



Faith-based classroom management practices and challenges among teachers in private Catholic schools

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the specific classroom management practices in private Catholic schools, emphasizing the integration of academic excellence with moral and spiritual formation. Using a descriptive phenomenological design, 12 teachers from the Diocese of Laoag Catholic Educational System shared their experiences through open-ended online questionnaires. Thematic analysis revealed five key practices: integration of faith and values, positive discipline, consistent structure, modelling of Christian virtues, and collaboration with parents and support staff. Challenges included student behavioral issues, balancing discipline with compassion, engaging students in faith activities, conflicting values with parents, and environmental constraints. The study concludes that effective classroom management in Catholic schools requires structured, faith-centered approaches supported by professional development and strong institutional and home-school partnerships.

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Introduction

Effective classroom management is widely recognized as a foundational component of successful teaching and learning, encompassing the strategies, techniques, and practices that teachers use to maintain a respectful, productive, and orderly learning environment (Evertson & Weinstein, 2022; Simonsen et al., 2020).

In the context of Catholic education, however, classroom management takes on a deeper significance. It supports not only academic achievement but also the moral and spiritual formation of students. Catholic teachers are uniquely charged with fostering a classroom atmosphere that reflects Gospel values, nurtures the whole person, and honors the dignity of every student (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2023).

One approach that aligns closely with these Catholic principles is restorative practices, which focus on healing relationships and repairing harm. These practices emphasize human dignity, reconciliation, and community—core values in Catholic teaching. Recent implementations of restorative practices have resulted in dramatic reductions in suspensions and referrals, along with notable improvements in classroom climate and student–teacher interactions (Thompson & Garcia, 2023/2024).

Such a role demands more than technical skill; it requires a pastoral approach grounded in respect, compassion, and Gospel-centered discipline (Miller, 2019; O’Keefe, 2018). As Bryk et al. (2015) argue, effective classroom management must embody these values by creating environments where discipline not only maintains order but also fosters conscience formation, builds authentic relationships, and models Christian behavior. In doing so, Catholic educators nurture both academic learning and the moral growth of their students.

Recent studies have examined classroom management practices across diverse educational settings, yet much of this work continues to emphasize public or non-sectarian schools. For example, Perales (2024) explored the connection between teachers’ spirituality and classroom management in parochial schools within the Archdiocese of Jaro, revealing a strong positive association between the two variables. However, the study did not thoroughly investigate the specific challenges teachers face in implementing management strategies or the extent to which Catholic educational values influence these practices. Likewise, Lascano et al. (2023) analysed the classroom management plans of private high school teachers in Taal, Batangas, focusing primarily on online learning environments rather than the face-to-face challenges experienced in Catholic school settings.

Similarly, studies by Alimahan and Ubayubay (2025) and Owusu-Addo (2024) examined classroom management practices and strategies in public and basic education contexts, respectively. While these studies provide meaningful insights, they overlook the unique spiritual and institutional dimensions that shape management approaches in private Catholic schools. In addition, Nyambe and Muzata (2023) investigated Catholic school management in Lusaka, Zambia, and found that administrative systems were deeply influenced by religious traditions; however, their study emphasized institutional governance rather than classroom-level management practices.

Collectively, these studies reveal notable gaps in the literature. There is still a lack of empirical research on how teachers in private Catholic schools design and implement classroom management strategies that reflect faith-based principles and institutional expectations. Furthermore, limited attention has been given to the specific challenges faced by these teachers—such as reconciling moral formation with discipline, addressing student diversity while maintaining Catholic identity, and adapting management techniques within the framework of religious education. Hence, this study aims to address these gaps by examining classroom management practices and challenges among teachers in private Catholic schools, providing context-specific insights into how faith and pedagogy intersect in everyday teaching.

In light of these concerns, this study seeks to explore the classroom management practices used by Catholic teachers and the challenges they face in applying these strategies. Gaining insight into these challenges is essential for designing targeted support, professional development, and faith-based

approaches that enable Catholic educators to cultivate well-managed classrooms grounded in their core values.

Literature review

The purpose of this review is to critically examine the classroom management practices used by teachers in private Catholic schools and to identify the distinct challenges they encounter within this educational setting. It explores how Catholic values and spiritual principles shape these practices, with a focus on promoting holistic student development, moral formation, and a classroom environment grounded in respect, compassion, and Christian-centered discipline.

Faith-based classroom management practices in Catholic schools

Classroom management is a pivotal element in fostering an effective learning environment and is widely acknowledged as foundational to student achievement and teacher efficacy (Evertson & Weinstein, 2022). It encompasses a broad spectrum of strategies aimed at maintaining order, promoting positive behavior, and enhancing student engagement. Moreover, Simonsen et al. (2020) highlight that effective classroom management not only minimizes disruptions but also cultivates a supportive atmosphere conducive to learning.

Within private Catholic schools, classroom management carries additional significance because of the integration of faith-based principles alongside educational goals. These schools emphasize not only academic excellence but also the holistic formation of students—spiritually, morally, and socially (National Catholic Educational Association, 2022). Therefore, classroom management in Catholic education takes on added layers of complexity as it intertwines with the school’s religious mission.

Furthermore, the moral and spiritual formation of students is an integral part of these institutions, requiring teachers to employ practices that reflect Gospel values and Catholic teachings (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2023). Consequently, this unique context demands an approach that goes beyond traditional discipline by incorporating respect for human dignity, compassion, and community-building. Catholic schools have been identified for their emphasis on self-discipline and values-based education, which positively influence student behavior (Fordham Institute, 2018). However, studies from Australia have highlighted ongoing challenges such as the need for enhanced teacher training in behavior management and addressing rising classroom disruptions (The Australian, 2024).

To address these issues, programs like the Catalyst initiative and Classroom Mastery have been implemented in some Catholic schools to promote calm, predictable classroom routines. These initiatives have led to improved student behavior and academic outcomes (Region Media, 2024)

Faith-based classroom management challenges

Teachers in private Catholic schools face unique challenges in balancing academic rigor with faith formation. According to Miller (2019) and O’Keefe (2018), Catholic educators must navigate the tension between maintaining discipline and nurturing the moral and spiritual development of students, while also

modelling Christian behavior in the process. Effective classroom management in this context must integrate pastoral care, emphasizing both relational trust and a sense of community (Bryk et al., 2015). Although there is a growing body of research on classroom management in Catholic schools, there remains a need to further examine how teachers implement these practices in real-world settings—particularly how they address challenges such as student behavior, diverse learning needs, and aligning discipline with Gospel-centered values. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for supporting teachers and enhancing the educational mission of Catholic schools.

Moreover, Cardíño and Naparan (2024) highlighted key challenges faced by Catholic school teachers, including inadequate administrative support, high expectations from parents and school communities, as well as low salaries. These pressures negatively impact teacher morale and hinder their ability to implement effective classroom management strategies. In addition, the emotional labor involved in balancing discipline with compassion further complicates the role of Catholic educators.

In the Philippine context, Alarcon et al. (2024) studied junior high school teachers in Bukidnon and found that managing diverse student behaviors remains a significant concern. Teachers emphasized the need for clear rules, psychosocial support, and active classroom presence. Likewise, Jayme and Tantiado (2025) found that while classroom instruction and student behavior were generally positive, effective management still depended on consistent strategy implementation and teacher preparedness.

Catholic school classroom management practices: Reinforcing values

Effective classroom management strategies involve the deliberate organization of the classroom environment, the setting of clear expectations, and the consistent reinforcement of positive behavior (Simonsen et al., 2019). Approaches such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are widely implemented because they emphasize proactive, school-wide systems that promote appropriate behavior and foster a positive learning environment (Simonsen et al., 2020). This model aligns particularly well with the mission of Catholic education, which seeks to cultivate the whole person—spiritually, morally, and socially—through a commitment to Christian values such as respect, compassion, forgiveness, and community.

Furthermore, Thompson and Garcia (2023/2024) document how restorative strategies—focused on repairing harm, fostering reconciliation, and building relationships—have led to decreased suspensions and improved classroom climates in Catholic schools. Similarly, Johnson and Evans (2023) found that restorative methods in Catholic classrooms contribute to a more compassionate community, reduced behavioral referrals, and a stronger sense of belonging among students. These outcomes resonate deeply with the Church’s emphasis on forgiveness, healing, and the common good (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2021).

Several recent studies highlight the effectiveness of structured classroom management strategies in Philippine Catholic schools. Jayme and Tantiado’s (2025), study involving 102 elementary teachers in Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon, found that teachers who used effective classroom management techniques reported generally positive learner behavior. Their research demonstrated a significant positive correlation between teachers’ management practices and improved student conduct, underscoring the

importance of clear routines and expectations. Complementing this, Cambay and Paglinawan (2024) found that classroom management strategies, when supported by a positive school environment, significantly enhance student engagement—emphasizing the combined impact of teacher practices and institutional culture.

Additionally, a 2024–2025 study in Misamis Oriental and another in Bukidnon reported that clear rules, well-structured classrooms, and consistent teacher management practices correlate strongly with improved student behavior, sustained focus, and academic performance. These studies suggest that proactive management, planning, and instructional clarity contribute to a more positive and respectful learning climate in Catholic schools.

The review's goal is to help make policy, guide professional development, and back up classroom strategies that are in line with the unique purpose of Catholic education by combining new research with real-world examples.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to examine the specific classroom management approaches used by teachers in private Catholic schools and to identify the challenges they encounter in balancing academic expectations with the mission of Catholic education.

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What classroom management practices are commonly employed by teachers in private Catholic schools?
2. What challenges do teachers in private Catholic schools encounter in implementing effective classroom management strategies

Research methodology

This chapter presents the research design, sources of data, which include the locale of the study, population and sampling, data gathering instrument, and data analysis, including its ethical standards.

Research design

This study utilized a descriptive phenomenological research design to deeply explore and understand the lived experiences of teachers concerning classroom management practices and the challenges they encounter in private Catholic schools. Phenomenology is particularly appropriate as it seeks to capture the essence and meaning of participants' first-hand experiences, free from preconceived notions or theoretical biases. Through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, the study revealed how teachers perceive and navigate classroom management within the distinct context of Catholic education, especially regarding the integration of spiritual and moral values. By richly describing these experiences, the research offered valuable insights into both the practical and existential dimensions of classroom management, shedding light on how teachers effectively balance discipline, academic demands, and faith-based formation.

Locale of the study

This study was conducted in selected schools under the Diocese of Laoag Catholic Educational System (DLCES), which oversees a network of private Catholic schools within the Laoag Region. DLCES schools are known for integrating academic excellence with faith formation, emphasizing the holistic development of students in accordance with Catholic values and teachings. These schools serve diverse communities, combining traditional classroom settings with religious instruction and pastoral care. By focusing on DLCES institutions, the study captured classroom management practices and challenges within a distinct Catholic educational environment that balances both spiritual formation and academic achievement. The locale provides a rich context to explore how teachers navigate the demands of maintaining discipline and fostering moral growth in alignment with the Diocese's educational mission.

Population and sampling

A total of 12 teachers from the Diocese of Laoag Catholic Educational System (DLCES) were purposively selected for this study. This sample size aligns with the principles of phenomenological research, which prioritize depth of understanding over generalizability (Van Manen, 2016). Participants were chosen based on their direct experience with classroom management in Catholic schools, ensuring the collection of rich, context-specific insights. Their lived experiences provided a meaningful exploration of how Catholic school teachers navigate classroom discipline, promote student engagement, and maintain instructional effectiveness, all within the framework of Catholic values and educational traditions.

Data gathering instrument

Data were collected through an online interview questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions designed to elicit detailed and meaningful responses on classroom management practices and challenges among teachers in Catholic schools. The instrument was carefully developed in alignment with the study's objectives and underwent expert validation to ensure clarity, relevance, and its ability to capture rich qualitative data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The questions explored key areas such as strategies for maintaining discipline, methods for promoting student engagement, difficulties in managing diverse classroom behaviors, and the role of Catholic values in shaping classroom management approaches.

Data gathering procedure

The data for this study were gathered through online questionnaires administered via Google Forms. These questionnaires consisted of open-ended questions designed to explore classroom management practices and challenges experienced by teachers in Catholic schools. The instrument was carefully developed based on the study's objectives and underwent expert validation to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research goals. Participants were purposively selected from the Diocese of Laoag Catholic Educational System (DLCES) based on their expertise and experience in classroom management. The questionnaires were distributed electronically to the selected teachers, with follow-up communication conducted when necessary to clarify responses or obtain additional information. All responses were collected, organized, and treated with strict confidentiality in preparation for data analysis.

Data analysis tool

The data collected from the interview questionnaires were analyzed using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase thematic analysis to systematically explore teachers’ classroom management practices and challenges in Catholic schools. This approach began with the researcher immersing in the responses by reading through the transcripts multiple times to gain a comprehensive understanding. Key phrases and significant statements related to classroom management strategies, challenges, and the role of Catholic values were coded in the second phase. These codes were then grouped into broader themes that reflected common patterns across participants’ experiences. The themes were carefully reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately captured the complexities of classroom management in a faith-based setting.

Ethical considerations

This study upheld strict ethical standards in exploring classroom management practices and challenges among teachers in Catholic schools. Informed consent was obtained from all participants after they were thoroughly briefed on the study’s purpose and their rights, including the right to withdraw at any time without consequence. To ensure confidentiality, all responses were anonymized, and data were securely stored to safeguard participant privacy. Recognizing the sensitive nature of discussing personal challenges, provisions were made to offer participants access to appropriate support resources should any distress arise during or following the data collection process.

Results and discussions

Problem 1: What classroom management practices are commonly employed by teachers in private Catholic schools?

Table 1. Faith-based classroom management practices

Theme	Category	Frequency
1. Faith and values integration	- Daily prayer and reflection - Integration of moral lessons - Service and reflection activities - Whole-school Gospel-based approach	12
2. Positive discipline & behavior management	- Faith-centered discipline (compassionate correction) - Positive reinforcement (praise, rewards) - Promoting cooperation and classroom unity	12
3. Rules, routines, and structure	- Clear and consistent rules from Day 1 - Well-established routines - Co-creating classroom rules with students	11
4. Teacher as moral model	- Teachers model virtues (kindness, patience, honesty) - Teaching by example	12
5. Collaboration and support systems	- Parent-teacher coordination - Guidance counselor support	9

Source: questionnaires made by the researcher

The table presents findings that reveal a holistic approach to classroom management in faith-based schools, particularly in Catholic education, where moral, spiritual, and academic development are deeply intertwined. The themes that emerged from the data include Faith and Values Integration, Positive Discipline and Behavior Management, Rules, Routines and Structure, Teacher as Moral Model, and Collaboration and Support Systems. Among these, Faith and Values Integration was the most emphasized, with 12 teachers responding, as they consistently described how faith practices and moral lessons are incorporated into everyday classroom life. According to one respondent, *“We often begin and end classes with prayers to set a respectful and faith-centered atmosphere.”* Another added, *“Every morning before the first class and in the afternoon before class, students pray together to set a respectful and calm atmosphere.”* These faith-centered practices cultivate respect and mindfulness while reinforcing Gospel values. Teachers further explained that moral instruction is embedded in disciplinary strategies, with one saying, *“I integrate Catholic values such as respect, compassion, honesty, and responsibility when addressing student behavior. Correction is done with empathy and a focus on moral growth rather than punishment.”* This approach supports the view of the National Catholic Educational Association (2022) and the Congregation for Catholic Education (2023), which emphasize that spiritual formation must go hand in hand with academic excellence.

Positive Discipline and Behavior Management also emerged as a highly prominent theme with responses from 12 teachers. Teachers in faith-based settings prefer nurturing discipline strategies that promote cooperation and empathy rather than punishment. As one teacher shared, *“As a teacher in a private Catholic school, I use positive discipline, set clear rules, and teach with values.”* We encourage respect and good behavior, and we set a good example for the students.” Another echoed, *“We emphasize virtues like faith in God, respect for other people, the sense of responsibility, and, of course, the virtue of compassion.”* Teachers often motivate students through positive reinforcement, with one respondent noting, *“We praise good behavior, give merits like pupil of the week, and recognize acts of kindness during class prayers or assemblies.”* This aligns with Simonsen et al. (2020), who advocate proactive strategies like Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), emphasizing compassion and moral guidance as key tools for discipline.

The theme of Rules, Routines, and Structure, identified by 11 respondents, highlights the importance of consistency, organization, and student involvement in maintaining a disciplined and values-driven environment. Teachers emphasized the need to establish clear expectations early on, as one stated, *“Clear rules and structured routines are established at the beginning of the school year.”* Another firmly noted, *“Rules and regulations should be imposed on the very first day of the school year.”* Many also shared how they co-create rules with students, grounding them in Catholic philosophy. One respondent explained, *“Co-creating rules with students by creating a code of conduct grounded in Catholic philosophy and values emphasizes Christ-like charity, respect for authority, and cooperation.”* Teachers also use creative strategies such as “1-2-3 eyes on me, 4-5-6 eyes on you” to regain focus while keeping interactions warm and respectful. These practices confirm Evertson and Weinstein’s (2022) assertion that effective classroom management depends on structure and consistency, which foster both academic productivity and moral responsibility.

Equally emphasized was the role of the Teacher as Moral Model. Teachers see themselves as living examples of the virtues they seek to instill in their students. One respondent stated, *“As a teacher, I serve as a role model to the students,”* while another shared, *“Teachers model the virtues of kindness, patience, and respect, showing students how to live by Catholic teachings.”* This demonstrates that faith-based educators view moral modelling as essential to student formation, echoing Johnson and Evans (2023) and Thompson and Garcia (2024), who found that teachers’ modelling of Christian virtues fosters a restorative and value-centered classroom climate. As one participant expressed, *“We teach students to be kind, honest, and respectful. We remind them to follow Jesus’ teachings, do what is right, and treat others with love.”* By living out these virtues, teachers reinforce the moral lessons taught in the curriculum and encourage students to apply them beyond the classroom.

Finally, Collaboration and Support Systems, though mentioned less frequently by 9 respondents, play an important supporting role in faith-based classroom management. Teachers recognized that engaging parents and guidance counselors strengthens both behavioral and moral development. One respondent explained, *“There is also close coordination with parents and the guidance office to support the child’s growth.”* Another stressed the importance of institutional backing, saying that schools should provide *“continuous training in faith-based classroom strategies and stronger support systems for teachers.”* This aligns with Jayme and Tantiado (2025), who emphasized collaboration as a foundation for maintaining consistency and compassion in classroom discipline.

Overall, the most emphasized practices—Faith and Values Integration, Positive Discipline, and Teacher as Moral Model—reflect the core philosophy of Catholic education, where faith formation and character building are integral to teaching. Slightly less frequent but still vital are Rules and Routines and Collaboration, which ensure structure and community support. As one teacher summarized, *“We always set rules that teach both discipline and faith. We remind students to study well, pray, be respectful, and do what is right. Our routines include prayer, good manners, and responsibility to help them grow in both learning and faith.”* These findings highlight that classroom management in Catholic schools is not merely about maintaining order but about cultivating virtue, compassion, and faith-based discipline. However, consistent with Cardíño and Naparan (2024) and Alarcon et al. (2024), teachers face challenges in managing diverse behaviors and balancing discipline with compassion, particularly when institutional support is limited. Therefore, continuous professional development and stronger collaboration among teachers, parents, and administrators are essential to sustaining a learning environment where academic excellence and spiritual growth truly go hand in hand.

Problem 2: What challenges do teachers in private Catholic schools encounter in implementing effective classroom management strategies?

Table 2. Challenges in classroom management in private catholic schools

Theme	Category	Frequency
1. Behavioral challenges of students	Talking out of turn, lack of focus, tardiness, resistance to routines, disrespect, peer pressure, and emotional issues	12

2. Balancing discipline and compassion (faith-based)	Discipline guided by kindness, patience, moral reflection, and Gospel values; avoiding punitive measures	12
3. Integration of catholic mission and values	Classroom management aligned with the school’s mission, use of scripture/prayers, and faith-based character formation	12
4. Conflict and challenges with parents	Parental resistance to discipline, differing home and school values, and lack of parental support	8
5. Student engagement and motivation challenges	Lack of student participation in rule-making, apathy towards religious activities, and varied interests affecting focus	6
6. Physical and environmental constraints	Limited seating, tight classroom spaces contribute to distractions and behavioral challenges	4

Source: questionnaires made by the researcher

The table presents findings on the common challenges in classroom management faced by teachers in private Catholic schools. These challenges reflect the everyday realities teachers encounter as they strive to maintain discipline, promote student engagement, and integrate Catholic values into their teaching. The findings reveal six major themes that illustrate the complexity of faith-based classroom management: behavioral challenges of students, balancing discipline and compassion, integration of Catholic mission and values, conflicts with parents, student engagement and motivation, and physical and environmental constraints.

The first theme, with 12 responses, behavioral challenges of students, was the most cited issue among teachers. Respondents described various classroom behaviors that disrupt learning, such as “talking out of turn, lack of focus, tardiness, resistance to routines, disrespect, peer pressure, and emotional issues.” One teacher explained, *“Some students test boundaries by displaying behaviors like tardiness, lack of focus, or resistance to routines.”* Another added that *“Common challenging student behaviors in private Catholic schools include talking during lessons, lack of focus, refusal to follow instructions, and occasional disrespect toward peers or authority.”* Teachers also mentioned that even minor misbehaviors—such as whispering, forgetting materials, or delaying instructions—require correction because, as one respondent noted, *“These are not major offenses, but they still need correction because Catholic school students are trained to practice respect, discipline, and responsibility.”* These examples show that, despite the spiritual focus of Catholic schools, teachers still confront typical behavioral concerns that require both practical management strategies and faith-centered approaches.

The second theme, with 12 responses, balancing discipline and compassion, highlights the tension teachers experience between enforcing rules and embodying the Christian values of patience, kindness, and understanding. One respondent shared, *“From my experience, one challenge in Catholic schools is keeping the balance between discipline and compassion. We need to correct misbehavior but still show*

patience and understanding as part of Christian values.” Another expressed, *“I face challenges like handling different student behaviors, keeping students focused, and balancing discipline with kindness.”* Teachers explained that discipline in Catholic schools is guided by moral reflection and compassion rather than punishment. As one teacher described, *“Discipline is guided by compassion, respect, and forgiveness rather than punishment.”* This approach reflects the Catholic philosophy of nurturing the whole child and aligns with Bryk et al. (2015), who emphasize a pastoral care model grounded in relational trust and community building.

The third theme focuses on the integration of the Catholic mission and values into classroom management, and recorded 12 responses. Teachers repeatedly emphasized that they “always incorporate lessons based on the MVGO (Mission, Vision, Goals, and Objectives)” and that “rules are not just for order but for teaching respect, kindness, honesty, and responsibility.” One respondent shared, *“As a Catholic school teacher, I manage my class by aligning discipline with the school’s mission and values. Corrections are done with patience and connected to Christian values, so students learn both academically and in faith.”* Another affirmed, *“As a Catholic teacher, our values guide us to teach with faith, lead with love, and discipline with kindness.”* These statements reflect the findings of the National Catholic Educational Association (2022) and the Congregation for Catholic Education (2023), both of which stress that faith integration should permeate daily classroom routines to foster moral and spiritual formation alongside academic learning.

Another recurring issue is conflict and challenges with parents, with 8 responses. Teachers reported instances where “some parents might oppose disciplinary actions, which undermines classroom management efforts.” One respondent noted, *“We often navigate conflicts between parents and teachers regarding student discipline since some parents expect faith-based leniency rather than strict enforcement of rules.”* These comments suggest a disconnect between school and home expectations regarding discipline. Teachers expressed the need for greater home-school collaboration to ensure consistent reinforcement of Catholic values and behavioral expectations.

The fifth theme, which concerns student engagement and motivation, received 6 mentions. Teachers described difficulties in maintaining student interest, especially in faith-related activities. One respondent observed, *“Keeping the students motivated in the lesson is difficult due to their different interests.”* Others mentioned *“Students’ lack of participation in making the rules”* and *“reluctance to engage in religious practices.”* These observations suggest that students’ diverse backgrounds and personal interests affect their participation and that faith-based activities must be made more relevant and engaging to sustain motivation.

Finally, the sixth theme was the least mentioned with 4 responses, physical and environmental constraints. Although mentioned less frequently, it still significantly impacts classroom management. Teachers noted that *“managing diverse student behavior needs in spaces with limited seating or tight spaces”* contributes to distractions and behavioral issues. Such environmental limitations hinder teachers’ ability to create orderly and focused learning environments.

Overall, classroom management in Catholic schools is a multifaceted endeavor that intertwines behavioral, moral, and spiritual dimensions. The findings reveal that while teachers face common

behavioral issues such as inattentiveness, disobedience, and disrespect, they address these through compassion, patience, and faith-based guidance. These results align with the studies of Alarcon et al. (2024) and Jayme and Tantiado (2025), who similarly identified behavior management as a persistent concern among teachers in the Philippine context. The emphasis on compassionate discipline also echoes the pastoral care approach of Bryk et al. (2015), emphasizing trust and holistic formation over punitive measures. Furthermore, integrating Catholic mission and values into classroom management supports Miller's (2019) and O'Keefe's (2018) advocacy for uniting academic excellence with moral and spiritual growth.

Given these findings, Catholic schools should continue to provide ongoing teacher training that merges faith-based principles with practical classroom management strategies. Such training should focus on compassionate discipline, establishing clear routines, and strengthening partnerships with parents. Additionally, administrative support remains crucial to help teachers balance academic expectations with moral and spiritual formation. Ultimately, the data affirm that effective classroom management in Catholic schools is not only about maintaining order but also about nurturing faith, character, and community through every aspect of teaching and learning.

Conclusion

This study examined the classroom management practices commonly employed by teachers in private Catholic schools and the challenges they face in balancing academic expectations with the mission of Catholic education. In response to the first research question, the findings reveal that teachers predominantly use faith-based strategies such as daily prayer, integration of moral lessons, and service activities to foster students' spiritual and moral growth alongside academic development. Positive discipline rooted in compassion and Gospel values, clear rules and routines established from the beginning, and teachers serving as moral role models are central to effective classroom management. Collaboration with parents and guidance counselors also supports this holistic approach, though to a lesser extent.

Regarding the second research question, teachers face multiple challenges, including common behavioral issues like talking out of turn, lack of focus, and resistance to routines. They also struggle to balance firm discipline with compassion, aligning their practices with Gospel-centered values rather than punitive measures. Conflicts with parents over discipline, varying home and school values, and limited student engagement in faith-based activities add complexity to their role. Environmental factors, such as crowded classrooms, further challenge teachers' ability to maintain order and focus.

These results align with existing studies emphasizing the importance of compassionate discipline, clear expectations, and strong teacher presence in faith-based settings. They also highlight the need for greater administrative support and enhanced collaboration with families to effectively address behavioral and motivational challenges.

Based on these insights, it is recommended that Catholic schools provide continuous professional development that integrates faith and practical classroom management techniques. Training should focus

on compassionate discipline, establishing consistent routines, and fostering partnerships with parents. Strengthening administrative support and improving classroom environments will also help teachers balance academic rigor with moral and spiritual formation.

In summary, effective classroom management in private Catholic schools involves a faith-centered, holistic approach that supports students' academic, moral, and spiritual growth. While teachers employ a range of strategies grounded in Catholic values, they encounter challenges that call for sustained support and collaboration to create nurturing and orderly learning environments.

This study is limited by its focus on teachers from private Catholic schools, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational settings. The reliance on teacher self-reports may introduce bias, and the absence of perspectives from students, parents, and administrators restricts a comprehensive understanding of classroom management practices. Future research should involve students, parents, and administrators, study different types of schools, and consider long-term or observational methods to assess the effectiveness of faith-centered strategies over time. Examining the role of resources, administrative support, and school environment could further illuminate how Catholic schools balance academic, moral, and spiritual development.

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