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**An Investigation into the Influences of Teachers' Classroom
Management Beliefs and Practices on Classroom Procedures**

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1 The Focus of the Inquiry

This study was conducted in an attempt to provide a description and an interpretation in relation to the influences of three teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices on their classroom procedures. In addition, classroom management beliefs and practices of nine students were probed in order to explore the influences of such beliefs and practices on classroom procedures. The investigation was carried out in a secondary school located in metropolitan Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

This research set out to provide the answers to two questions:

- **How do teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices influence classroom procedures?**
- **How do students' classroom management beliefs and practices influence classroom procedures?**

2 The Necessity for the Inquiry

The results of two historical studies (Clements, 1983; Emmer, Sanford, Clements & Martin, 1983) compelled the writer to think of the possibility of the teachers' beliefs, in regard to classroom management, influencing their classroom management practices and in turn classroom procedures.

In a field experiment, Emmer et al. (1983) investigated the possibility of teachers adopting effective classroom management strategies based on previous research and whether their adoption would positively affect the managerial processes in their classrooms. An experimental group of 18 teachers was given classroom management manuals and attended workshops on classroom management. The control group was excluded from the two activities. Results indicated that some of the aspects in the manual were utilized and applied more than other aspects. There were also some other areas that were not adopted at all. During the first two months of the school year, the experimental group used the recommended strategies more than the control group. In addition, the students of the experimental group exhibited improved behavioral patterns. However, no significant differences between the experimental and the control groups were found during the middle of the year observations.

The finding of the previous study lead the writer to question the reasons behind that divergence in relation to the impact of the implementation among the teachers. They received the same manuals and attended the same workshops. Could the teachers' own concepts about classroom management have affected the implementation?

Similarly, Clements (1983) supplied 11 junior high school teachers, who were experiencing problems with classroom management, with materials and workshops based on findings from a descriptive study (Evertson & Emmer, 1982) of classroom management. The treatment group was then observed while practising in classes to evaluate the amount of implementation of the previously given recommendations. It was concluded that the teachers who received the treatment did not significantly use the recommended strategies more than the teachers in the

control group. Students' behavioral patterns, which were considered the management outcome, were not affected (Clements, 1983).

This conclusion led the writer to think of the possibility of assuming that a change in a teacher's classroom management practices can take place after taking the teacher's classroom management beliefs into consideration.

Consequently, it might be assumed that classroom management manuals and workshops seem to be inadequate when trying to improve teachers' classroom management strategies. The writer thought of two questions: Why did the participating teachers use the same strategies they were using before the treatment? Did individual definitions of classroom management and personal beliefs concerning various classroom management strategies affect the teachers' adoptions of the externally recommended classroom management strategies?

In addition, Martin, Yin, and Baldwin (1997) provided another stimulating question. After investigating the differences of the beliefs pertaining to the style of classroom management between male and female and urban and rural secondary level teachers, they concluded by asking, "Do teachers' perceptions of their classroom management style match their behavior in the classroom?" (p. 13).

Based on the former discussion, it becomes apparent that it is of key importance to explore whether and how teachers' classroom management beliefs affect teachers' classroom management practices. It is also crucial to observe whether teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices can influence classroom procedures. When these two previously mentioned issues are gauged, it is possible to assist teachers in acquiring more effective classroom management approaches.

Moreover, Martin and Baldwin (1993) suggest, "research efforts to explore the effects of classroom management are limited by the quality of instruments presently available to measure teacher perceptions and beliefs" (p. 5). There are two scales used to measure teachers' disciplinary approaches and choices: the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) scale (Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1967) and the Beliefs on Discipline Inventory (BDI) (Wolfgang & Glickman, 1980, 1986).

However, there is an instrument that "addresses the broader concept of classroom management" (Martin, Yin & Baldwin, 1997, p. 12). The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory (Martin & Shoho, 1999, 2000; Martin, Yin & Baldwin, 1997, 1998), previously titled The Inventory of Classroom Management Style (ICMS) (Martin & Baldwin, 1993; Martin, Baldwin & Yin, 1995), was developed to measure teachers' classroom management beliefs. The Inventory consists of three subscales that investigate the concept of classroom management: Instructional Management, People Management and Behavior Management.

The ABCC Inventory consists of 26 Likert Format statements with a response scale that consists of four categories for each item in the Inventory (Martin & Shoho, 2000). The categories are defined as *Describes Me Very Well*, *Describes Me Usually*, *Describes Me Somewhat*, and *Describes Me Not At All*. Teachers' classroom management beliefs are described according to a score that ranges from the most Non-interventionist to the most Interventionist with the mid

score of Interactionist (Martin & Baldwin, 1993; Martin, Baldwin & Yin, 1995; Martin & Shoho, 1999, 2000; Martin, Yin & Baldwin, 1997, 1998). “ABCC Inventory has been shown to be a reliable valid instrument useful in the empirical examination of classroom styles” (Martin & Shoho, 2000, p. 8).

The ABCC Inventory allows teachers to choose one of the four-category responses, which can indicate to what extent the statement describes teachers’ classroom management beliefs. Nevertheless, using this scale does not give teachers the chance to express themselves comprehensively in terms of their classroom management beliefs. On the other hand, carrying out a constructivist investigation enables the researcher to more deeply and comprehensively gauge teachers’ classroom management beliefs. A constructivist investigation also allows for the inclusion of the emergent contextual variables and patterns that would not be included when using an inventory or a scale to measure these beliefs. Moreover, a constructivist investigation facilitates looking into teachers’ classroom management practices and whether they are of any congruence to their classroom management beliefs.

Based on the former discussion, it is apparent that a constructivist investigation of the influences of teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures can yield valuable information pertinent to the role of teachers’ classroom management beliefs in enhancing learning, which is the core mission of the educational process.

3 Theoretical Background

To be able to explore teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices, it is essential to understand the various conceptual views of classroom management. “Teachers base their classroom practices on their beliefs” (Fehring, 1998, p. 13). These beliefs include the beliefs regarding what classroom management means, how it functions and what it aims at. Moreover, the selection of a classroom management approach or a collection of techniques and the ways teachers react towards any classroom situation are argued to be influenced by teachers’ conceptualization of classroom management and what it constitutes. In addition, the concept of classroom discipline and how it differs from the concept of comprehensive classroom management is discussed.

By reviewing literature, it is perceived that some investigators (Colvin, Sugai & Patching, 1993; H. J. Ellis, Finnegan, Hastings, Onsrud & Rohrer, 1996; D. W. Ellis & Karr-Kidwell, 1995; Kohn, 1994; Smith & Misra, 1992; Tauber, 1995; Toben & Sapp, 1972) seem to consider classroom discipline and classroom management as being synonymous. Moreover, some investigators, like Vaughan (1981), actually stipulate that they study classroom management and they end up examining discipline or they (Bullough, 1994; Hindle, 1994) use the two terms together without stating whether they are similar. Furthermore, some studies (Alexander & Galbraith, 1997; Allen, 1986; Clements, 1983; Evertson & Emmer, 1982) explored classroom management without trying to define what classroom management means from the authors’ viewpoints. Thus, the reader would not be able to perceive what exactly was investigated.

A very different use of classroom management as a concept is introduced in J. Wilson and Fehring (1995). When referring to classroom management, they claim that classroom management is managing “day-to-day and longer term collection of useful assessment data” (p.

109). This is another perspective of what classroom management means. It can be inferred that classroom management as a concept is used in many situations to refer to various and different meanings.

Nonetheless, there is a considerable number of writers (Burman, 1993; Eby, 1992; Hunt & Bedwell, 1982; V. F. Jones, 1995; Kohut & Range, 1986; Lewis, 1990, 1997; N. K. Martin, Yin & Baldwin, 1997; McCormack, 1994; McLaughlin, 1994; Ralph, 1994; Reed, 1991; W. A. Rogers, 1991; Sanford, Emmer & Clements, 1983; Ward, 1980; E. A. Wilson, 1996; Wragg, 1995; Yates, 1988) who state their own viewpoints regarding the concept of classroom management, differentiate between classroom management and classroom discipline and investigate the same characteristics they define at the beginning of their investigations.

Randolph and Evertson (1994) argue for forsaking the term *classroom management* completely. Orchestration is proposed to be the more appropriate definition (Randolph & Evertson, 1994). The teacher is expected to orchestrate the classroom where proactive and reactive strategies are included, the students' agenda and needs are catered for, less paperwork is required and more reflection and discussion take place (Randolph & Evertson, 1994). Nevertheless, guidelines or specific techniques pertaining to orchestrating classrooms were not provided.

3.1 The Concept of Comprehensive Classroom Management

Throughout the current study, classroom management is viewed as every action, including discipline and behavior management that takes place in the classroom. It involves the practices and the interactions that occur from the start until the end of the lesson (Anderson, 1992; Brophy, 1983; Doyle, 1986; Gettinger, 1988; Kohut & Range, 1986; M. Martin & Norwich, 1991; McCormack, 1994; Sanford et al., 1983; Tierney, 1991). Every word a teacher says and every action a teacher does while being in the classroom is considered part of managing his/her classroom.

Comprehensive classroom management encompasses efficient organization of material, seating plans and charts, keeping an up-to-date grading system, effective instruction, being aware of the students' needs and characters, assessing one's work and performance, managing the students' behavior, and having a positive attitude (Reed, 1991; Scully, 1996; Wragg, 1995).

3.2 Classroom Discipline Throughout the Literature

For some writers (Charles, 1981; Porter, 2000; W. A. Rogers, 1989; L. F. Scott, 1989), discipline is looked at from a comprehensive viewpoint where it incorporates both proactive and reactive strategies to alleviate off-task behaviors. Other writers (Lawrence & Olvey, 1994) think of discipline as a reactive approach only where logical and natural consequences are applied on the misbehaving student. The teacher defines what the good behaviors and bad behaviors are for the students. A key factor in carrying out this plan is the consistency in carrying out consequences when rules are not followed.

A third disciplinary view is that discipline is punishment and control (Rowntree, 1981). The teacher applies punishment techniques that are predetermined and appropriate behaviors are imposed on students. For some other writers (Albert, 1995; Bagely, 1914; Charles, 1981; L. F. Scott, 1989), discipline aims to help students attain self-discipline. Proponents of this approach

believe that by adopting appropriate disciplinary techniques, students can master self-discipline and thus on-task behaviors are enhanced. Albert calls for a preventive discipline plan where intrinsic motivation and rewards crucially affect the students' acquisition of self-discipline. L. F. Scott and Charles assert that effective discipline strategies can accomplish three goals: (a) increasing the rate of on-task behaviors, (b) enhancing accountability and attaining self-discipline, and (c) enforcing the principals of decent interactions in class and respecting others and their rights.

“Discipline . . . may be viewed as serving two different functions[:] a managerial function and an educational function” (Burman, 2002, p. 58). The managerial facet of classroom discipline can be attained by employing strategies that achieve and maintain an orderly and positive environment for learning (Burden, 1995; Burman, 2002; M. N. Lovegrove & Lewis, 1991). The second facet is termed “educational” (M. N. Lovegrove & Lewis, 1991, p. xv). This conception demonstrates how the teacher can significantly influence the students' educational and learning experiences via the strategies they follow, non-verbal communication and the interactions that take place when the teacher tries to handle an off-task behavior. “The interaction is therefore a learning experience in its own right perceiving the discipline process as a way of providing valuable educational experiences for students” (p. xv). Classroom discipline is considered the umbrella term and behavior management is one aspect of the disciplinary educational process (Burman, 1993, 2002; M. N. Lovegrove & Lewis, 1991). The major aim that teachers are expected to accomplish is the students' acquisition of self-discipline. Therefore, the teachers are required to incorporate both aspects, the managerial and the educational, when planning for their discipline approaches.

However, Lewis (1997) contends, “discipline can be distinguished from the broader area of classroom management” (p. 404). He states that classroom management incorporates managing instruction, organizing materials and learning activities and that in turn helps in decreasing the rate of off-task behaviors (Lewis, 1997). On the other hand, discipline incorporates the strategies teachers follow after misbehaviors occur (Lewis, 1997).

3.3 Classroom Discipline as Part of Comprehensive Classroom Management

The current investigation looks at classroom management as incorporating classroom discipline (Kohut & Range, 1986; McCormack, 1994). It includes all the teachers' classroom management practices that enhance students' engagement in classroom activities and increase on-task behaviors. Consequently, classroom management is looked at in a more extended way where its definition implies comprehensive conceptualization (Charles, 1989; Doyle, 1986; Duke & Meckel, 1984; Emmer, Evertson, Sanford, Clements & Worsham, 1982). This study rests upon that conceptualization when attempting to investigate teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices.

2.5 Significance of Comprehensive Classroom Management

Comprehensive classroom management positively affects the learning process. “Surveys done annually for the past twenty years show the persistence of concern about discipline; this is not a new problem. It seems to have been there for as long as schools have existed” (Charles, 1991, p. v).

Comprehensive classroom management creates well-organized classrooms where learning can be optimized. Therefore, classroom management is significant in facilitating the learning process. The core mission of the educational process is to teach so that students are able to learn. Unfortunately, if behavioral disruptions occur frequently, teachers will not be able to instruct. Consequently, students will not be able to learn.

It is worth noting that even if teachers are very effective, teaching-wise, and they are careful to avoid triggering students' misbehaviors, there will always be some kind of disruptive behaviors in the classroom (Hindle, 1994; Lewis, 1997; Osborne, 1984).

"The most common concern cited by preservice, beginning and experienced teachers as well as being the focus of media reports, professional literature and staff room conversations" (McCormack, 1994, p. 8) is students' classroom behavioral problems. Both novice and experienced teachers express concerns and focus on classroom management skills (Balson, 1991; Cairns, 1995; Clements, 1983; Lewis, 1997; Long & Frye, 1989; M. N. Lovegrove & Lewis, 1991; N. K. Martin et al., 1997; Randolph & Evertson, 1994; Veenman, 1984; Willower, Eidell & Hoy, 1967) and admit that it is a distinctive factor in causing stress (H. J. Ellis, et al., 1996; V. F. Jones & L. S. Jones, 1986; Lewis, 1997; M. N. Lovegrove & Lewis, 1991; Veenman, 1984).

In Australia, the community believes that discipline problems are expanding in schools (R. Scott, 1983). Eggleton (2001) argues that discipline is an essential factor for any school to succeed in managing behavior and learning. Moreover, students' behavioral problems are always referred to among the key reasons teachers mention when resigning from government secondary schools in Australia (Bruce & Cacioppe, 1989; Lewis, 1997).

From what has preceded, it can be inferred that comprehensive classroom management increases students' involvement in curricular activities, enhances learning and saves time wasted in dealing with unexpected disruptions (Brophy, 1979; Evertson & Harris, 1992; Good, 1982; M. Martin & Norwich, 1991; McCormack, 1994; V. F. Jones, 1995). It is also apparent that student teachers, beginning teachers, and experienced teachers need to master research-based skills that enable them to manage their classes effectively (Tisher, Fyfield & Taylor, 1979; Veenman, 1984; Winitzky, 1992).

3.5 Teachers' Classroom Management Beliefs

The teacher's personal belief system guides his/her choices of classroom management approaches (Agne, Greenwood & Miller, 1994; Burman, 1993; Combs, 1982; D. W. Ellis & Karr-Kidwell, 1995; Hatswell, 1989; Schmidt & Jacobson, 1990; Tobin & Fraser, 1988). N. K. Martin, Yin and Baldwin (1998) state,

There can be little doubt that the teachers encounter a variety of new experiences in the classroom. Their beliefs regarding these experiences and the manner in which they approach them work together to create a unique and individual style of classroom management. (p. 13)

A teacher who believes in the students' right to influence the decision making in the class might consider implementing a democratic classroom management approach. Whereas a teacher who

believes that the students do not possess adequate moral and value judgment required to be involved in planning for classroom activities and rules might prefer a teacher-oriented approach. Another teacher might choose a strictly structured approach where learning by practising and correcting mistakes is the main strategy because he/she believes that behaviorism is the best way to learn.

Therefore, in order to address the teacher's classroom management practices we need to start from his/her own personal beliefs (Alexander & Galbraith, 1997). The results of many educational studies affirm the notion that the teacher belief system has an impact on the students' learning processes (Agne et al., 1994; Lunenburg & Schmidt, 1989). Therefore, it can be assumed that "determining that a system of beliefs differentiates the most effective teachers from the general population of professional teachers could, in part affect the future direction of educational reform and ultimately the quality of the educational system" (Agne et al., 1994, p. 142). The current study investigated one area of this belief system, which is beliefs regarding classroom management.

3.6 Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy, as part of teachers' belief system, is perceived as an essential requirement for affecting student academic and behavioral learning (Bezzina & Butcher, 1990). It also positively impacts on teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices (Bezzina & Butcher, 1990; Good, 1981; Ross, 1994; Soodak & Podell, 1994).

Bandura (1977) developed the theory of self-efficacy, which indicates to what extent an individual believes in his/her capability to achieve goals. In the context of the classroom, teacher efficacy refers to the teacher's belief in his/her capability to influence students' academic achievements (Ashton & Webb, 1986). There are two types of teacher efficacy: (a) personal teacher efficacy, and (b) general teacher efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bezzina & Butcher, 1990; Ross, 1994). Personal teacher efficacy is defined as "the respondent's expectation that he or she will be able to bring about students' learning" (Ross, 1994, p. 5). It illustrates how much a teacher believes in his/her ability to influence students' achievements (Agne et al., 1994; Bandura, 1977; Ross, 1994). It significantly influences the teacher's selection of activities and strategies, the quality of his/her professional efforts and the persistence in confronting problems (Bandura & Schunk, 1981).

On the other hand, general teacher efficacy is defined as "the belief that the teacher population's ability to bring about change is limited by factors beyond their control" (Ross, 1994, p. 5). It deals with the perception that the teacher's ability to influence students' learning in the classroom context is affected mainly by external factors.

Hence, if a teacher believes that he/she can maximize students' chances of learning regardless of environmental conditions or the background of the students, he/she will apply the possible strategies consistently and spend endless efforts until the aim is achieved. Moreover, the higher the teacher efficacy is the more the teacher's acceptance of adopting humanistic approaches to classroom management (Ross, 1994). Consequently, students' academic achievements are positively influenced because these humanistic approaches help increase the rate of on-task behaviors (Ross, 1994).

Thus, we can assume that even if the teacher knows the right way to manage his/her class, his/her personal teacher efficacy can either inhibit or enhance his/her efforts (Soodak & Podell, 1994, p. 50).

3.7 Teacher Locus of Control

Another relevant area to teachers' classroom management beliefs is teacher locus of control. Locus of control is defined as the personal belief that one can affect life experiences and situations (Parkay, Greenwood, Olejnik & Proller, 1988). It is "a person's estimate that a given behavior will lead to certain outcomes" (Bandura, 1977, p. 193).

Locus of control can be internal or external. Internal locus of control refers to a person's belief in his/her own abilities to influence what happens around him/her. On the other hand, an individual with external locus of control believes that external factors can affect his/her life circumstances without being able to cause the change him/herself (Parkay et al., 1988). While locus of control represents what the person anticipates of his/her own actions and their outcomes, self-efficacy stands for what that person believes about his/her ability to perform the action required to bring about the desired result (Bandura, 1977).

Finally, "we must accept individual differences in belief systems, strategies and structures in behavior management just as we accept individual differences in learning styles and abilities in students" (Hatswell, 1989, p. 148). Instead of denying the right to be different, it is possible to make teachers aware of the existing different management approaches and also of the extent their classroom management beliefs might affect their classroom management practices. Thus, teachers will be more able to choose what conforms to their individual beliefs.

3.8 Students' Classroom Management Beliefs

Taking both teachers' and students' classroom management beliefs into consideration leads to maximizing learning and cooperation in classrooms. Troisi (1983) looks at the educational process from the perspective of what teachers do and want. He discusses effective teaching and purports that effective teachers enjoy effective classroom management. However, students are not considered as affecting classroom procedures.

Nevertheless, students' beliefs in relation to classroom management are investigated from various perspectives in the literature. Some studies (Applegate, 1981; McCormack, 1994; Mergendoller & Packer, 1985; Nash, 1976) investigated students' expectations of their teachers, what they do not consider appropriate behavior-wise, and what they reject in their teachers' classroom management practices. It was found out that when teachers are not friendly and caring, students react angrily (Applegate, 1981).

For students, patience and understanding are major and essential characteristic demanded from their teachers (Mergendoller & Packer, 1985; Turanli & Yildirim, 1999). They differentiate between patient teachers who always warn the misbehaving students before carrying out a designated punishment and impatient teachers who always punish without warning. Students are also resentful of teachers who restrict working with their peers, and moving around the room to pass things to their friends or to sharpen their pencils. They consider these restrictions unjust.

Students also want their teachers to show them enthusiasm in what they deliver and attend to students' different needs (Turanli & Yildirim, 1999). McFarland (2000) recommends using humor and showing enthusiasm in order to be able to effectively manage secondary school students.

Students expect their teachers to be capable of effectively managing classrooms (McCormack, 1994; Nash, 1976; Turanli & Yildirim, 1999). When we know what students expect from their teachers, what their needs are, and work through meeting these needs reacting negatively may be eliminated or at least reduced.

4 Methodology

The “starting point(s)” (Guba, 1990, p. 18) that underpins the theoretical and methodological approaches towards any inquiry is the paradigm selected (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Guba, 1990). A paradigm is the “basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). The constructivist paradigm was selected to underpin this study (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

In this study, the selection of the constructivist paradigm predetermined epistemological and methodological decisions in relation to investigating teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices (Guba, 1978, 1990; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These decisions pertain to the nature of knowledge sought, the researcher-participant relationship and consequently the way the findings were created, the methods selected for collecting empirical materials, the type of analysis chosen, and the special trustworthiness criteria followed.

Figure (1) illustrates how selecting the constructivist paradigm indicated ontological, epistemological, and methodological implications on the research design. It displays the aim of this constructivist study and the consequent decisions taken in regard to the characteristics of this inquiry.

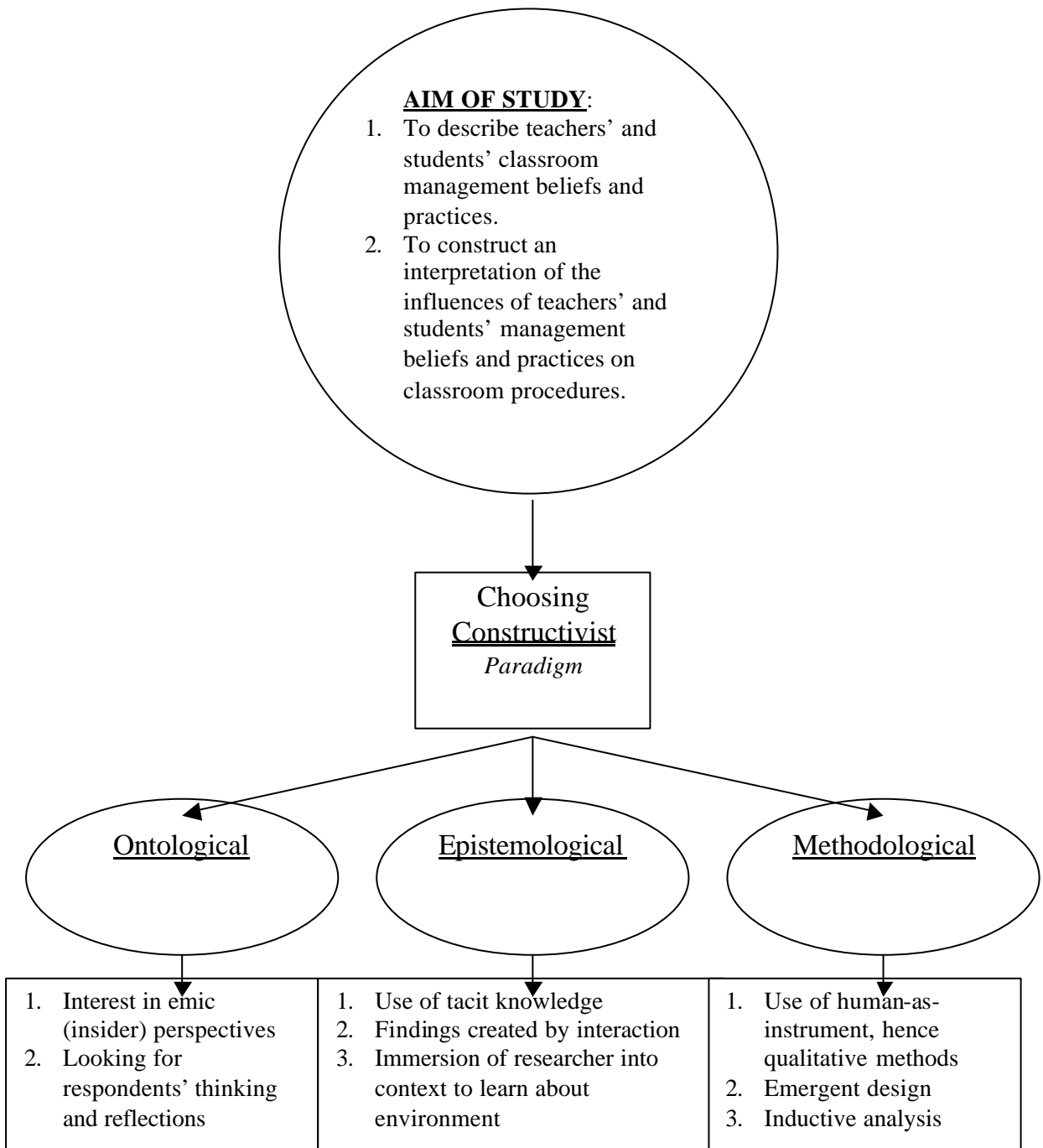


Figure 1 Ontological, Epistemological and Methodological Implications on the Design of the Study

4.1 Research Paradigm

The constructivist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), upon which this study was modelled, was previously termed *naturalistic paradigm* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As Lincoln (1993) describes it,

Constructivism is one of a set of emergent paradigms that can be rightfully considered either poststructuralist or postmodern, or both. It rejects modernism's Grand Narratives, and focuses on the re-creation and re-presentation of multiple, socially enacted realities, created by multiple stakeholders and participants. (p. iii)

There were three reasons for choosing the constructivist paradigm to underpin the current study:

1. Investigating the influences of teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures in the real life classroom could not be carried out using the experimental approach. Experimental inquiry involves controlling contextual variables, randomly selecting the sample and generating hypotheses beforehand (Burns, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, in the classroom context, there are numerous situations that cannot be controlled or isolated. The constructivist paradigm allowed for studying and inductively analyzing the participant teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices in their natural settings (Guba, 1978; Husen, 1997; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990, 2002).
2. Exploring teachers' classroom management beliefs in order to provide a description and an interpretation regarding the influences of these beliefs on classroom procedures requires probing these beliefs in detail and in depth. Carrying out a constructivist investigation enabled the researcher to more deeply and comprehensively gauge teachers' classroom management beliefs and allowed for the inclusion of the emergent contextual variables and patterns that would not be included when using an inventory or a scale to measure these beliefs.
3. Conventional inquiry includes manipulation of the studied context (Merriam, 1988; Husen, 1997). This in turn limits the application of findings to real life settings (Guba, 1978). Utilizing the constructivist paradigm allowed for the inclusion of as much idiographic information and intensive descriptions as possible about the participant teachers, the students, the classrooms and the school. Therefore, transferability to similar contexts can be achieved (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). "The original inquirer cannot know the sites to which transferability might be sought, but the appliers can and do" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 298). Therefore, the inquirer incorporated thick description (Geertz, 1973) which might be of assistance to others seeking to apply the findings of this study elsewhere.

Guba and Lincoln (1994) state that the aim of the constructivist inquiry "is understanding and reconstruction of the constructions that people (including the inquirer) initially hold, aiming towards consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve" (p. 113). The aim of this inquiry was achieved through three stages:

1. trying to understand what the participant teachers' beliefs in regard to classroom management are as well as obtaining a description of their classroom management practices,
2. trying to interpret whether their classroom management beliefs affect their classroom management practices, and

3. discovering whether both teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices influence classroom procedures.

Figure (2) exhibits the main features of the research design. It displays the aim of this constructivist study, the consequent process of inquiry and methods selected for collecting empirical materials.

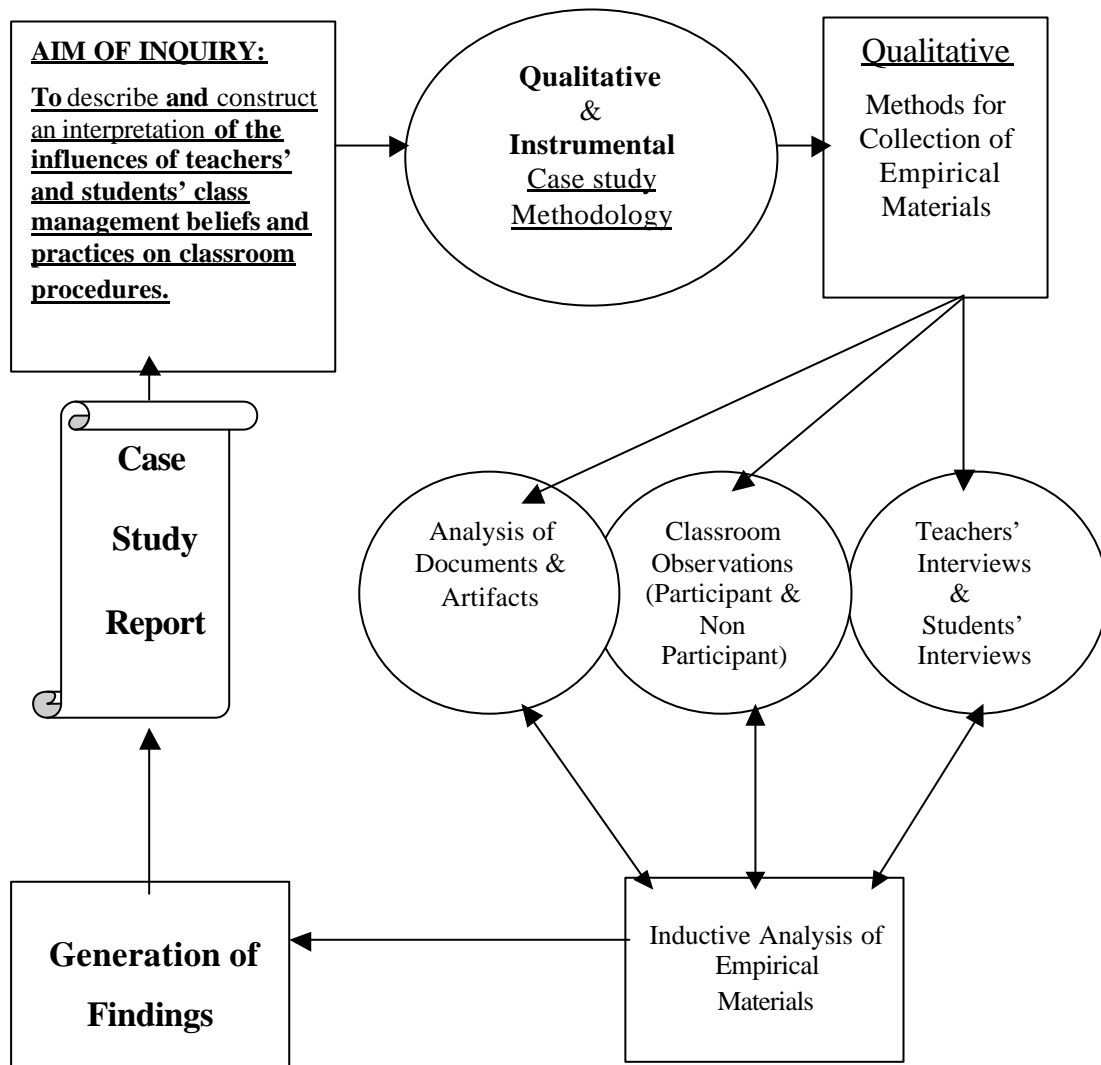


Figure 2 Main Features of Study

4.2 The Process of Inquiry

4.2.1 The Emergent Design of the Inquiry

The study was initially designed to cater for one case study teacher, Matilda Crum (pseudonym), and to investigate the influences of her classroom management beliefs and practices on her year 7 classroom procedures. However, during the immersion phase that took place in May 2000, Matilda Crum was having an informal conversation with the writer during which she suggested that the writer might “have a look at another class with another teacher so that you will have a more comprehensive idea” (Personal Correspondence, Matilda Crum). The investigator took the suggestion into consideration and approached the second case study teacher, Jay Kay (pseudonym), who teaches Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) to one of the year 8 classes. She agreed to participate in the study.

When the researcher started observing Jay’s class, she found out that there was a high frequency of demonstrated off-task behaviors. Moreover, Jay Kay stated that she was experiencing frequent disruptions in her class during the first interview conducted with her. The writer met with her in the Staff Room after that first interview and Jay mentioned that the same year 8 class was exhibiting no off-task behaviors with their English teacher. The writer started thinking of the same class as exhibiting different behavioral patterns with two different teachers. She started thinking of the factors and variables that influence their changing behavioral patterns. She approached John O’Neil (pseudonym), the English teacher of the same year 8 class, and he offered his cooperation and consented to participating in the investigation.

Investigating the three teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices in one school was considered a key factor in discovering how these teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices might influence their classroom procedures. The three case study teachers work in the same school, operate within the same school policy, are faced with the same circumstances and deal with students, who live in one area and have their general characteristics. Therefore, deeper understanding of the individual classroom management beliefs every teacher holds and the practices every teacher exhibits can be attained. Operating in the same school can prove whether any contextual variables may affect teachers’ classroom procedures more or less than their own classroom management beliefs and practices.

4.3 Case Study Approach

Investigating the three teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices was carried out using the case study approach. Attempting to gain a general consensus for a definition of case study research appears to be a difficult task. Burns (1994) defines it as the study of a “bounded system” (p. 313). Adelman, Jenkis and Kemmis (1983) cite the definition adopted in the 1976 Cambridge conference concerning case study: “Case study is an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus an inquiry round an instance” (pp. 139-140).

The current case study contains the aggregation of Yin’s (1994) definition of case study and Merriam’s (1988) definition of qualitative case study. Yin technically defines the case study as:

1. An empirical inquiry that
 - investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when
 - the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.
2. The case study inquiry:
 - copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
 - relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulation fashion, and as another result
 - benefits from the prior development of theoretical proposition to guide data collection and analysis. (p. 13)

For Merriam (1988), the qualitative case study is “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon” (p. xiv). The purpose of this investigation was providing a descriptive account as well as searching for an interpretation of the influences of the case study teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures.

Merriam (1988) prescribes four characteristics to underpin a qualitative case study. She asserts that a qualitative case study is

- a. Particularistic: The case study has to focus on a particular phenomenon.
- b. Descriptive.
- c. Heuristic: “Case studies illuminate the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study. They can bring about the discovery of new meaning, extend the reader’s experience, or confirm what is known” (p. 13).
- d. Inductive.

The following table (1) represents the application of Merriam’s (1988) definition of qualitative case study to this investigation.

Table 1 Application of Merriam’s (1988) Definition of Qualitative Case Study to the Investigation

Characteristics of Qualitative Case Study	The Current Study
Particularistic	The focus of this present case study was to investigate teachers’ beliefs and practices in relation to classroom management and the effect of both on classroom procedures.
Descriptive	The study in question provides the rich, thick description (Geertz, 1973) of the context studied and the classroom management beliefs and practices of the teachers and the students.

Heuristic	This case study aimed at understanding: a. the case study teachers' classroom management beliefs and how they can influence classroom procedures, and b. the case study teachers' classroom management practices and how they can influence classroom procedures.
Inductive	This study rests upon the assumption that empirical materials are positioned in the studied context. The aim of this study was not to verify predetermined hypothesis regarding teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices but to describe and interpret the phenomenon in question.

From what has preceded, it is now evident that the current case study fits into the qualitative case study category.

4.3.1 Instrumental Case Study

The case study in question drew upon Stake's (1995) instrumental case study category as well as a combination of Merriam's (1988) descriptive and interpretive case study criteria. In instrumental case studies, the case is selected to elucidate an issue or to refine a theory (Stake, 1995). By studying the three cases selected for this inquiry an insight into the classroom management strategies that the case study teachers followed, in an attempt to create a positive learning classroom environment, might be yielded. This insight may in turn lead to some understanding of the issue in question.

Merriam (1988) and Yin (1994) use the purpose of the final report of a case study as a criterion for classifying case studies. Merriam categorizes the case studies as descriptive case studies, interpretive case studies, which Yin terms as explanatory case studies, and exploratory case studies. She argues that descriptive case studies do not seek investigating or verifying cause-and-effect relationships. This type of research is always undertaken when variables cannot be separated from the studied context. The model of descriptive case study in education is defined as the one that "presents a detailed account of the phenomenon under study" (Merriam, 1988, p. 27).

The significance of the descriptive case studies relies mainly on supplying fundamental information in relation to some educational issues that are still not thoroughly investigated. Consequently, descriptive case studies, by focusing on possible innovative programs, can contribute to theory formation and future innovations in the area of education (Merriam, 1988).

Interpretive case studies are similar to descriptive case studies in that they contain rich and thick description. Unlike descriptive case studies, these descriptive empirical materials are collected with the intention of interpreting or theorizing about the phenomenon (Merriam, 1988). Because interpretive case studies require more profound analysis, Shaw (1978) classifies that category of

case studies as analytical case studies and postulates that this type of case studies is more theoretically oriented and contains more depth than descriptive case studies.

There are some pure descriptive case studies. However, more of the case studies can be found as a combination of description and interpretation or description and evaluation (Merriam, 1988). The current case study is believed to fit into the descriptive and interpretive categories. This present study started by intensively describing the phenomenon under investigation and moved toward attempting to provide an interpretation as the emergent patterns unfolded and analysis took place.

4.4 Sampling

Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative inquiry is interested in purposefully selecting and studying in-depth relatively small samples of participants and, in some studies, single cases. Purposeful sampling (Patton, 1990) or “purposive sampling” (Chein, 1981, p. 440; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 274; Merriam, 1988, pp. 48-49) or “criterion-based sampling” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984, p. 77) enables the researcher to select “information-rich” (Patton, 1990, p. 169) cases, which can be studied in depth.

Patton (1990) identifies information-rich cases as the cases that can provide an immense amount of information in relation to the purpose of the study. He identifies 15 different strategies in relation to purposeful sampling. In this inquiry, the first case study, Matilda Crum, was chosen on the basis of homogeneous typical purposeful sampling. She taught English to a year 7 class during the period of the study (May, 2000 & July-December, 2000).

Patton (1990) claims that the qualitative account of a homogeneous typical case provides a description and an illustration of what is typical. Moreover, he argues that the study of typical cases does not allow any thorough generalizations. However, the findings concluded from typical cases highlight the key issues, which have to be taken into account when considering the same kind of cases (Patton, 1990).

The selection of the other two participating teachers, Jay Kay and John O’Neil, occurred after the study had already begun. The suggestion of the first participating teacher to include another class and another teacher in the study led to the selection of the second participating teacher (Patton, 1990). The same process recurred when the second teacher told the writer about the third teacher and his positive classroom management skills (Patton, 1990). Therefore, the second and the third participating teachers were selected according to typical snowball purposeful sampling criteria (Patton, 1990). Jay Kay taught SOSE to a year 8 class and John O’Neil taught English to the same class.

“In instrumental case studies, some cases would do a better job than others The first criterion should be to maximize what we can learn” (Stake, 1995, p. 4). In this instrumental case study, typical cases were believed to contribute to what could be internalized about some teachers’ beliefs and practices in relation to classroom management. The selected teachers represent typical teachers working in one of the Victorian State secondary schools (Australia). The three teachers were over 30 years of age and each had more than ten years of experience.

“Sampling in field research involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events” (Burgess, 1982, p. 76). This research site was a homogeneous typical Victorian State secondary school in the Northern Region. The fieldwork was carried out for five months (July-December, 2000).

The year 7 and 8 classes were selected on the basis of homogeneous typical purposeful case sampling (Patton, 1990). They represent typical Victorian multicultural classes. However, the nine interviewed students were chosen according to maximum variation purposeful sampling criterion (Patton, 1990). The nine students exhibited a wide diversity of behavioral patterns that ranged from complete on-task behaviors to complete off-task behaviors. The investigator based her selection on her observations in the two classes and the comments the three teachers expressed during the interviews regarding their students.

4.5 Duration of Inquiry

Figure 3.1 details the duration of time spent in collecting empirical materials and Figure 3.2 details the duration of time spent in processing empirical materials, participants' reviewing of raw empirical materials, external auditing and finishing writing the thesis.

**COLLECTION
OF EMPIRICAL
MATERIALS
May 2000 &
July -December
2000**

	Immersion Phase May 2000	Interviews July- December 2000	Observation July- December 2000
Matilda Crum	<u>4 lessons x 45m</u>	6.8 Hrs	<u>2 x 45 m</u>
John O'Neil	Socializing in Staff Room	6.9 Hrs	<u>lessons/week</u>
Jay Kay	Socializing in Staff Room	4.1 Hrs	<u>2 x 45 m</u>
<u>Year 7 Students</u>			<u>lessons/week</u>
Zein	3 Reserve lessons	40 m	
Mouneer		35 m	
Faten		34 m	
Kim		33 m	
<u>Year 8 Students</u>			
Julie	3 Reserve lessons	42 m	
Samy		38 m	
Jeehan		40 m	
Carmella		35 m	
Juzal		40 m	
Total	7.5 Hrs	23.4 Hrs	57 Hrs

m= minutes
Hrs=hours

Figure 3.1 Duration of the Collection of Empirical Materials

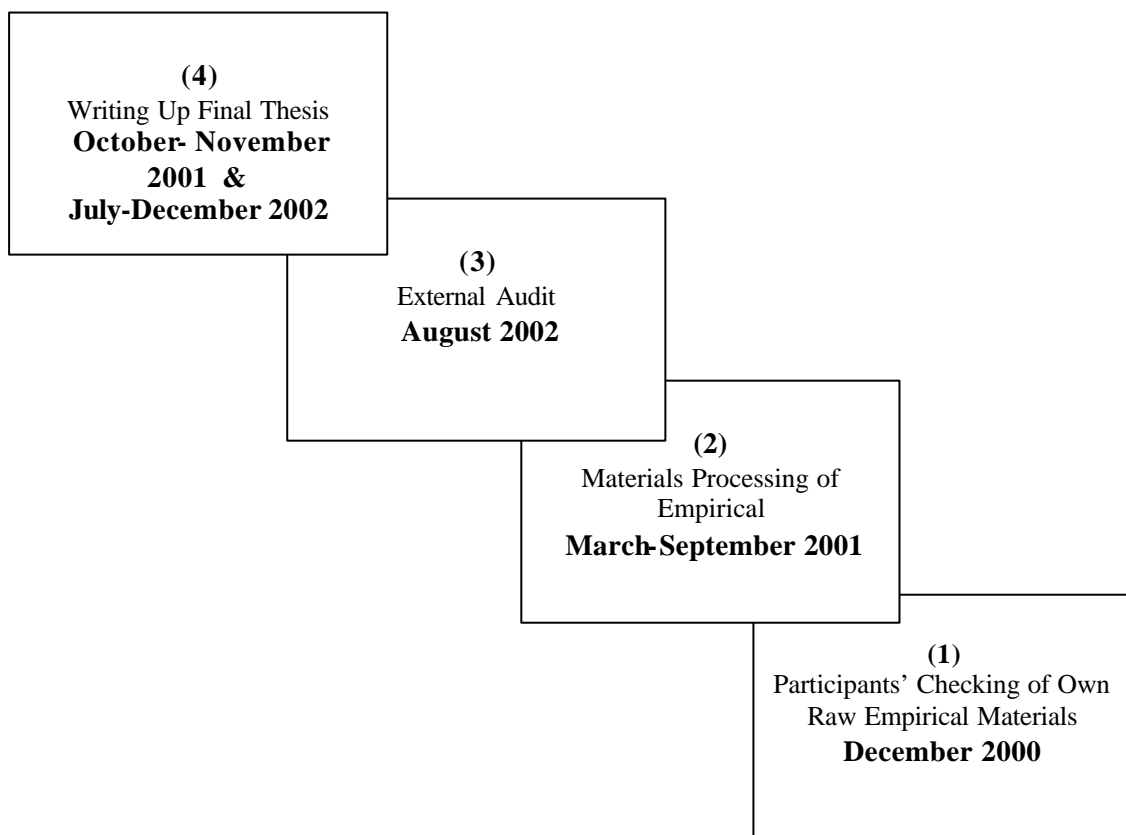


Figure 3.2 Duration of Analysing and Reporting Empirical Materials

4.6 Research Methods

Despite the fact that constructivist inquiry can accommodate both qualitative and quantitative methods for collecting empirical materials, employing qualitative methods are preferred to quantitative methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1997; Merriam, 1988). In addition, case study is argued to be the main approach, which can include quantitative or qualitative methods or both (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1994). Nevertheless, qualitative methods were selected to collect the empirical materials of this study for three reasons:

1. By using qualitative methods to study the influences of the case study teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures, the researcher could include the participants' interpretations and reflections and present the multiple perspectives everyone holds regarding the studied phenomenon (Guba & Lincoln, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
2. Using qualitative methods allowed the participants the chance to reflect on the raw empirical materials they had submitted before the researcher carried out the final phase of analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
3. The aim of the current investigation was to explore teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices in their natural settings where all the contextual variables are taken into consideration. During the course of the inquiry, the writer discovered certain contextual variables that could be of influence on the participants' classroom management beliefs and practices. The school discipline policy and the students' perspectives in regard to what they consider as proper behaviors were all investigated in order to understand how all these contextual variables interrelate and constitute the holistic characteristics of the observed classroom procedures (Diesing 1972; Merriam, 1988; Sturman, 1997). On the other hand, quantitative methods are used in studies where variables are controlled and the aim is to look for cause-and-effect relationships (Guba & Lincoln, 1997).

In this study, three qualitative methods were utilized to gather empirical materials. In the next sub-section, the application of these methods is described.

4.6.1 Interviews

Qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to collect qualitative empirical materials regarding certain main issues that are of key relevance to the focus of the inquiry in question. They are

1. the teachers' perspectives about classroom management as a concept,
2. how they think it is similar or different to discipline,
3. their perceptions regarding the significance of classroom management, and
4. the way they plan for managing their classes.

4.6.2 Constructivist Participant and Non-Participant Observations

Constructivist observations can range from the complete observer to the complete participant (Patton, 1990). As P. A. Adler and P. Adler (1998) and Patton (1990) suggest, the writer exploited different types of observations and ranged her role from that of the complete observer to that of the complete participant. The writer began as “a spectator and gradually” (Patton, 1980, p. 127) started participating in the classroom activities.

Therefore, the writer conducted the observations:

1. To document the behavioral patterns of the students while being in the classroom.
2. To comprehensively record the teachers’ classroom management practices. The researcher was able to record the daily routines, practices and interactions while they were taking place (Merriam, 1988).
3. To obtain empirical materials which were used to form new questions for the interviews. These questions were based on real incidents and this helped in eliciting more about the case study teachers’ rationale concerning specific classroom management practices.

4.6.3 Document Analysis

Documents, as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), refer to “any written or recorded material other than a record that was not prepared specifically in response to a request from the inquirer” (p. 277). Goetz and LeCompte (1984) use the term artifacts to refer to “the range of written and symbolic records kept by or on participants in a social group” (p. 153). The researcher looked for documents and artifacts that were germane to the research purpose and could contribute to answering the research questions (Merriam, 1988).

The content analysis of this “mute evidence” (Hodder, 1998, p. 110) helped in the triangulation of empirical materials collected from conducting interviews and carrying out participant and non-participant observations (Patton, 1990; Stake, 1995).

The researcher used qualitative content analysis to analyze the documents and artifacts. “Essentially content analysis is a systematic procedure for describing the content of communication” (Merriam, 1988, p. 116). Qualitative content analysis targets an understanding of the meanings in the document, reflecting upon it, looking for subtle differences in meanings, and looking for relationships between situations (Altheide, 1987; Fehring, 1999). The research purpose and questions guided the content analysis.

By employing the three qualitative methods for collecting empirical materials, the writer could form a “holistic interpretation” (Merriam, 1988, p. 102) of the influences of teachers’ and students’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures. The following section illustrates how the process of analyzing empirical materials was carried out. It outlines the utilization of the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in order to look into the influences of teachers’ and students’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures.

4.7 Processing of Empirical Materials

4.7.1 The Constant Comparative Method

“Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111). The current investigation attempted to provide a detailed description and an interpretation of the influences of teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures. Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend adopting the constant comparative method originated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) when constructivistly processing empirical materials “partly because it is less extreme, partly because it makes explicit the continuous and simultaneous nature of data collection and processing, and partly because its procedures have been well explicated by Glaser and Strauss (1967)” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 336). However, they stress that the researcher consider two elements pertaining to this approach for processing empirical materials:

It should be noted that Glaser and Strauss do not address themselves to working within the naturalistic paradigm Second, the reader should be aware that Glaser and Strauss are describing, in the constant comparative method, a means for deriving (grounding) theory, not simply a means for processing data. (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 339)

Glaser and Strauss (1967) provide four stages for processing empirical materials:

- i. comparing incidents applicable to each category,
- ii. integrating categories and their properties,
- iii. delimiting the theory, and
- iv. writing the theory.

Nevertheless, formulating a theory out of an investigated phenomenon is not always the aim of every researcher. Therefore, the steps of processing the empirical materials can be concentrated on (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The current study aimed at describing and providing an explanation of the influences of teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures. Therefore, the followed framework concentrated on the steps focused on by Lincoln and Guba.

Figure 4 depicts the four steps of the processing of empirical materials based on Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) constant comparative method.

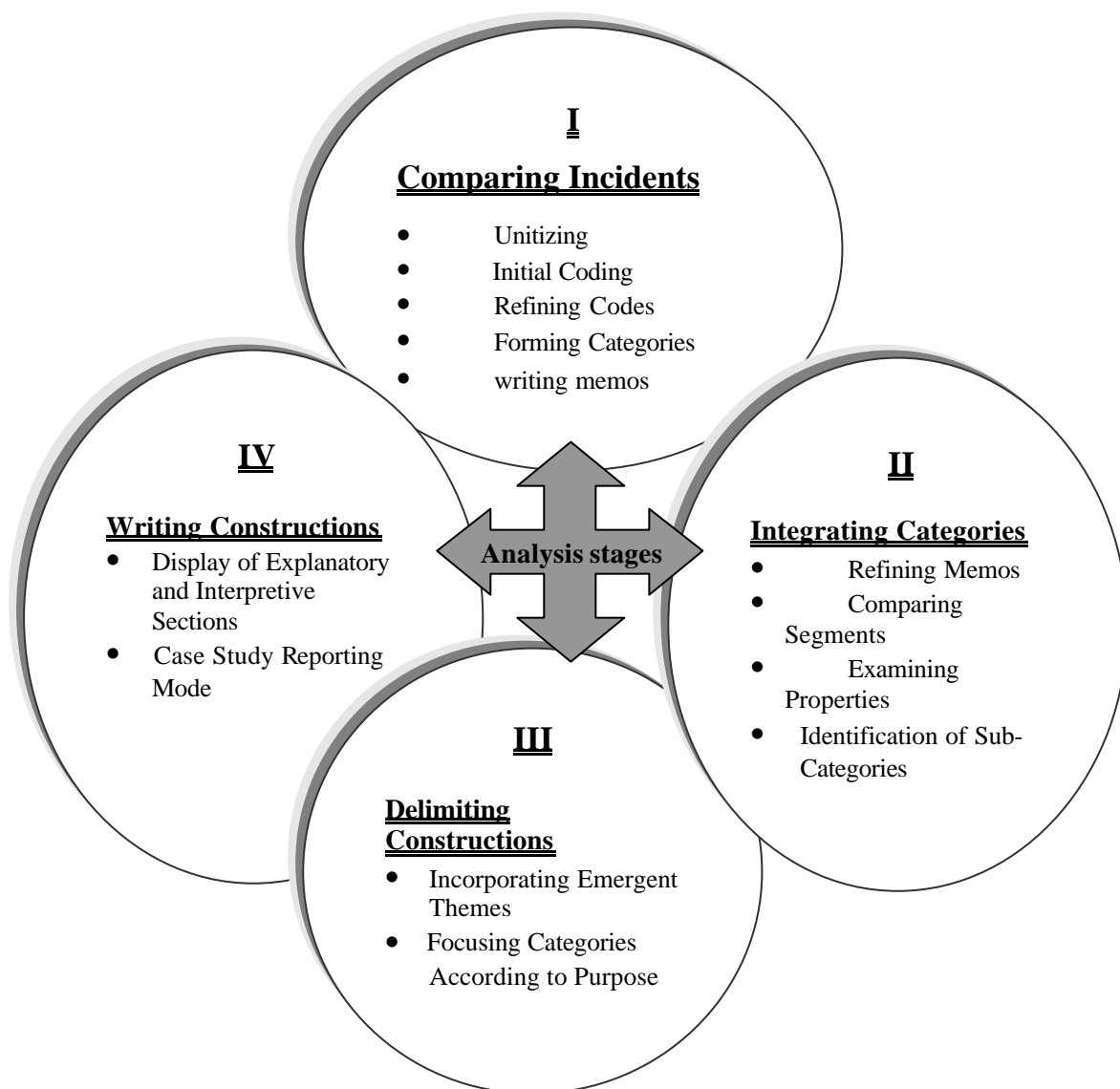


Figure 7 Steps of Processing Empirical Materials

4.8 Trustworthiness

Inductively analyzing empirical materials entails paying additional attention to the trustworthiness of the findings derived from the analysis procedure (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985) “make clear the inappropriateness of the conventional terms when applied to naturalism and . . . provide alternatives that stand in a more logical and derivative relation to the naturalistic axioms” (p. 301). They claim that the conventional inquiry relies on deductive analysis where a pre-determined hypothesis is confirmed or disconfirmed. On the other side, the constructivist inquiry depends on inductive analysis that finds the conclusion inherent in the collected empirical materials. Lincoln and Guba (1985) stress that researchers pay sufficient attention to the criterion of trustworthiness when carrying out a constructivist inquiry. “The four terms ‘credibility’, ‘transferability’, ‘dependability’, and ‘confirmability’ are, then, the naturalist’s equivalents for the conventional terms ‘internal validity’, ‘external validity’, ‘reliability’, and ‘objectivity’ ” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 300).

In this investigation, the researcher’s interpretation of the influences of the three teachers’ classroom management beliefs and practices on classroom procedures has to reflect the participants’ views in relation to the same phenomenon. The techniques that were followed to enhance the credibility of the current inquiry are prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation of empirical materials, peer reviewing, and external auditing (Guba, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1994, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990).

4.8.1 Prolonged Engagement

Prolonged engagement is “the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: learning the ‘culture’, testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or the respondents, and building trust” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). For the current study, the immersion phase took place during May 2000. The writer attended four English lessons and three reserve lessons with the year 7 class and three reserve lessons with the year 8 class in an attempt to further substantiate her rapport with the students. The researcher started familiarizing herself with the school site, the teachers of the school and exchanging brief encounters with several teachers in the Staff Room.

As Merriam (1988) asserts, “an observer cannot help but affect and be affected by the setting, and this interaction may lead to a distortion of the real situation” (p. 103). During the five months duration of this inquiry (July - December, 2000), which constituted Term 3 and Term 4, the researcher purposefully spent prolonged times in the Staff Room during breaks and at lunchtimes. She came to know many of the teachers of the school and had regular short conversations with some of them. Moreover, she helped the dancing team in the school with their rehearsals for the school concert. She was asked to provide the help based on her knowledge of cultural belly dancing. She attended rehearsals on a weekly basis for three weeks.

In relation to the three case study teachers, the researcher developed communication with them outside the classrooms whenever possible. Short and brief conversations relating to this study or general issues helped in establishing rapport.

The investigator also had several conversations with some of the students of the year 7 and 8 classes. Conversations were held in corridors while waiting for the teacher to open the classroom at the beginning of every lesson observed, while being in the classroom with a reserve teacher when any of the three case study teachers were absent, or before and after the interviews. Conversations involved talking about general subjects of interest for either the teachers or the students.

This prolonged engagement made the researcher familiar to the participants in order to minimize the effect of the researcher the students' behaviors. It allowed the students the adequate time to get used to the researcher being in their classes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The writer's efforts to incorporate friendly conversations with the students [so that they would not consider her as an outsider who tries to intrude on their personal opinions] led the students to gradually get used to the researcher's presence in the class with the teacher. However, the researcher was aware of the implications of "becoming over-involved with the respondents - what the anthropologists call 'going native' " (Guba, 1981, p. 85). She tried to be as emotionally detached as possible and to record any biases in her personal reflections file (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

4.8.2 Persistent Observation

Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue,

If the purpose of prolonged engagement is to render the inquirer open to the multiple influences - the mutual shapers and contextual factors - that impinge upon the phenomenon being studied, the purpose of persistent observation is to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued and focusing on them in detail. If prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth. (p. 304)

For five months, the researcher employed participant and non-participant observational techniques in year 7 and 8 classes. Year 7 class was observed for two periods on a weekly basis. Year 8 class was observed for four lessons a week. Two periods were dedicated to observe John O'Neil and his students in English lessons. The other two periods were to observe Jay Kay with the same students in SOSE lessons. Field notes were recorded while being in the two classes when possible or as soon as the researcher left the classrooms. The researcher kept on revisiting the observation notes to identify the emerging themes and ideas. This checking process acted as the guide in subsequent observations where the researcher looked for incidents that confirmed or disconfirmed the ideas and themes discovered in previous stages. Revisiting the notes while still collecting empirical materials helped in the elimination of irrelevant themes to the focus of the study and the concentration on pursuing more information regarding relevant themes and threads of meanings (Guba, 1981).

4.8.3 Triangulation

There are various types of triangulation: (a) triangulation of empirical materials,

(b) triangulation of investigators, (c) triangulations of designs, and (d) triangulation of methodology (Guba, 1978, 1981). In this study, two types of triangulation were adopted:

- a) Triangulation of empirical materials: the materials were collected from three teachers, from nine students, and from relevant documents and artifacts.
- b) Methodological triangulation: the researcher used several sources of empirical materials instead of focusing on one source only. Qualitative interviews were conducted with the three teachers and the nine students, participant and non-participant observational techniques were employed and qualitative content analysis of relevant documents and artifacts was carried out.

4.8.4 Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing is essential “to provide inquirers the opportunity to test their growing insights and to expose themselves to searching questions” (Guba, 1981, p. 85). The concept of peer debriefing was achieved throughout the writer’s meetings with her senior supervisor, Associate Professor Heather Fehring. To enhance the credibility of this study, discussions regarding the coded categories that emerged from the analysis of the empirical materials were carried out between the senior supervisor and the writer. During these discussions, the consistency of the application of each code and each category was also checked.

4.8.5 External Audit Process

In an attempt to increase the dependability and confirmability of the current inquiry, an external audit process was carried out by an RMIT Master of Education student, Miss Kris Thatcher. The auditor performed two tasks: verifying that all the sources of the empirical materials do exist and checking the audio taped interviews against the interview transcripts. Then, the auditor spot checked the empirical materials quoted in the thesis to confirm its original existence in the collected empirical materials. The process took place in August 2002.

5 Research Findings

5.1 Teachers’ Classroom Management Beliefs Versus Teachers’ Other Understandings

The three case study teachers perceive classroom management from a comprehensive view and argue that it involves practices and interactions from the start until the end of the lesson (Anderson, 1992; Brophy, 1983; Doyle, 1986; Gettinger, 1988; Kohut & Range, 1986; Martin & Norwich, 1991; McCormack, 1994; Sanford et al., 1983; Tierney, 1991). Despite the considerable number of researchers (Colvin et al., 1993; Ellis, et al., 1996; Ellis & Karr-Kidwell, 1995; Kohn, 1994; Smith & Misra, 1992; Tauber, 1995; Toben & Sapp, 1972) who seem to regard classroom management and classroom discipline as being synonymous; Matilda, John, and Jay stress that classroom discipline is one aspect of classroom management. The way Matilda and John comprehend classroom management as a concept directs their classroom management plans and practices.

John administers a multitude of instructional and disciplinary strategies that comprise his comprehensive classroom management plan. He believes that his classroom management plan should see to every classroom aspect starting from the minute he gets into the classroom until the end of the lesson (Anderson, 1992; Brophy, 1983; Doyle, 1986; Gettinger, 1988; Kohut & Range, 1986; Martin & Norwich, 1991; McCormack, 1994; Sanford et al., 1983; Tierney, 1991).

Thus, John's classroom management plan becomes his tool through which he maximizes his students' chances of learning and minimizes classroom off-task behaviors.

5.1.1 Classroom Orchestration

Like Randolph and Evertson (1994), Matilda prefers to use the term *classroom orchestration* instead of *classroom management*. For her, the teacher orchestrates his/her classroom taking into consideration thorough preparation, delivery of materials, employing a discipline plan that involves proactive and reactive strategies, and catering for her students' different needs. In her lessons, the students are given the chance to run discussions and reflect on various issues instead of silently answering work sheets (Randolph & Evertson, 1994). Her classroom management plan comprises instructional and disciplinary strategies that aim to eliminate classroom disruptions and maximize learning (Martin et al., 1997).

5.1.2 Other Influences

It is documented in the literature (Agne et al., 1994; Burman, 1993; Combs, 1982; Ellis & Karr-Kidwell, 1995; Hatswell, 1989; Schmidt & Jacobson, 1990; Tobin & Fraser, 1988) that the teacher's belief system, including beliefs regarding classroom management, is of major influence on his/her classroom management practices. However, it has been revealed in this study that there are other understandings, Jay Kay holds, which influence her classroom management decisions and practices more than her classroom management beliefs.

Jay's conception regarding what constitutes a comprehensive classroom management plan does not play a crucial part in her classroom management practices. She believes that any classroom management plan should consist of an instructional element and a disciplinary element. She also believes that the disciplinary element of any classroom management plan is a kernel through which learning can be achieved (Cotton, 1991; Shanker, 1995).

However, Jay focuses on the instructional aspect of her classroom management plan more than on the disciplinary aspect. She argues that because she does not have experience in teaching SOSE she is more occupied with preparing and delivering classroom materials. Nonetheless, she concedes that she experiences frequent classroom disruptions and she is aware that it is hard for her to deliver the prepared materials among these disruptions (Cotton, 1991; Shanker, 1995). Therefore, it can be concluded that the influence of Jay's personal interest in studying and preparing SOSE content on her classroom management planning overcomes the influences of her beliefs regarding the importance of taking care of the disciplinary aspect of her classroom management plan.

5.2 Balanced Classroom Management Approach

The three case study teachers this research introduces perceive their classroom management approaches as comprising two main aspects: the instructional aspect and the disciplinary aspect. John and Matilda design strategies that pertain to the instructional aspect of their classroom management approaches and other strategies that create an effective disciplinary system. On the other hand, Jay is interested in constructing the instructional aspect more than the disciplinary aspect. As a result, she encounters frequent class disruptions and consequently her delivery of content is inhibited.

Based on the former argument, it can be asserted that teachers have to attend to the two aspects of their classroom management approaches because they will not be able to deliver the content of their subject matter without maintaining a disciplined environment (Tobin & Fraser, 1988). Moreover, teachers' effective behavior management approaches become useless if the teachers' instructional plans do not increase the students' involvement in curricular activities and do not positively help students learn.

5.3 The Vital Ingredient in the Educational Process

It is postulated that teachers can apply similar classroom management strategies and bring about different outcomes. John and Jay apply classroom management approaches that have various similarities but John attains disciplined classrooms while Jay experiences frequent classroom disruptions. John explains how professional development workshops address the application of effective teaching and disciplinary strategies but

. . . I've always kind of felt that they've been barking up the wrong tree I believe that most strategies are quite interesting but . . . I've always felt that that has not been the sole ingredient . . . I knew there was another ingredient into a successful class and a successful school, that was not the strategies because someone else can use that strategy and either be successful or flop so . . . I've always believed that I make the difference. (Int. 12 : 933: 943)

5.4 Criteria of Applying Behavior Management Approaches

Contrary to Wolfgang and Glickman's (1980, 1986) contention that the main aim behind implementing any of the three behavior management approaches, the Interventionist, the Interactionist and the Non-Interventionist, is attaining students' self-discipline; John and Jay apply eclectic approaches with an intention to create disciplined classrooms where learning can be enhanced. However, the finding of this research is compatible with Burman's (1993) assertion that teachers' selections of behavior management approaches or eclectic approaches depend mainly on their perceptions regarding the concept and aims of class discipline. Therefore, Matilda applies an eclectic approach with elements from the Interactionist and the Interventionist approaches in order to obtain self-disciplined students whereas the main aim for John and Jay is having disciplined classrooms.

The three case study teachers' adoptions of behavior management approaches are mainly determined by the aim they aspire to reach from applying such approaches. John and Jay apply behavior management approaches that are similar to an extent. John's and Jay's paramount aim behind employing their disciplinary plans including behavior management approaches is to achieve disciplined classrooms through which learning can be achieved. On the other hand, Matilda is preoccupied with helping her students attain self-discipline. John and Jay consider having self-disciplined students a bonus but it is not the prime aim behind their behavior management practices.

5.4.1 Students' Self-Discipline

John and Jay apply what M. N. Lovegrove and Lewis (1991) call *the managerial facet of classroom discipline* where they try to maintain an orderly and positive learning environment

with minimal classroom disruptions. John believes that he is not able to help his students acquire self-discipline because there are other factors beyond his control that impede such acquisition including the other teachers' classroom management approaches and the parents' discipline approaches. He believes that discipline is the routine he practises in his class and he tries to get his students locked into this routine and acquire the habit of working in the desired mode.

John states that despite the fact that his students behave in his lessons they do not behave as much in other classes. He is not satisfied with the fact that they do not exercise self-discipline but he is content with the level of discipline he has achieved with them during his lessons. Jay is also not satisfied with her students' behavioral patterns. However, she does not think she can influence their acquisition of self-discipline.

Burman (1993; 2002) explains how teachers like Matilda are working towards extending their disciplinary role to include an educational as well as a managerial role. M. N. Lovegrove and Lewis (1991) pinpoint that the verbal and non-verbal communication and the interactions that take place while the teacher tries to handle misbehaviors become a valuable learning experience for the students to exercise self-discipline. Through the educational disciplinary plan, the teacher can influence the students' behavioral patterns. Matilda herself concedes that delivering class materials and achieving learning are just two of her goals. She believes that her role as a teacher is to help her students learn how to succeed in life and how to fight the deep-rooted tendency in human beings to amuse themselves by carrying out interesting activities if they are faced with boring or challenging activities. She also believes that this skill is more important than academic skills for her students to obtain. These two beliefs lead Matilda to aim at teaching her students social and cognitive skills and giving them the chance to practise their own choices. Her role is to help them become independent self-disciplined learners.

5.5 Students' Self-Discipline is a Bonus, Not a Prerequisite

Burman (1993) and Wheeler (1959) propose that teachers are expected to help their students achieve self-discipline, independence, and responsibility. By applying her classroom management approach Matilda is able to produce such an aim. John undertakes his classroom management approach in order to generate task-oriented and disciplined classrooms because he is aware that there are other factors that inhibit his students' acquisition of self-discipline. His comprehensive classroom management plan does yield the desired results.

Thus, it can be claimed that both teachers are able to achieve disciplined classrooms and enhance the students' chances of learning despite the fact that one teacher has self-disciplined students and the other does not. Based on this statement, it becomes justifiable to affirm that students' self-discipline, as a quality that positively impacts on classroom discipline is not a prerequisite for John to create discipline in his classes. John considers having self-disciplined students as a bonus, not a condition to generate a positive class environment suitable for learning.

5.6 Teacher Efficacy and Classroom Management

The findings of this research confirm the notion established in the literature (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Ross, 1994; Sodak & Podell, 1994) regarding the influence of teacher personal and general efficacy on his/her choice of classroom management approach. Matilda and John possess high

personal teacher efficacy that helps them select more humanistic classroom management approaches where their relationships with their students can be characterized as caring and understanding. It also positively influences their pursuit of every possible strategy that helps in tackling their classroom problems and inducing academic and behavioral change.

Jay argues that one of the features that the successful teacher should possess is listening to his/her students and trying to sort their problems out. However, she is busy in her classes trying to deliver her content among substantial disruptions that she is not able to attain close and affectionate relationship with her students. The students might not think of Jay as a close teacher who can listen to them and to whom they can express themselves.

Jay thinks that she is not able to deliver the SOSE content properly as she perceives herself to be “not . . . confident about that material” (Int. 24: 232). She also believes that she, as a teacher, is not able to promote learning because of two facts beyond her control. As Ross (1994) describes general teacher efficacy, Jay believes that her students lack motivation to learn and they are poorly skilled and therefore it is hard for them to learn.

Jay asserts that some of her behavior management strategies work temporarily in stopping misbehaviors. However, she contends that she applies the same consequences as John does “but it’s still not been John O’Neil. He’s just a good . . . teacher” (Int. 9: 168: 169).

When asked about the reason why she gets different behavioral outcomes from John’s despite the application of similar consequences, she stipulates, “John has got something that I don’t have, as a teacher” (Int. 9: 164). When asked about the achievements her students attained, she replied, “None, I’d say” (Int. 24: 305).

Jay’s conceptions regarding herself as a teacher and her students’ academic and behavioral status negatively affect her persistence on applying possible strategies that might tackle her students’ academic and behavioral problems (Soodak & Podell, 1994).

5.7 Teacher Locus of Control and Classroom Management

The conclusions of this inquiry regarding the influence of internal teacher locus of control on the teacher’s selection of humanistic classroom management approach and the application of more copying strategies are consistent with the findings of other studies (Cadavid & Lunenburg, 1991; Parkay et al., 1988). Matilda’s and John’s internal locus of control directly contributes to their search for more coping strategies and their application of any possible techniques that they anticipate as bringing about the desired achievement.

On the other hand, Jay believes that there are external factors beyond her control that impede her students’ academic and behavioral progress. She also believes that there are not any types of behavior management strategies that can permanently reduce class disruptions. Therefore, she accepts the fact that there are frequent class disruptions and believes that these disruptions are due to her students’ lack of self-discipline. Her external locus of control impedes her from looking for more coping strategies and persisting with selected techniques that might positively influence her students’ behavioral and academic achievements.

5.8 Students' Classroom Management Beliefs and Teacher Classroom Management Approach

Students of year 8 class believe that it is inevitable that they occasionally engage in performing various types of off-task behaviors. They point out that their teachers must not expect them to behave all of the class time. It is a reality that these students exhibit frequent class disruptions in SOSE classes. However, it is concluded from the qualitative analysis of the interviews and the observations that their behavioral disruptions are kept to a minimum in John's classes. Sometimes, there are virtually no disruptions during some of John's lessons. For this reason it can be argued that John's classroom management approach influences classroom procedures more than his students' beliefs regarding the appropriateness of occasional misbehaving.

5.9 Students' Classroom Management Beliefs and Class Rules

The students of year 8 class believe that it is appropriate to chat while working. Despite the fact that some of their teachers prohibit such a practice, they still talk while working. In John's classes, where they keep their disruptions to a minimum, they are allowed to chat while copying from the board, answering questions in writing, drawing charts, and during regular breaks. However, the students' chatting is not loud and I was not able during my observation sessions to hear what they were chatting about. Therefore, it is assumed that the students' beliefs regarding proper class behaviors influence classroom procedures more than class rules. This result verifies Allen's (1986) declaration that students' agenda plays an important role in shaping students' behaviors. The students have the inclination to work and behave in classes provided that they are given the chance to socialize while working (Allen, 1986). It is apparent in this inquiry that the students of year 8 class enjoy working in John's classes and one of the reasons behind their satisfaction is that they are given the chance to socialize while carrying out class work.

6 Future Research

This section prescribes a number of implications for future research based on the findings of this inquiry. There are ramifications pertinent to six issues that need further investigation.

6.1 Investigations of Influences of Teachers' Classroom Management Beliefs on Classroom Management Practices and Classroom Procedures

The influences of teachers' classroom management beliefs on their classroom management practices need to be more probed in order to explore how other understandings that teachers hold might influence on their classroom management practices. Two questions arise: Are there any teachers' understandings that can affect their classroom management practices more than the ir classroom management beliefs? How do these understandings influence classroom management practices? Attempting to answer these two questions can add depth to our perceptions of the role teachers' classroom management beliefs play in shaping classroom management practices. In this study, one teacher's understandings influenced her class management practices more than her classroom management beliefs. Yet, this finding cannot be generalized based on the limitations of this study. Thus, expanding our knowledge about the more influential factors on teachers' classroom management practices will contribute to the area of classroom management. More needs to be known regarding teacher understandings that impede carrying out a comprehensive classroom management plan. Hence, student teacher programs and courses and

teacher professional development workshops can address these understandings in an attempt to enhance learning.

6.2 Investigations of Teachers' Classroom Management Practices

Results from this study indicate that different teachers can apply similar classroom management strategies and obtain different outcomes. Important research can stem from this study by gauging different teachers' classroom management practices in order to discover the overt and covert reasons behind attaining different outcomes despite applying similar management strategies.

6.3 Investigations Using the Constructivist Paradigm

This inquiry investigated the influences of classroom management beliefs and practices of the three case study teachers and the nine students on their classroom procedures utilizing the constructivist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994) through which teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices were explored in detail. Scrutinizing teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices via qualitative interviews and participant and non-participant observations enabled the discovery of the discrepancies between Jay's classroom management beliefs and her other understandings and their effect on her classroom management practices. As it has been explained, the ABCC Inventory (N. K. Martin & Shoho, 1999, 2000; N. K. Martin et al., 1997, 1998) is used to measure teachers' beliefs regarding classroom management. It does not allow the teasing out of teachers' classroom management beliefs in detail and does not gauge the discrepancies teachers might hold between their classroom management beliefs and practices. Hence, other understandings that might be of key influence on teachers' classroom management practices cannot be gauged. Therefore, additional research in the area of teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices could involve studies conducted using the constructivist paradigm and consequent methodology. Valuable results can be generated from such studies regarding the role teachers' classroom management beliefs play in enhancing learning.

6.4 Investigations of the Role of Students' Self-Discipline

It is not necessary for John to have self-disciplined students in order to gain disciplined classrooms. However, it is not known whether other teachers can achieve the same result with students who are not self-disciplined. The question now is posed: Is students' self-discipline a prerequisite in order to have disciplined classrooms?

Answering this question would add to the significance of applying a comprehensive classroom management approach. If the teachers can achieve disciplined classrooms, even if their students are not self-disciplined, by applying comprehensive classroom management approaches, it will be obvious how crucial teachers' expertise is in contriving comprehensive and effective classroom management approaches.

6.5 Investigations of the Influences of Students' Classroom Management Beliefs a Class Rules on Classroom Procedures

In this study, the beliefs of students of year 8 class in relation to the legitimacy of chatting while working influence classroom procedures more than their teachers' prohibition of chatting while working. However, this finding cannot be generalized for the rest of the student population. It is worth investigating whether other students follow their classroom management beliefs more than they follow class rules. This type of investigation is proposed to yield information regarding the

students' agenda and whether it is crucial to include students in the process of formation of class rules.

6.6 Investigations of the Influences of Students' Classroom Management Beliefs and Teachers' Classroom Management Approaches on Classroom Procedures

John's classroom management approach influences classroom procedures more than students' classroom management beliefs pertinent to occasional class misbehaviors. It is interesting to note that the students of year 8 class expect to occasionally misbehave. However, they usually behave in John's classes. Further research about this issue can reveal whether teachers' classroom management approaches can always influence classroom procedures more than students' classroom management beliefs. Ramifications of such research are of central importance to student teachers and in-service teachers because these studies will provide an idea of what is more influential on creating disciplined classrooms.

The researcher considers this inquiry as only a beginning in investigating how teachers' and students' classroom management beliefs affect classroom management practices and consequently classroom procedures. Students' acquisition of self-discipline and how this acquisition influence classroom procedures is another issue that needs to be deeply probed in order to ascertain whether students' self-discipline is a prerequisite to the effective management of classrooms.

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