

# Research on effective paths of classroom management for student-teachers in primary Chinese education

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**Abstract:** Effective classroom management is crucial for teaching quality and student learning, particularly for student-teachers in primary Chinese teaching practice. This study explores the classroom management challenges faced by student-teachers in rural primary schools and identifies strategies to improve their management skills. Using qualitative data from interviews, observations, and reflective journals during teaching internships, the study highlights issues such as limited experience, large class sizes, and diverse student needs. The paper suggests strategies like relationship building, co-constructing classroom rules, interactive teaching methods, and reflective practice to enhance classroom management and foster professional growth, ultimately improving teaching outcomes in primary Chinese education.

**Keywords:** classroom management; student-teachers; primary Chinese education; teaching practice; volunteer teaching

## 1 Introduction

Classroom management is essential for effective teaching, influencing student engagement and achievement. For primary Chinese education students, volunteering in rural or under-resourced schools offers valuable hands-on experience. However, student-teachers often face challenges in managing classrooms due to limited experience and complex dynamics [1]. This paper explores effective strategies for student-teachers to develop classroom management skills during their teaching practice, analyzing real cases from volunteer programs to provide practical recommendations for their professional growth and improved primary Chinese instruction.

## 2 Literature review

Classroom management is essential for effective teaching and a positive learning environment. Emmer and Evertson (2017) highlight the need for clear expectations, routines, and student engagement. For student-teachers, balancing instruction with behavior management is challenging, especially in primary Chinese education, which involves language acquisition and cultural elements [7]. Volunteer teaching in rural schools offers opportunities to develop these skills, but research on how student-teachers adapt their strategies is limited. This study fills this gap by examining their classroom management experiences and offering recommendations for improving teaching effectiveness.

## 3 Methodology

This qualitative study explored student-teachers' classroom management experiences during volunteer teaching in rural primary schools. Fifteen participants from a major university took part in an eight-week summer program. Data were collected through interviews, supervisor observations, and reflective journals. Thematic coding was used to analyze the

data and identify key themes and strategies [2]. This approach provided valuable insights into the challenges and effective management techniques used by student-teachers.

## **4 Findings and discussion**

### **4.1 Challenges in classroom management**

The study identified several challenges faced by student-teachers, including lack of authority recognition, large diverse classes, and limited experience. Rural schools' lack of resources and cultural differences further complicated management. Additionally, insufficient support and guidance from school staff hindered their ability to address behavioral issues effectively, highlighting the complexity of classroom management in rural primary Chinese education.

### **4.2 Effective classroom management strategies**

In response to these challenges, student-teachers developed and employed several practical and effective classroom management strategies. Firstly, building positive and respectful teacher-student relationships emerged as a crucial foundational step. Participants emphasized that demonstrating genuine care, patience, and respect toward students helped to establish mutual trust, cooperation, and a positive classroom climate [3]. Secondly, involving students actively in the co-creation of classroom rules increased their ownership and willingness to follow behavioral expectations, which in turn reduced disciplinary issues. Thirdly, the use of interactive and student-centered teaching methods—such as group discussions, cooperative learning, storytelling, and games—not only enhanced student engagement but also minimized opportunities for disruptive behavior. These approaches encouraged collaboration and made learning more enjoyable and meaningful for the students. Finally, continuous self-reflection was identified as a key factor in improving classroom management skills. Through maintaining reflective journals, student-teachers critically evaluated their own practices, identified areas for improvement, and adapted their strategies accordingly. Collectively, these management techniques contributed to creating a more harmonious, well-organized, and productive learning environment, which fostered better academic and social outcomes for students.

## **5 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, several comprehensive recommendations are proposed to improve student-teachers' classroom management skills during volunteer teaching activities, especially in rural primary Chinese education settings [4].

**Pre-service training:** Universities should design and incorporate targeted classroom management modules into the curriculum focusing specifically on practical and realistic scenarios, which student-teachers are likely to encounter in rural or under-resourced schools. These modules should go beyond theoretical knowledge to include case studies, role-playing exercises, and problem-solving workshops. By simulating real classroom challenges such as handling diverse student behaviors, managing large classes, and overcoming resource limitations, student-teachers can build confidence and practical skills before entering the field. Moreover, training should emphasize the development of cultural sensitivity and communication skills to prepare student-teachers for the unique social and cultural contexts they will face during their volunteer teaching.

**Mentorship:** Assigning experienced and skilled teachers as mentors to student-teachers during their volunteer teaching practice is essential for providing continuous guidance, support, and constructive feedback. Mentors can offer personalized advice on classroom management techniques, share successful strategies, and help student-teachers reflect on their teaching experiences. Regular mentor-mentee meetings allow student-teachers to discuss difficulties openly, receive emotional encouragement, and develop professional problem-solving skills. This support system helps reduce feelings of isolation and anxiety that novice teachers often experience, fostering professional growth and enhancing teaching

effectiveness. In addition, mentors can assist student-teachers in setting achievable goals and monitoring progress in their classroom management abilities.

**Reflective practice:** Encouraging student-teachers to engage in regular self-reflection and peer discussion is crucial for cultivating critical thinking and adaptive classroom management skills. Reflective practice involves analyzing daily teaching experiences, identifying what strategies worked or failed, and considering alternative approaches. Through maintaining reflective journals or discussion groups, student-teachers develop heightened self-awareness and the ability to respond flexibly to evolving classroom dynamics. Peer collaboration allows sharing diverse perspectives, constructive criticism, and collective problem-solving, which enriches learning. Universities and volunteer programs should facilitate structured reflection sessions and provide tools such as guided questions or reflective frameworks to maximize the benefits of this practice.

**Contextual adaptation:** Training student-teachers to adapt their classroom management strategies to the specific cultural, social, and resource conditions of the schools in which they teach is essential to improving effectiveness. Rural schools often present unique challenges, including limited materials, multi-grade classrooms, and cultural norms different from urban environments. Student-teachers need to learn how to assess the local context carefully and tailor their approaches accordingly—such as, using locally relevant examples, flexible seating arrangements, or community-involved rule-setting. Such contextual sensitivity helps build rapport with students and local stakeholders, enhances student engagement, and ensures that management techniques are practical and sustainable [5]. Preparing student-teachers to be flexible and culturally responsive increases their ability to create positive learning environments across diverse settings.

## **6 Conclusion**

Effective classroom management is essential for student-teachers to succeed in primary Chinese volunteer teaching. This study highlights the complex challenges faced by student-teachers and identifies practical strategies that enhance their classroom management capabilities. By emphasizing relationship building, student involvement, interactive teaching, and reflective practice, student-teachers can create supportive learning environments that benefit both themselves and their students [6]. Future research could explore long-term impacts of these practices and develop tailored training programs to better prepare student-teachers for diverse teaching contexts.

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## **Conflicts of interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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