



## **Teacher Participation in Professional Learning Programs in Classroom Behaviour Management**

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**Abstract:** Professional learning can help teachers to develop their knowledge and abilities to support their functions and roles as educators. However, studies show that most teachers in Indonesia have not been involved in continuing professional development. This study describes the professional learning program attended by elementary school teachers in Indonesia regarding classroom behaviour management. The results of this study indicate that only some of the teacher participants stated that they had participated in a professional learning program on managing student behaviour in the classroom. Organizers of the professional learning programs attended by teachers include the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, schools, universities, and other community members. Participants also shared the benefits of these activities in managing student behaviour in the classroom. The results of this study suggest the importance of implementing more professional learning programs that focus on managing student behaviour in the classroom, which is designed effectively to directly impact behaviour management practices carried out by teachers in the classroom.

**Keywords:** teacher, professional learning program, classroom behaviour management, Indonesia

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### **Introduction**

Managing student behaviour has consistently been a problem faced by teachers in Indonesia. Teachers often viewed too much talking and inattention as typical behaviours in the classroom. Other troublesome behaviour for teachers includes disrespect, aggression, excessive talking, and lack of attention (Hitipeuw, 2012). Research conducted by Paramita et al. (2022) further shows that the problem of student behaviour is not only faced by teachers during face-to-face meetings in class but also during distance learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Behaviours such as excessive talking, not paying attention, and playing during lessons occur in offline and online learning situations. Some other behavioural problems that arise when studying offline include disturbing friends and walking around in class. In contrast, behaviour problems during online learning include failure to submit assignments, ignoring online class rules, and being passive during learning sessions.

Even though many student behaviour problems are not challenging behaviours which threaten the safety of the student or other people around them, a consistent and long-term occurrence of these behaviours may interfere with the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process in the classroom (Sun, 2015). It may reduce students' opportunities to learn and impact teacher stress levels and consequently trigger aggressive teacher responses to students (Montuoro & Mainhard, 2017). News reports in the Indonesian mass media have shown the widespread use of physical punishment by teachers to students who are seen as having behavioural problems (Paramita et al., 2019). Despite the shared argument that teacher punishment is aimed at educating the students, international literature has shown that the use of physical punishment, such as hitting, slapping, or asking students to do various physical activities as punishment, has proven to be ineffective and may cause other negative impacts (Armstrong, 2018).

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Classroom management literature in the last two decades has emphasized the importance of a proactive and preventive perspective on classroom management, i.e., the practices teachers use to create an environment that facilitates academic and social-emotional learning (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006). The purpose of behaviour management in the classroom is not to create compliance or silence students but to encourage positive student behaviour and support learning, prevent behaviour problems, and respond to behavioural problems with effective and evidence-based approaches (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006).

The rise of problem behaviour cases in the classroom and the continued use of corporal punishment by Indonesian teachers may indicate teachers' lack of knowledge and competence in dealing with student behaviour problems. Mustafa (2013), in his research on the level of professional competence of teachers in Indonesia, stated that the level of professional competence of teachers, in general, is within the good category. However, the competence of teachers in classroom management is still classified as lacking. Teacher competence in classroom management, including classroom behaviour management, is important to support effective learning.

Literature shows that professional learning can help teachers to develop their knowledge and abilities to support their functions and roles as educators (Akiba & Liang, 2016). In relation to behaviour management, the approach and delivery of professional learning in classroom management can determine how effectively teachers can apply an evidence-based approach in their classrooms. Based on a literature review on classroom management and action by Marquez et al. (2016), there are several things that teachers can apply, including integrating online technology, evidence-based practices in supporting positive behaviour, modelling videos, independent/step-by-step activities, and doing activities that can increase student engagement in the classroom. Research shows that the professional learning of teachers may positively influence students' behavioural engagement (Gregory et al., 2014), teacher satisfaction in applying knowledge and skills in classroom management (Giallo & Hayes, 2007), and teacher-student relationships (Yoshikawa et al., 2015). Research by Prenger et al. (2017) also suggested that community-based professional training may improve teacher knowledge and skills in managing student learning in the classroom.

Conceptually, the term professional learning is different from professional development. Professional development is more related to providing information to teachers. The teacher acts more as a passive listener and plays a less active role in increasing their knowledge and skills (Timperley, 2011). This focus on the passive delivery of material often has little impact on the actual implementation of teaching in the classroom. On the other hand, professional learning describes formal teacher learning activities, such as workshops or other professional learning sessions, aimed at encouraging changes in the capacity of teachers to carry out their professional duties or changing their practices to be more effective (Mayer & Lloyd, 2011). This process is expected to provide an opportunity for teachers to reflect and evaluate their current practices and update their understanding of information, theoretical concepts and the characteristics of students they are currently facing. The involvement of teachers in professional learning certainly cannot be separated from the development of four areas of teacher competence: educational, social, personality, and professional competencies.

The Government of Indonesia, through Law 14/2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, has required teachers to have academic qualifications and competencies to act as learning agents to improve the quality of national education. In addition to having the required academic qualifications, teachers as professionals must carry out ongoing professional development activities to improve pedagogic, social, personality, and professional competencies to meet the needs and demands of the teaching profession (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016).

However, studies show that most teachers in Indonesia have not been involved in continuing professional development. Only a few teachers received coaching from principals, supervisors, experienced teacher colleagues, or external facilitators (Solihin et al., 2021). The involvement of teachers in various activities to improve their competencies which may directly impact learning, namely in the form of training and mentoring, also seems limited and has not reached a wide group of teachers (Solihin et al., 2021). In line with this, Sennen (2017), in a study on the problems of teacher competence and professionalism, indicated that there were problems related to the low motivation and willingness of teachers to learn and continue to develop themselves.

Tournaki et al. (2011) assert that professional teacher learning is important to help teachers improve student achievement. The effectiveness of teachers in learning and classroom management is

closely related to learning planning and preparation, classroom management, and classroom teaching processes (Tournaki et al., 2011). Thus, professional teacher learning in classroom management is significant for managing student behaviour and improving the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process in the long run.

Therefore, this study aims to describe the professional learning programs attended by elementary school teachers in Indonesia regarding classroom behaviour management. Specifically, according to the teachers, this research will describe the topics of the activities, the organizers, and the usefulness of the professional learning program. The research questions are: 1) What topics of professional learning attended by elementary school teachers in Indonesia regarding classroom behaviour management? 2) Who were the organizers of the programs? 3) How teachers perceived the usefulness of the professional learning programs? Overall, this study is expected to provide practical information regarding the availability of professional learning activities focusing on classroom behaviour management in the Indonesian context.

### **Methods**

This study is a descriptive study designed to describe professional learning programs on classroom behaviour management attended by teachers. This study uses quantitative analysis and descriptive statistics. This research is part of a study examining teachers' strategies for dealing with student behaviour. Before data collection began, the Health Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Nursing, Airlangga University, conducted a research ethics evaluation with the ethics approval number 2348-KEPK.

The target participants of this research are elementary school teachers in Indonesia. The research team conducted the data collection process and was assisted by contact persons from 16 provinces to distribute the questionnaires in their respective regions. Participants were recruited using the snowball technique to gain participants from various regions in Indonesia.

Data was collected using a series of closed- and open-ended questions presented in an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The questionnaire was distributed to primary school teachers across Indonesia through social media and personal contacts. The questionnaire began with the question, "Have you ever attended a professional learning program on managing student behaviour in the classroom (e.g., courses, seminars, training, mentoring, and other professional learning activities)?" Participants who answer "Yes" will be asked to write down the title/topic of the activity they were participating in, the organizer of the activity, and what they learned in the program. Finally, participants were asked to assess how useful the program according to participants was, with the answer choices: "Not useful" (Score 1), "Less useful" (Score 2), "Quite useful" (Score 3), "Useful" (Score 4), or "Very useful" (Score 5).

Data were analyzed by categorizing the participants' answers regarding 1) the topics of the professional learning programs, based on the participants' answers to questions about the title/topic of the activity and what they learned in the activity, 2) the organizer of the activity, and 3) how useful the program was according to the participants. All data were analyzed descriptively.

The coding of the topics of the professional learning programs and the activity organiser was done based on the participants' responses. However, the categorization of the topics of the professional learning programs in the areas of academic and personal competency was based on the Sekolah Dasar/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Class Teacher Competency Standards as described in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 16 of 2007 concerning Academic Qualification Standards and Teacher Competencies. In terms of participants' perceptions of the program's usefulness, the percentage of participants' responses on the scale was reported, along with some descriptive statistics.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Results**

Among the 478 teachers who filled out the research questionnaire, only 201 teachers stated that they had participated in a professional learning program on managing student behaviour in the classroom. In comparison, the rest (277 teachers) stated that they never had. Of the 201 existing data, the amount of data analyzed is 196. Data gained from five teachers were not analyzed because they wrote the data collection questionnaire for this research as the topic of the professional learning program

they had participated in, so it was deemed invalid. Table 1 below presents participants' characteristics based on their provinces.

**Table 1.** Participant data by province

| No     | Province                          | Amount | Percentage (%) |
|--------|-----------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| 1      | Aceh                              | 8      | 4.08           |
| 2      | North Sumatra                     | 11     | 5.61           |
| 3      | West Sumatra                      | 11     | 5.61           |
| 4      | South Sumatra                     | 13     | 6.63           |
| 5      | Jambi                             | 3      | 1.53           |
| 6      | Lampung                           | 1      | 0.51           |
| 7      | Special Capital Region of Jakarta | 12     | 6.12           |
| 8      | Special District of Yogyakarta    | 5      | 2.55           |
| 9      | West Java                         | 10     | 5.10           |
| 10     | Central Java                      | 2      | 1.02           |
| 11     | East Java                         | 27     | 13.78          |
| 12     | South Kalimantan                  | 21     | 10.71          |
| 13     | East Kalimantan                   | 13     | 6.63           |
| 14     | Central Kalimantan                | 1      | 0.51           |
| 15     | North Sulawesi                    | 3      | 1.53           |
| 16     | Central Sulawesi                  | 25     | 12.76          |
| 17     | South Sulawesi                    | 3      | 1.53           |
| 18     | Gorontalo                         | 5      | 2.55           |
| 19     | Bali                              | 9      | 4.59           |
| 20     | West Nusa Tenggara                | 9      | 4.59           |
| 21     | East Nusa Tenggara                | 2      | 1.02           |
| 22     | Papua                             | 1      | 0.51           |
| 23     | West Papua                        | 1      | 0.51           |
| Amount |                                   | 196    | 100            |

Table 1 shows that the participants of this study came from 23 provinces in Indonesia. However, the distribution of participants is uneven between provinces. About a third of the participants (37.24%) came from East Java, Central Sulawesi, and South Kalimantan. Another third (35.71%) are from North Sumatra, West Sumatra, South Sumatra, the Special Capital Region of Jakarta, West Java and East Kalimantan. As described in Table 2, the majority (73.98%) of the participants were female, aged between 30-39 years (37.24%), and had completed their education with a Bachelor's degree (86.22%).

**Table 2.** Characteristics of participants

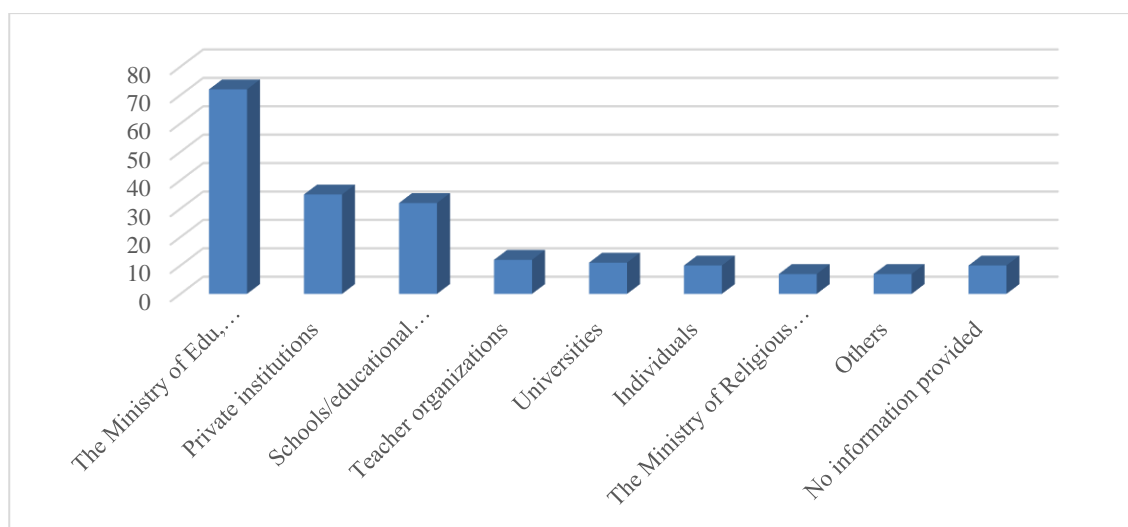
|           | Demographic characteristics | Amount | Percentage (%) |
|-----------|-----------------------------|--------|----------------|
| Gender    | Male                        | 51     | 26.02          |
|           | Female                      | 145    | 73.98          |
| Age       | 29 years old or less        | 69     | 34.18          |
|           | 30-39 years old             | 76     | 37.24          |
|           | 40-49 years old             | 39     | 19.90          |
|           | 50 years old or more        | 17     | 8.67           |
| Education | Senior High school          | 2      | 1.02           |
|           | Diploma                     | 7      | 3.57           |
|           | Bachelor Degree             | 173    | 86.22          |
|           | Master Degree               | 19     | 9.18           |

As described in Table 3, the topics of the professional learning program on classroom behaviour management that the research participants have attended can be categorized into four main themes,

namely 1) pedagogic competence (51.53%), 2) classroom management (28.57%), 3) inclusive education (7.65%), and 4) personality competence (6.63%). This category is based on the title/topic written by the participants and their explanation of the program content. As stated above, the categorization of academic and personal competency areas is based on the Sekolah Dasar/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Class Teacher Competency Standards as described in the Minister of National Education Regulation of the Republic of Indonesia Number 16 of 2007 concerning Academic Qualification Standards and Teacher Competencies.

**Table 3.** The topics of the professional learning programs on classroom behaviour management attended by research participants

| Area                 | Sub-area  | Amount | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Pedagogic competence | Mastering student characteristics                   | 24     | 12.24          |
|                      | Developing curriculum                               | 3      | 1.53           |
|                      | Organizing learning process                         | 39     | 19.90          |
|                      | Utilizing information and communication technology  | 31     | 15.82          |
|                      | Facilitating the development of students' potential | 2      | 1.02           |
|                      | Conducting a learning assessment                    | 2      | 1.02           |
| Classroom management | Classroom management                                | 34     | 17.35          |
|                      | Classroom behaviour management                      | 22     | 11.22          |
| Inclusive education  |   | 15     | 7.65           |
| Personal competence  |   | 13     | 6.63           |
| Others               |   | 11     | 5.61           |
| Total                |   | 196    | 100            |



**Figure 1.** The organizers of the professional learning programs

About a third of research participants (36.73%) stated that the professional learning program they participated in was organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, either through the Ministry directly, the local Education Office, or the Education Quality Assurance Institute (Lembaga Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan). Other providers that are quite common are private institutions (17.86%) and schools/educational foundations (16.33%). The rest includes teacher organizations (e.g., the Indonesian Teachers Association (Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia)), universities, individuals, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, etc. Ten participants did not answer this question. The description of organizers of the professional learning programs is described in Figure 1.

In terms of the usefulness of the programs, the results indicated that more than half of the participants (N = 105, 53.57%) perceived that the professional learning programs they had participated in were very useful, and 50 participants (25.51%) felt that the programs they participated in were useful. As shown in Table 4, the topics with the highest combination of scores, 4 (“Useful”) and 5 (“Very useful”), were, respectively, organizing the learning process (39.9%), utilizing information and communication technology (34.5%), classroom management (33.1%), mastering student characteristics (26.4%), and classroom behaviour management (22.5%).

Meanwhile, 31 participants (15.82%) perceived that the program they participated in was quite useful. The other ten participants (5,10%) felt that the professional learning program they participated in lacked or was useless. These professional learning programs perceived as lacking or not useful include those focusing on distance learning, limited face-to-face learning, and classroom management. Overall, teachers in this study perceived that their participation in the professional learning programs was useful, with a mean score of 4.29 (SD = .95). Figure 2 illustrates participants’ perceptions of the program's usefulness based on its topic.

**Table 4.** Teacher perceptions of the usefulness of the professional learning programs according to the topics of the programs

| Topics  | Usefulness |        |             |        |              |        |        |        |             |        | Total |        |
|---|------------|--------|-------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|--------|-------|--------|
|   | Not useful |        | Less useful |        | Quite useful |        | Useful |        | Very useful |        |       |        |
|   | N          | %      | N           | %      | N            | %      | N      | %      | N           | %      | N     | %      |
| Mastering student characteristics                   | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 4            | 12.9%  | 7      | 14.0%  | 13          | 12.4%  | 24    | 12.2%  |
| Developing curriculum                               | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 0            | 0.0%   | 1      | 2.0%   | 2           | 1.9%   | 3     | 1.5%   |
| Organizing learning process                         | 0          | 0.0%   | 3           | 42.9%  | 4            | 12.9%  | 9      | 18.0%  | 23          | 21.9%  | 39    | 19.9%  |
| Utilizing information and communication technology  | 0          | 0.0%   | 2           | 28.6%  | 6            | 19.4%  | 12     | 24.0%  | 11          | 10.5%  | 31    | 15.8%  |
| Facilitating the development of students’ potential | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 0            | 0.0%   | 1      | 2.0%   | 1           | 1.0%   | 2     | 1.0%   |
| Conducting a learning assessment                    | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 0            | 0.0%   | 0      | 0.0%   | 2           | 1.9%   | 2     | 1.0%   |
| Classroom management                                | 2          | 66.7%  | 2           | 28.6%  | 4            | 12.9%  | 8      | 16.0%  | 18          | 17.1%  | 34    | 17.3%  |
| Classroom behaviour management                      | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 5            | 16.1%  | 6      | 12.0%  | 11          | 10.5%  | 22    | 11.2%  |
| Inclusive education                                 | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 3            | 9.7%   | 3      | 6.0%   | 9           | 8.6%   | 15    | 7.7%   |
| Personal competence                                 | 1          | 33.3%  | 0           | 0.0%   | 4            | 12.9%  | 2      | 4.0%   | 6           | 5.7%   | 13    | 6.6%   |
| Others  | 0          | 0.0%   | 0           | 0.0%   | 1            | 3.2%   | 1      | 2.0%   | 9           | 8.6%   | 11    | 5.6%   |
| Total   | 3          | 100.0% | 7           | 100.0% | 31           | 100.0% | 50     | 100.0% | 105         | 100.0% | 196   | 100.0% |

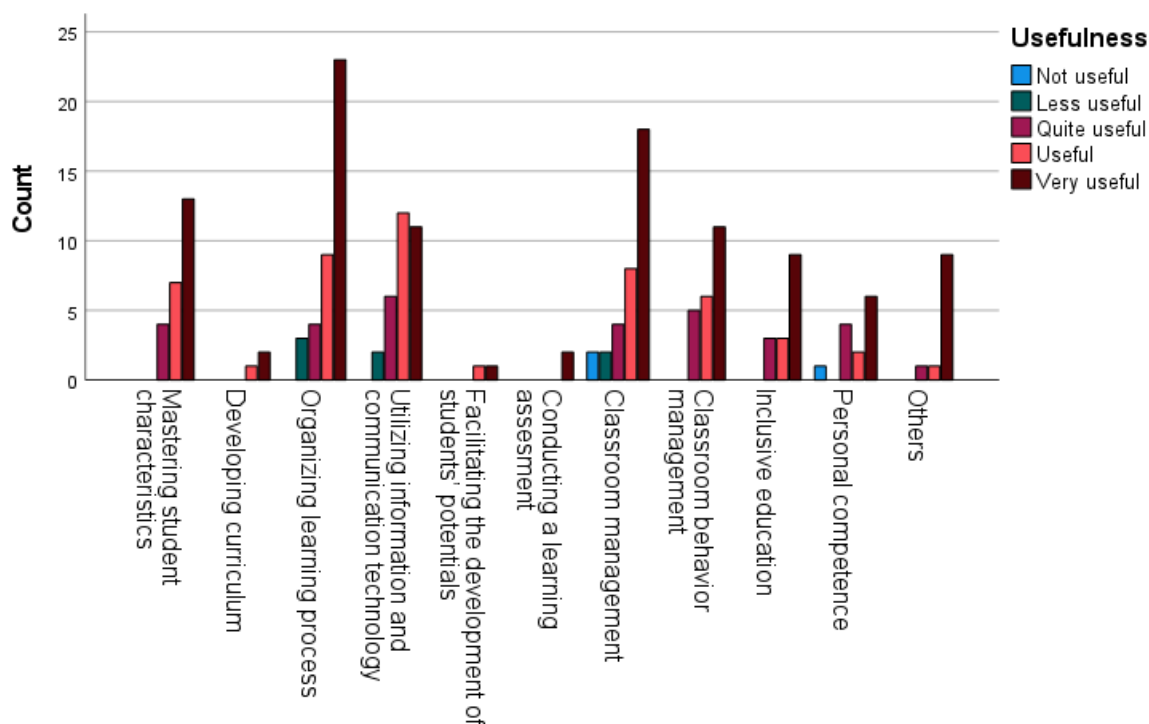


Figure 2. Participants' perceptions of the usefulness of the program based on the topics

**Discussion**

This study was aimed to describe 1) the theme of the professional learning program on classroom behaviour management (e.g., courses, seminars, training, mentoring, and other professional learning activities) that teacher participants have participated in, 2) the organizer of the activities, and 3) the usefulness of the programs according to the participants. The data collection results found that 196 of 478 teachers, or 41% of teachers who filled out the questionnaire, stated that they had participated in a professional learning program on managing student behaviour in the classroom. It indicates that less than half of the primary school teachers in the research sample have attended courses, training, seminars, or other professional learning activities that specifically focus on classroom management.

Among the 196 research participants who stated that they had participated in such a program, only about a third (28.57%) wrote down the title/topic of activities that were directly related to classroom management, including classroom management and student behaviour management. Most participants (51.53%) stated that they had participated in a professional learning program with topics related to teacher pedagogic competencies, such as student characteristics, learning process, and information and communication technology. The learning process includes teaching and learning according to the 2013 curriculum, creating lesson plans, teaching methods and techniques. Some participants (7.65%) wrote that they learned about inclusive education, including understanding and dealing with children with special needs. It is understandable because the participants of this study include teachers in general/regular primary schools and inclusive schools.

According to Conroy et al. (2013), there are four classroom management practices whose effectiveness is supported by scientific evidence: antecedent-prevention, instruction and interaction, consequence-based, and self-management strategies. Antecedent prevention relates to how teachers build classroom rules, arrangements, and structures. In contrast, instruction and interaction relate to strategies teachers use to increase student learning opportunities, for example, adjusting academic demands to students' abilities, actively supervising, and providing opportunities for students. Respond, give effective instructions and orders, acknowledge students' interests, and so on. Meanwhile, consequence-based and self-management strategies relate to strategies teachers can use to manage student behaviours in the classroom. It shows that teacher classroom management competencies need to be built by involving different elements related to classroom management and student behaviour. Although classroom management is generally related to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, the development of educational competence alone is insufficient. Teachers must also learn effective

classroom management strategies to respond well to student behaviour problems. Hepburn and Beamish (2019) explain that teachers' lack of knowledge about behavioural issues and lack of training can result in the low implementation of evidence-based classroom management strategies that have been proven to be effective.

The research results in the professional learning program providers show that most of the programs were implemented by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology through direct programs from the Ministry or the local Education Office. Schools and other community members organize some programs. It is in line with the explanation of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2016) that sustainable professional development activities include functional and technical training activities, as well as collective teacher activities, which can be arranged in the form of workshops, seminars, colloquiums, or other types of scientific meetings. Such professional development activities can be done at school (in-house training) or outside school.

Regarding teachers' perceptions of the usefulness of the activities, the results showed that more than half of the participants (53.57%) felt that the professional learning programs they participated in were very useful. The topics of the programs which were viewed as useful/very useful were, respectively, organizing the learning process (39.9%), utilizing information and communication technology (34.5%), classroom management (33.1%), mastering student characteristics (26.4%), and classroom behaviour management (22.5%). Organizing the learning process and using information and communication technology were relevant in the context of online learning when the data collection was done. It is important to note that topics related to understanding student characteristics, classroom behaviour management and classroom management were also perceived as useful. This result asserts the importance of delivering more professional learning programs focusing on classroom management.

Unfortunately, five out of ten participants (5.10%) who perceived that the professional learning program they were participating in was lacking or not useful wrote that the topics of the activities they participated in were related to classroom management. One participant described that in one of the mentoring programs from the Education Office, which was deemed useless, teachers were asked to be more patient and try to find alternatives to the problems encountered. Other programs deemed less useful by participants raised interesting topics, namely how to organize/manage a conducive class and regain students' focus in the classroom. The teachers' statements which perceived that the usefulness of the programs was still lacking, may imply a weakness in the preparation of the programs. Should the programs be optimally arranged, these topics seem relevant to the teacher's needs. As explained by Desimone and Garet (2015), effective teacher-professional learning programs should not only focus on delivering useful material but also seek to involve teachers in authentic learning experiences, provide opportunities for teachers to apply what they learn, and provide feedback and support for teachers to optimize their classroom practices. An effective combination of content and teaching methods will enhance the usefulness of a teacher's professional learning program.

### **Conclusion**

The results of this study indicate that only some of the teachers in the research sample stated that they had participated in a professional learning program on classroom behaviour management. Among them, only about a third of the teachers described the topics of the activities which were directly related to classroom management and student behaviour management. Organizers of professional learning programs attended by teachers include the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, schools, universities, and other community members. Half of the participants stated that the professional learning program they participated in was very useful. Still, some participants felt that the program they were participating in was lacking or useless. This study implies that there is a great need to implement more teacher-professional learning programs focusing on classroom behaviour management, which are designed effectively to provide a direct impact on behaviour management practices carried out by teachers in the classroom. Future research should develop such professional learning programs for Indonesian teachers and evaluate their effectiveness.



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