itself but also its underlying causes (Marzano & Marzano, 2003; Oliver et al., 2011).

In conclusion, the study underscores the complexity of managing misbehavior in elementary classrooms. While most misbehaviors were minor and manageable, persistent challenges highlight the need for stronger school-



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home collaboration and targeted support programs. Professional development focused on proactive and inclusive classroom management may further equip teachers with the tools to handle both common and complex behavioral issues. By integrating preventive, corrective, and collaborative approaches, schools can foster classroom environments that support both academic success and holistic learner development.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the common learner misbehaviors in elementary classrooms, the strategies teachers employed to address them, and the rules and challenges associated with classroom management. The findings revealed that the most frequent misbehaviors, such as untimely talking, laughing, yelling, and being out-of-seat, were generally minor but disruptive when not addressed promptly. More serious behaviors, including bullying and aggression, occurred less frequently but posed greater challenges for teachers.

Teachers primarily relied on preventive and relational strategies, such as private conversations, reminders, praise, and activity redirection, to manage behavior. For more severe cases, parental involvement and guidance counseling were utilized. Classroom rules centered on preparedness, respect, listening

attentively, and following instructions, which were consistently implemented and considered effective in maintaining order.

Despite these efforts, challenges such as disrespectful attitudes, emotional outbursts, and limited parental involvement highlighted the complexity of managing learner misbehavior. The study concluded that while clear and consistent rules are essential, effective classroom management also requires a holistic approach that integrates preventive strategies, supportive teacher-student relationships, and strong school-home collaboration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

Strengthen Preventive Classroom Management: Teachers should continue prioritizing preventive strategies, such as positive reinforcement, activity-based redirection, and proactive reminders, to minimize disruptive behaviors before they escalate.

Enhance Teacher Professional Development: Regular training programs on classroom management, conflict resolution, and socio-emotional learning can better equip teachers with tools to



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address both minor and complex misbehaviors.

Promote School-Home Collaboration: Schools should establish structured communication channels with parents to encourage their active involvement in addressing learner behavior. Parent seminars and collaborative meetings may strengthen consistency between home and school expectations.

Integrate Guidance and Counseling Services: For more severe or recurring cases of misbehavior, schools should maximize the role of guidance counselors to provide individualized support plans for learners, in partnership with teachers and parents.

Develop Inclusive Management Approaches: Since learner misbehaviors may stem from intellectual, emotional, or developmental differences, tailored interventions should be provided to ensure that rules and strategies are responsive to diverse learner needs.

Encourage Further Research: Future studies could expand to other schools and contexts, or examine the long-term impact of specific management strategies, providing broader insights into effective classroom discipline.

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