ISSN: 3116-3475
International Journal
of Education, Research, and Innovation Perspectives
Volume 2 Issue 11 (November 2026)

Lived Experiences of Kindergarten Teachers in Managing Learners Discipline

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Date Submitted:
September 22, 2026

Date Accepted:
October 27, 2026

Date Published:
November 16, 2026

DOI:
10.5281/zenodo.24285474

ABSTRACT

Discipline is essential in creating a positive learning environment, especially in kindergarten, where learners begin to develop behavioral and social skills. This study explored the lived experiences of kindergarten teachers in managing learners' discipline in selected public elementary schools in Sariaya West District, Division of Quezon, Philippines, focusing on their experiences in handling learner behavior, the challenges they encountered, the meanings they attributed to these experiences, and the strategies they used to promote positive behavior. A qualitative narrative inquiry design was employed. Eight Kindergarten teachers selected through purposive sampling participated in semi-structured individual interviews guided by an expert-validated interview guide, and the verbatim transcripts were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis, with member checking and an audit trail supporting trustworthiness. Five themes emerged: adapting discipline practices to individual learner needs, communicating with parents about learner behavior, challenges in managing aggressive learner behavior, developing caring and gentle discipline approaches, and understanding learners through their family and home background. Read through Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the themes formed a layered process in which teachers encountered behavioral differences and challenges in the classroom microsystem, sought to understand the home circumstances behind the behavior, communicated with parents across the home–school mesosystem, and gradually developed more caring and individualized responses. The study concluded that managing Kindergarten learners' discipline is a responsive, relational, and context-sensitive process that requires patience, flexibility, positive guidance, and collaboration with parents and fellow teachers. Based on the findings, a Proposed Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan with seven areas of development was formulated to support teachers through school-based professional learning, coaching, and parent–teacher collaboration.

Keywords: *Kindergarten Teachers, Learner Discipline, Classroom Management, Positive Discipline, Parent–Teacher Collaboration, Narrative Inquiry*

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood development is an important foundation of human development because the experiences children receive during the early years can influence their readiness for formal schooling and their subsequent learning. A longitudinal study by Tang et al. (2023) found that participation in preschool and kindergarten education was associated with long-term benefits in children's cognitive and academic-related skills, and a study of village preschools in disadvantaged regions found positive effects on children's cognitive skills several years after enrollment (Chen et al., 2023). Research on school readiness likewise identifies self-regulation as an important early competency (Cameron et al., 2024), yet a study of 71 Kindergarten teachers found that teachers

ISSN: 3116-3475
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had difficulty identifying self-regulation concerns and describing appropriate intervention strategies (Wan & Ng, 2024), pointing to the need to prepare early childhood practitioners to respond to children's developmental and behavioral needs.

In the Philippines, early childhood development has been strengthened by Republic Act No. 12199 (2025), the Early Childhood Care and Development System Act, which establishes a comprehensive and integrated national ECCD system and repealed Republic Act No. 10410. Republic Act No. 11650 (2022) includes Kindergarten in its provisions for inclusive education, recognizes the need for identification, referral, intervention, and individualized support according to learners' needs, and treats parents, families, and teachers as partners in learners' care and education. The Kindergarten Curriculum Guide also forms part of the Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum, implemented in phases beginning School Year 2024–2025. These developments show that early childhood is not simply a preparatory stage but a period requiring intentional educational attention, including attention to children's adjustment and behavior.

Managing learner discipline refers to teachers' continuous process of guiding learners' behavior through positive, consistent, and developmentally appropriate classroom management practices. Kindergarten teachers are expected to establish a safe and supportive learning environment while responding to the diverse behavioral needs of young learners, as positive classroom climates in early childhood education are associated with supportive teacher–student interactions and effective pedagogical practices (Khalfaoui et al., 2021). In the Philippine context, DepEd Order No. 40, s. 2012 (Child Protection Policy) requires that disciplinary actions uphold the rights, dignity, and welfare of every learner (Department of Education, 2012), and Republic Act No. 10627 (2013), the Anti-Bullying Act, requires schools to adopt clear procedures, interventions, and disciplinary measures that promote a safe school environment.

Effective discipline, however, cannot be achieved through teachers' efforts alone. School governance becomes more inclusive when parents and the wider community are involved (UNESCO, 2021), and parent–teacher partnerships support children's holistic development and achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001). Nevertheless, differences in parent and teacher perspectives, communication quality, and language and cultural barriers may hinder collaboration (Li et al., 2023), while effective parent–teacher communication contributes to stronger parental support and better home–school coordination in addressing learners' needs (Graham-Clay, 2024; Monfrance et al., 2025). Learners' behavioral development is influenced by the combined support of families and teachers (Tompkins & Villaruel, 2022), so differences in disciplinary approaches and inconsistent home–school communication can make behavior management difficult. In the Sariaya West District, Division of Quezon, schools encourage parental involvement through assemblies, conferences, and Parent–Teacher Association activities, but little is known about how Kindergarten teachers themselves experience managing learner discipline.

Existing studies have largely examined teachers' disciplinary practices, parental involvement, or learners' behavioral outcomes, often through quantitative measures, leaving limited understanding of how Kindergarten teachers personally experience discipline management and the contextual factors that shape it. This study therefore explored the lived experiences, challenges, and strategies of kindergarten teachers in managing learners' discipline in selected public elementary schools in Sariaya West District. The central question was: How do Kindergarten teachers experience, what challenges do they face in, and what strategies do they use in managing learner discipline? Specifically, the study sought to answer the following: (1) How do participants describe their most challenging experiences in managing learner discipline in kindergarten? (2) What meanings do participants attribute to their experiences in managing learner discipline? (3) What themes emerge from the participants lived experiences? (4) Based on the findings, what development plan may be proposed to support Kindergarten teachers in managing learners' discipline? The findings are expected to inform Kindergarten teachers, school administrators, and the Division Office in strengthening discipline practices, parent–teacher communication, and professional support for teachers.

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Literature Review

Policy Context of Learner Discipline in Philippine Schools

In the Philippines, the promotion of learner discipline and a safe, inclusive, and learner-centered school environment is guided by national laws and DepEd policies. The Child Protection Policy institutionalizes the protection of children against abuse, violence, exploitation, bullying, and discrimination and emphasizes positive and non-violent discipline, ensuring that disciplinary actions are educational, restorative, and respectful of learners' rights and dignity (Department of Education, 2012). Complementing this policy, the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013 mandates schools to establish anti-bullying policies with preventive strategies, reporting mechanisms, intervention procedures, and appropriate disciplinary measures (Republic Act No. 10627, 2013).

These policies also recognize that learner development and discipline cannot be achieved by schools alone. Schools in the Division of Quezon, including the Sariaya West District, encourage parental involvement through school assemblies, parent–teacher conferences, and learner support programs intended to strengthen communication and shared responsibility. Research has shown that the congruence of parents' and teachers' ratings of family engagement is related to children's outcomes, underscoring the value of home–school communication and collaboration in the early years of schooling (Ogg et al., 2021).

Discipline, Classroom Management, and Positive Behavior Support

Classroom discipline traditionally emphasizes authority, order, and adherence to rules, but contemporary approaches emphasize that effective discipline also requires compassion and respect for learners' dignity. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) emphasize proactive guidance, clear expectations, and positive reinforcement implemented consistently across settings (Sugai & Horner, 2020). Teachers' use of constructive disciplinary practices, such as positive reinforcement, appropriate feedback, and learner-centered interventions, contributes to supportive classroom environments in which respect and trust are strengthened (Garcia & Pantao, 2021; Escobal et al., 2023).

Despite these benefits, teachers continue to experience difficulties in implementing positive discipline because of differences in learners' behavioral needs, limited parental involvement, and the need for continuous professional support (Escobal et al., 2023; Marquez & Oropa, 2025). Marquez and Oropa (2025) found that teachers managing modern learning environments faced difficulties in behavior management, discipline strategies, communication, student engagement, and maintaining a positive emotional climate, and that they addressed these through flexibility in responding to learner behavior, reflective teaching, and continuous professional development. Oyangorin (2026) similarly examined classroom discipline management as a basis for a disciplinary measure plan, illustrating how findings on discipline practices can be translated into school-based plans.

Parent–Teacher Collaboration in Managing Learner Behavior

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory holds that learners' behavior and development are shaped by interacting environmental systems, particularly the family and the school. Family–school partnership research supports this view: when parents and teachers maintain consistent expectations and shared responsibility, learners receive more coordinated support for their social and behavioral development (Epstein, 2018), and conjoint behavioral consultation strengthens family–school connections through collaborative problem-solving (Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2008; Garbacz et al., 2022). A meta-analysis likewise found that family–school engagement interventions improved parent–teacher relationships (Smith et al., 2022).

Parental involvement in children's schooling has been associated with better adjustment and learning outcomes (Ma et al., 2016; Barger et al., 2019), and parent involvement in positive behavior intervention and supports has been described by teachers and caregivers as important to consistent behavioral expectations (Gerrard & Wilson, 2022). Aniñon and Obiso (2025) found that teachers in public elementary schools attributed learner misbehavior to weak parental guidance, lack of self-discipline, and emotional or behavioral concerns, and that they responded by establishing clear classroom rules, conducting counseling, giving consistent reminders, and applying firm yet supportive discipline. Most of these studies, however, measured the relationship between

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involvement and outcomes rather than how teachers experience parent–teacher collaboration in actual discipline situations.

Teachers' Lived Experiences of Positive Discipline

Escobal et al. (2023) explored the lived experiences of Philippine public school values education teachers in implementing positive discipline through a phenomenological study using semi-structured interviews and Colaizzi's method. Three themes emerged: the significance of positive discipline, the challenges in its implementation, and its benefits in promoting positive learner behavior. Teachers reported that positive discipline fostered responsibility in a classroom characterized by respect, fairness, and cooperation, but they also experienced limited parental and institutional support and difficulty balancing compassion with disciplinary measures. Gastador et al. (2025) similarly found that teachers handling Kindergarten without early childhood education preparation encountered challenges due to limited institutional support, insufficient preparation, and the need for mentoring and collaboration.

Padayao and Bantulo (2024) explored the implementation of positive discipline among eight public school teachers through a phenomenological approach. The teachers faced learner misbehavior, difficulty in consistently implementing positive discipline, and the need to balance kindness with firmness, which they addressed through mentoring, positive reinforcement, proactive behavior support, and individualized approaches. They also emphasized patience, understanding, and commitment to learners' holistic development. These studies highlight teachers' experiences of positive discipline but were conducted mainly beyond the kindergarten level, and few context-specific qualitative studies have examined the experiences of kindergarten teachers in public schools, particularly in Sariaya West District (Molla & Nolan, 2020; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The study was anchored on Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which explains that children's development is shaped by the interaction between individuals and their surrounding environments, particularly the home and school (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). The microsystem refers to the learner's most immediate environments and direct interactions with parents, teachers, and classmates, while the mesosystem refers to the connections among these microsystems, particularly the relationship between the family and the school. In this study, the microsystem framed the teacher–learner interactions through which discipline is managed in the classroom, and the mesosystem framed the communication and collaboration between kindergarten teachers and parents in addressing learners' behavioral concerns.

Guided by this theory, the study adopted the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model shown in Figure 1. The input consisted of information from eight Kindergarten teachers on their experiences (classroom management practices, disciplinary rules and expectations, monitoring of learners' behavior, and communication with parents), challenges (differences in learners' behavioral needs, aggressive or challenging behaviors, difficulty maintaining routines, emotional and contextual concerns, limited parental involvement, and the need for resources and support), and strategies (positive reinforcement, consistent implementation of classroom rules, individualized behavior support, responsiveness to emotional needs, and parent–teacher communication) (Sugai & Horner, 2020; Escobal et al., 2023; Padayao & Bantulo, 2024). The process comprised securing permissions, narrative inquiry, semi-structured interviews with purposively selected teachers, thematic analysis, and development of the plan. The output was the proposed Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan, supported by research showing that family engagement (Epstein, 2018; Smith et al., 2022) and targeted professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017) help teachers address identified needs.

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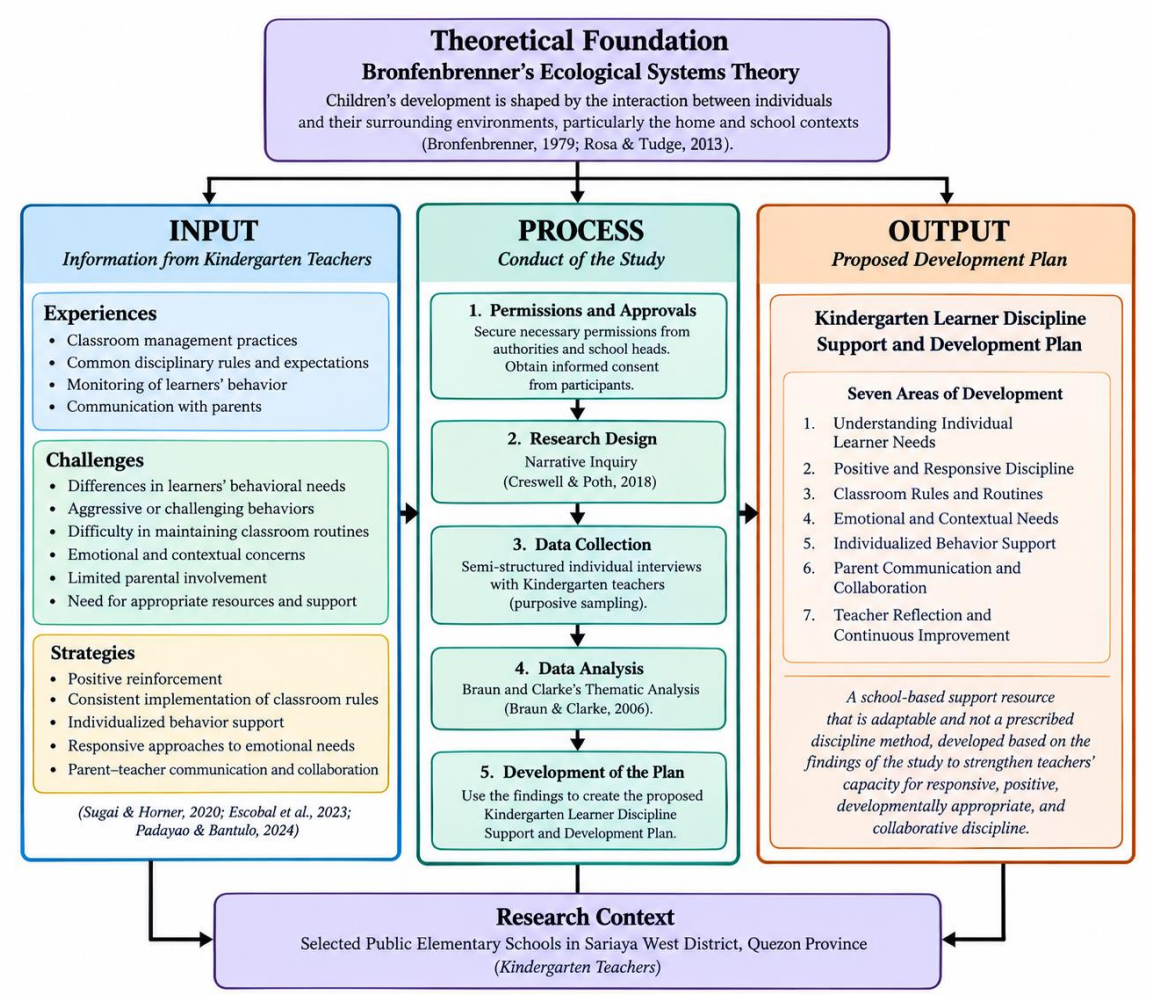


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework of the Study*

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design, specifically narrative inquiry, to explore the lived experiences of kindergarten teachers in managing learners' discipline. Qualitative research seeks to understand how individuals interpret their experiences and construct meaning within their natural settings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018), and narrative inquiry explores individuals' experiences through the stories they share, enabling the researcher to understand how participants construct meaning within personal, social, and professional contexts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This design allowed the participants to narrate their experiences, describe their challenges, explain their strategies, and share how they communicated with parents about learners' behavior.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools in Sariaya West District, Division of Quezon, a public school district in the western part of Sariaya, Quezon Province. The district provides basic

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International Journal
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education from kindergarten to the elementary grades and serves children of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and learning needs from various communities. The setting reflected the actual environment in which young learners interact daily with teachers and classmates as they adjust to the routines, expectations, and social interactions of formal schooling.

Participants and Sampling

The participants were eight Kindergarten teachers selected through purposive sampling, which enables the researcher to deliberately select participants who can provide rich and relevant information about the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The inclusion criteria were that the participant (a) was currently employed as a Kindergarten teacher in a selected public elementary school in Sariaya West District, with or without Early Childhood Education units; (b) had direct experience in managing learners' discipline and working with parents on learners' behavioral concerns; (c) was willing to participate voluntarily and gave informed consent; and (d) was able to narrate personal experiences during the interview. Teachers not assigned to Kindergarten, those on leave or unavailable during data collection, those who declined or did not give consent, and those unable to complete the interview were excluded. Given the purpose of narrative inquiry, eight participants were considered sufficient to generate rich, in-depth narratives. The participants were identified as P1 to P8.

Research Instrument

The researcher served as the primary instrument and used a semi-structured interview guide developed from the research questions. After warm-up questions on the participants' professional background and current learners, the core questions asked about their experiences in managing learners' discipline, significant experiences with challenging behavior and how they responded, the situations they found most challenging, how their experiences influenced their understanding of discipline, how parents, fellow teachers, and administrators influenced their practice, and the strategies and lessons they developed. The guide was validated by three experts on its introduction, questions, and closing components; 59 of the 60 evaluation responses were affirmative, and the single negative response concerned a guardian-signature item that did not apply to adult participants.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division of Quezon, the Public Schools District Supervisor, and the school heads of the selected schools, after which the researcher coordinated with the school heads to identify and schedule the participants. The purpose, objectives, and procedures of the study were explained, and informed consent was obtained before each interview. The semi-structured individual interviews were held at a date, time, and venue convenient for each participant and lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes. With permission, the interviews were audio-recorded, and field notes documented relevant observations and non-verbal expressions. The recordings were transcribed verbatim, and the transcripts were returned to the participants for member checking so that they could verify, clarify, or revise their responses before analysis.

Data Analysis

The validated transcripts were analyzed manually using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis: familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, defining and naming the themes, and producing the report, in which the themes were interpreted in relation to Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the conceptual framework, and the related literature. Reflexivity was maintained through reflective notes and analytic memos, as the researcher plays an active role in developing themes (Braun & Clarke, 2022), and interpretations were compared across participants' accounts and across sections of the interview guide (Flick, 2023). Trustworthiness was established following Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility through repeated reading of verbatim transcripts, member checking (Erdmann & Potthoff, 2023; González-Salgado et al., 2024), and the use of participants' direct statements; dependability through an audit trail of methodological and analytical decisions; confirmability through reflexive notes and field notes; and transferability through a detailed description of the context, participants, and procedures.

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Ethical Consideration

The study received ethical clearance from the University Ethics Review Board of the University of Perpetual Help System DALTA through expedited review and complied with Republic Act No. 10173 (2012), the Data Privacy Act. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained before the interviews, and the participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Participant codes were used in place of names, identifying information was removed from the transcripts, and the transcripts, audio recordings, and field notes were stored in password-protected files accessible only to the researcher and, when necessary, the research adviser. Open-ended, non-leading, and respectful questions were used, and all data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Five themes emerged from the analysis of the participants' narratives. Table 1 summarizes the themes, their central meanings, and the participants whose accounts illustrate each theme. The themes are discussed below according to the research questions, followed by their interpretation in relation to the theoretical and conceptual framework and the proposed development plan.

Table 1. *Emergent Themes on Kindergarten Teachers' Lived Experiences in Managing Learners' Discipline*

Theme	Central Meaning	Illustrative Accounts
Adapting Discipline Practices to Individual Learner Needs	Teachers recognize that learners differ in behavior and response to discipline and adjust their approaches to each learner instead of applying a single method.	P1, P4
Communicating with Parents about Learner Behavior	Teachers share observations with parents, ask about the learner's background, and seek continuity of guidance at home.	P1, P2
Challenges in Managing Aggressive Learner Behavior	Learners who hurt classmates require immediate response, attention to safety, and understanding of the learner's difficulties.	P5, P8
Developing Caring and Gentle Discipline Approaches	Through experience, teachers move away from harsh or loud responses toward patient, affectionate, and safe guidance.	P1, P7
Understanding Learners through Their Family and Home Background	Teachers interpret classroom behavior in light of the learner's home circumstances, such as hunger or lack of care and attention.	P4, P6

Most Challenging Experiences in Managing Learner Discipline

The participants' most challenging experiences centered on aggressive learner behavior and on behaviors rooted in circumstances outside the classroom. Learners who hit or hurt their classmates were described as among the most difficult to handle because teachers had to respond immediately while protecting other learners. P5 described a learner who, apart from hurting others, had difficulty completing activities and reading, and explained the need to identify the child's strengths and weaknesses: "I always stay beside the child to prevent wandering and help the child feel included despite their difficulties or aggressive behavior." P8 pointed to the difficulty of preventing harm when constant supervision was not possible: "One challenging behavior I experienced was children hurting their classmates. This may be learned at home. It is difficult to manage because I cannot always stay close to the child." These accounts portray aggression as a concern that calls for attention both to the behavior and to the circumstances surrounding it, consistent with Kelly et al. (2022), who found that challenging behavior in early childhood settings requires behavior support built on communication and collaboration between educators and families.

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Other challenges arose from learners' family situations. P4 shared: "One challenge I experienced was understanding children because they came from different family backgrounds. As I got to know them and their families, I realized that some children behaved that way because they lacked care and attention from their parents." P6 emphasized limited information from home: "One challenge I experienced was the lack of communication with parents. Some children cried or had difficulty learning because they were hungry or had problems at home. These situations were difficult to manage in the classroom." The teachers thus moved from asking what the learner was doing toward asking why the learner might be behaving in a particular way. This contextual reading is supported by Lewis et al. (2024), who found that teachers' relationships with families become particularly significant, and sometimes strained, when young children experience adversity.

Strategies Teachers Used in Managing Learner Discipline

The teachers did not apply a single disciplinary approach to all learners. P1 explained: "Children have individual differences, so teachers should adjust their discipline approaches. Some respond to a soft voice, while others need a firm look. I prefer a gentle and caring approach to avoid causing fear or trauma." P4 added: "Children have different needs and behaviors, so teachers should adjust their discipline approaches and provide patience, understanding, and gentle guidance." Across the narratives, the individualized responses included speaking softly, eye contact, holding the learner's hand, one-on-one activities, rewards, changes in seating, separating a learner from peers, and positioning the learner closer to the teacher. The participants also described setting classroom rules early and reminding learners of them repeatedly. These practices parallel the findings of Culha and Yılmaz (2023), who reported that preschool teachers considered individual differences and used reinforcement, communication, peer support, and family support in managing their classrooms, and of Padayao and Bantulo (2024), who found that teachers relied on positive reinforcement and individualized approaches.

Communication with parents formed part of the teachers' response when classroom discipline alone was insufficient. P1 described sharing sensitive observations carefully: "I gently communicate my observations about a child's behavior to the parents. Discipline also needs to be reinforced at home because it is difficult when school practices are not continued there." P2 used such conversations to understand the learner: "When children show aggressive behavior, teachers talk to parents to understand the child's behavior and family background." The teachers called parents, reported observed behavior, asked about the child's background, and requested follow-up at home, and some also coordinated with fellow teachers when additional support was needed. At the same time, some parents did not immediately accept teachers' observations, showing that parent communication functioned both as a support and as a challenge. Similar barriers to parent–teacher relationships in early care and education have been documented in the literature (Zulauf-McCurdy et al., 2024).

Meanings Teachers Attributed to Their Experiences

The participants came to understand discipline less as the correction of misbehavior than as a caring, relational practice. P1 shared: "I learned that children need understanding and love. We cannot discipline them by hitting them because it may make them more aggressive and cause them to hurt others." P7 described a change in approach over time: "When I started teaching, I used to speak loudly. In Kindergarten, I learned to speak gently and be friendly so children would feel comfortable, safe, and cared for." Being gentle did not mean abandoning authority; rather, the teachers-maintained respect while giving priority to learners' comfort and safety. This movement away from punitive responses is relevant to Williford et al. (2024), who documented variation in kindergarten teachers' use of soft exclusionary discipline, particularly toward children perceived as having lower self-regulation and social skills.

Taken together, the themes operated in a relational sequence rather than as separate categories. Teachers encountered individual differences and challenging behaviors, sought to understand the learner and the home context, adapted their classroom responses and communicated with parents, and gradually developed a caring orientation to discipline. Underlying this sequence was teacher sensemaking through experience: repeated classroom encounters enabled teachers to recognize behavioral patterns, consider possible reasons, select

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responses, and decide when classroom strategies needed to be supplemented by parent or colleague support. This positions teachers as active interpreters of learner behavior rather than enforcers of fixed rules, and it is consistent with research linking the quality of teacher–child relationships to children's social behavior and engagement in Kindergarten (Paes et al., 2021; Elizarov et al., 2024; Dede Yildirim et al., 2024).

Interpretation in Relation to the Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The findings support Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory. Adapting discipline to individual needs, managing aggressive behavior, and developing caring approaches unfolded within the classroom microsystem through direct teacher–learner interaction, while understanding learners' home backgrounds and communicating with parents connected the classroom and the home within the mesosystem. The findings also extend the microsystem perspective by showing that teachers are active participants who shape the classroom environment through observation, interaction, and adjustment, and that the meaning of behavior in one setting may become clearer only when information from another setting is considered. The difficulties some teachers experienced when parents did not accept their observations further show that home–school connections are not automatically supportive, which helps explain why the quality of interaction between these environments matters (Lewis et al., 2024).

The findings likewise refine the IPO framework. The inputs were not limited to observable misbehavior but included learners' personalities, developmental characteristics, family circumstances, and relationships with parents. The process involved observation, interpretation, adaptation, communication, and reflection, which is consistent with early childhood classroom management research emphasizing teachers' attention to individual differences (Culha & Yılmaz, 2023). Because teachers revised their understanding of the learner as new information came from parents, the process was dynamic and iterative rather than linear. The analysis also revealed tensions between stricter and gentler forms of discipline, between the teacher's classroom responsibility and circumstances beyond the classroom, and between the support and the difficulty that parent communication can bring, showing that teachers must continuously balance classroom expectations, individual needs, safety, family circumstances, and relationships with parents.

Proposed Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan

Based on the findings, a Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan was proposed as a school-based support resource for kindergarten teachers, with possible involvement of school heads, parents, and other school personnel. Its general objective is to strengthen teachers' capacity to manage diverse learner behaviors through responsive, positive, developmentally appropriate, and collaborative discipline practices. The plan does not prescribe a single disciplinary method; its activities may be adapted to the needs of teachers, learners, and the school. Table 2 presents its seven areas of development.

Table 2. *Proposed Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan*

Area of Development	Objective	Activity and Strategy	Time Frame
Understanding Individual Learner Needs	Strengthen teachers' ability to recognize differences in learner behavior and needs	Learner Behavior Observation and Needs Identification: case discussion, sharing of classroom experiences, and reflection	December 2026
Positive and Responsive Discipline	Enhance teachers' use of appropriate responses to challenging behaviors	Positive Discipline Strategy Demonstration: demonstration, peer sharing, and discussion of responsive strategies	February 2027
Classroom Rules and Routines	Strengthen the consistent use of clear, developmentally appropriate expectations	Classroom Rules and Visual Routine Development: collaborative planning of classroom routines	April 2027

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Area of Development	Objective	Activity and Strategy	Time Frame
Emotional and Contextual Needs	Increase awareness of factors that may affect learner behavior	Understanding Learner Behavior through Case Analysis: case analysis, reflection, and discussion of learner circumstances	June 2027
Individualized Behavior Support	Strengthen teachers' ability to adapt discipline practices to learner needs	Individual Learner Behavior Support Planning: analysis of calm communication, proximity, one-on-one support, seating, and positive reinforcement	August 2027
Parent Communication and Collaboration	Strengthen communication with parents on learner behavior and needs	Parent–Teacher Behavior Communication and Action Planning Session: respectful communication, information sharing, and collaborative problem-solving	August 2027
Teacher Reflection and Continuous Improvement	Encourage teachers to examine and improve their discipline practices	Teacher Discipline Practice Reflection and Documentation: reflection, peer sharing, and discussion of experiences	November 2027

Note. Target participants for each activity are 20 Kindergarten teachers.

CONCLUSION

Managing Kindergarten learners' discipline is a responsive, relational, and context-sensitive process rather than the application of a fixed disciplinary method. The teachers adjusted their approaches to learners' behavior, personality, emotional condition, and situation, which shows that young learners need developmentally appropriate and individualized guidance. Aggressive behavior and behaviors linked to home circumstances were the most demanding experiences, and understanding the circumstances behind such behavior strengthened teachers' capacity to respond appropriately. Clear expectations, positive and individualized responses, and caring and gentle approaches allowed teachers to guide behavior while keeping learners engaged in learning. Communication with parents and coordination with fellow teachers made discipline a shared responsibility, although home–school communication was not always smooth. Consistent with Bronfenbrenner's ecological perspective, the findings show that classroom behavior is connected to the relationships and contexts surrounding the child, and that teachers' flexibility, patience, and professional judgment, developed through experience, are central to managing diverse discipline needs. The proposed Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan translate these experiences into a structured and adaptable school-based support resource.

Recommendation

Kindergarten teachers may maintain flexible, learner-responsive discipline practices by observing learner behavior closely before responding, considering individual differences and relevant home circumstances, and combining clear expectations with caring and gentle guidance. School heads may implement the proposed Kindergarten Learner Discipline Support and Development Plan through school-based professional learning, coaching, mentoring, and peer sharing, and may provide regular opportunities for teachers to discuss difficult cases. Schools may also strengthen respectful and consistent home–school communication and establish clear procedures for consultation, parent coordination, and referral to appropriate school personnel when a learner's behavior requires support beyond the classroom. Parents may work with teachers in continuing at home the guidance provided in school. The Division Office may consider developmentally appropriate school-based guidance on kindergarten learner discipline that is aligned with child protection and positive discipline policies while allowing for teachers' professional judgment. Future researchers may extend the study to other schools,

districts, and divisions; conduct longitudinal and comparative studies of public and private or urban and rural settings; include parents' perspectives on home–school communication; and evaluate the feasibility, usefulness, and effects of the proposed plan on teachers' discipline practices and confidence.

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