



**UNIVERSITY
OF TURKU**

Navigating Classroom Management: Experiences of expatriate teachers in UAE international schools

Department of Education

Master's thesis

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21.05.2026

Turku

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Master's thesis

Subject: Education and Learning

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Title: Navigating classroom management: Experiences of expatriate teachers in UAE international schools

Supervisor: PhD Suvi Jokila

Number of pages: 101 pages

Date: 21.05.2026

Abstract.

Increasing cultural diversity in international schools may introduce new classroom management challenges to expatriate teachers, those who come from different cultural backgrounds. Despite the growth of international schools in the United Arab Emirates(UAE), few studies have explored expatriate teacher experiences with regards to classroom management challenges and strategies within culturally diverse classrooms. In order to address that gap, current study explores the classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers, and the strategies they use to overcome such situations. Moreover, the study is guided by Culturally Responsive Classroom Management(CRCM) of Weinstein et al. (2004). This study employs a qualitative design, conducting semi-structured interviews with six expatriate teachers from UAE international schools, and the collected data was analyzed using Thematic analysis method. Data analysis resulted in several themes which emerged as classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers including cultural and linguistic diversity, student behavior challenges, managing students with special educational needs (SEN), family and socioeconomic influences, and institutional and structural constraints. The analysis also revealed that expatriate teachers employ several classroom management practices when managing diverse classrooms in UAE international schools including, developing an understanding of student and their background, adapting their teaching practices and learning activities, building positive teacher student relationships, managing student behavior, and collaborating with colleagues and parents. Together, the findings of current study revealed that classroom management in UAE international schools is shaped by teachers' cultural awareness, collaborative skills, adaptive and flexible teaching practices, and relationship building. Furthermore, this study underscores the importance of CRCM as a lens for examining and enhancing classroom management practices in culturally diverse international school contexts.

Keywords: international schools, expatriate teachers, classroom management, multicultural classrooms, culturally responsive classroom management

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1 Introduction

In recent years , the expansion of global mobility has resulted in increased international migration which has led to a greater level of cultural diversity within countries , in terms of language, religion, and ethnicity (Lee et al., 2023). This growing diversity is reflected throughout educational settings, as classrooms have become more multicultural, consisting students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Peterson & Jensen, 2025; Naz et al., 2023; Forghani-Arani, Cerna, & Bannon, 2019). These variations which situated within the student, have developed implications for teaching practices , as teachers are now required not only to address and cater for a wide range of student needs but as well they are expected to understand and address different communication patterns, behaviors and learning expectations. Therefore, teaching in a multicultural classroom means more than solely delivering a lesson or the content for the students, rather it requires the teacher to develop necessary skills and build cultural awareness, and adapt his or her teaching practices to better suit the students and create a supportive and inclusive learning environment (Naz et al., 2023; Peterson & Jensen, 2025). However, working in such diversified educational settings often present challenges, especially related to language, culture, and pedagogy (Tapia Parada & Tour, 2022) creating intensified classroom management challenges for the teachers (Milner & Tenore, 2010). Classroom management is an essential element of effective teaching, because “successful teaching that leads to successful student learning depends upon successful management decisions” (Wolff et al., 2021, p. 136). This highlights the central role of classroom management in maintaining student behavior, increasing student engagement and motivation , and finally improving the academic performance (van Dijk et al., 2019). However, in multicultural educational settings where students come from different cultural backgrounds, classroom management become even more crucial and challenging as these cultural differences influence student behaviors, communication and interactions. As a result, classroom management becomes highly complex, and teachers may misinterpret student behavior due to the lack of knowledge on student’s culture , or implicit biases, which can result in conflict or strict disciplinary actions (Guzelergene et al., 2025). This can in turn weaken the relationship between the student and the teacher, and foster feelings of exclusion and may exacerbate inequities in the classroom. Considering such challenges which may arise in multicultural classroom settings, teachers should therefore develop relevant, and adaptable strategies to address

these diverse needs of their students and effectively manage the complexities of the classroom environment.

As such, international schools which, serve for a wider range of culturally diverse student populations and often offer an internationally focused curricula (Hayden & Thompson, 2013), hold an important role in the UAE's education system. However, international schools are diverse in nature and cannot be considered as uniform, as they differ in their purpose and the target student population they tend to serve, which may range from expatriate families to local students (Hayden & Thompson, 2013; Bunnell et al., 2016). Informed by the demographic composition, UAE's schools are structured in a way that clearly separate public from private sector. Public education is mainly focused on serving the native Emiratis, with only about 20% consists of non-Emirati students. Whereas the private sector- such as International schools, follow a curriculum that is mainly delivered in English, while Arabic offered as a second language (Garces Bacsal et al., 2025).

Expansion of International schools is also evident in the diversity of curricula offered by them. For instance, studies claim that there are, "17 curricula options, including those from the UK, US, France, the Philippines, India, and Pakistan" (Bersotti, 2022, as cited in Al Taneiji, 2025, p. 2) offered in UAE international schools. This range of curricula highlights how international schools are intentionally designed to match the educational demands of expatriate population in the country.

Both teacher and student population exemplifies the highly multicultural nature of UAE international schools. This diversity which exist within teacher and student population is highlighted by the findings from PISA 2018, which stated that UAE has the largest immigrant students among the other participating countries (OECD, 2020, as cited in Garces Bacsal et al., 2025). Similar to the diversity observed in the student population, the teaching workforce also demonstrates a highly diversified population; for instance, although there are about 36% Emirati nationals serve in public schools, only a 0.3% Emiratis serve in private school sector (Gallagher, 2019, as cited in Garces Bacsal et al., 2025), which implies that almost all the teacher population in private schools are expatriates. Taken together, the combination of diverse student population and predominantly expatriate teacher population create a highly diversified and complex educational environments. When expatriate teachers begin teaching in a new country, they are often faced with challenges related to cultural adaptations of the host country, at the work place, as well as in the classrooms, and furthermore the differences in cultures between students and teachers will hinder the effectiveness of teaching

(AL-Roomy & Kalmey, 2026). This brings the need for “ expatriate teachers to adapt to cultural differences, refine classroom management techniques, and develop strategies to improve student engagement” (Golis, 2024, as cited in S. Al-Taneiji, 2025, p. 2).

Research has examined about teaching in multicultural settings , and classroom management (Guzelergene et al., 2025; Halicioğlu, 2015; Sarı & Yüce, 2020; Van Tartwijk et al., 2009). Studies also have explored about the experiences of expatriate teachers in the UAE, highlighting challenges regarding cultural adaptation, and teacher retention (Al Alaleeli, 2022; Dillon et al., 2025; Murdock, 2022). In particular, there is lack of existing literature which provides context specific insights as to how expatriate teachers in the UAE international schools, manage and respond to classroom management difficulties which occur in highly diverse classrooms. Moreover, remaining studies about UAE International schools, often discuss about challenges expatriate teachers face in general and provide limited insight about how they adapt their classroom management practices to better serve the multicultural classroom settings. This gap is significant, as deeper understanding of these teacher experiences is essential for creating context relevant classroom management practices for the future expatriate teachers, those who willing to work in highly diversified educational settings such as UAE. Without such insights, teachers may struggle to address the complexities arise in multicultural classrooms, and schools may not have a proper support system to address these challenges. Therefore, this study seeks to explore classroom management experiences of expatriate teachers in the UAE international schools, with a particular focus on the challenges they face and about how they adapt their classroom management practices to manage multicultural classrooms.

The two main research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What are the main classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers in the UAE International schools?
2. How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International schools?

In order to address the above-mentioned research questions, this study uses a qualitative research design. Furthermore, this study is guided by Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM) theory (Weinstein et al., 2004), which highlights the importance of aligning classroom management practices with the cultural backgrounds of the students.

Findings of this study will contribute to better understand effective classroom management practices in multicultural educational settings, specifically within the United Arab Emirates' international schools setting. The findings may also provide practical insights for the expatriate teachers in their classroom management approaches. Additionally, the study will contribute to the existing literature by providing context specific perspectives as to how teachers adapt their classroom management practices when managing multicultural classrooms.

2 Literature Review

This chapter examines the literature relevant to classroom management in multicultural settings. It begins by exploring key concepts related to classroom management and the challenges teachers experience when managing diverse classrooms, especially in the context of international schools. It then proceeds to explore culturally responsive classroom management as the theoretical framework, followed by discussing strategies employed by teachers. Finally, the chapter concludes by identifying gaps in the existing literature that shape the direction of the current study.

2.1 Classroom Management

Effective “classroom management” (CM) is a key component in creating a positive teaching-learning environment, and without it, meaningful learning is unlikely to occur. Bozkuş (2021) states that poor CM leads to disengagement and will limit the effective learning of the students. Therefore, teachers should pay a significant amount of attention to enhance their classroom management practices.

Different scholars have conceptualized classroom management in various ways, highlighting different views in the literature. For instance, Evertson and Weinstein (2006) define CM as the practices implemented by teachers to promote (1) academic and (2) social emotional learning of students. Oliver et al. (2011) highlight the importance of student behavior in classroom management and defines classroom management as a set of non instructional strategies employed by teachers in order to promote positive behavior of students while preventing and reducing their inappropriate behavior. Unlike Evertson and Weinstein (2006)’s definition, this perspective represents a more behavioral focus approach to classroom management. Martin and Baldwin (1994) refer to CM as a multidimensional concept which consists of three interconnected dimensions such as, person, instruction, and discipline. They further illustrate that person dimension consists of teacher’s perceptions of students, while organization of teaching and learning activities (i.e., classroom routines, physical learning environment, and time management) constitute the instruction dimension, and discipline dimension, encompasses of teacher’s activities which focuses on maintaining appropriate student behavior.

These definitions highlight the multifaceted and complex nature of ‘Classroom Management’, that extends beyond student discipline. It involves not only maintaining appropriate student behavior, but also strengthening teacher student relationships, and creating an environment which supports the academic and social emotional learning.

2.2 Classroom Management in Multicultural Classrooms

In recent years, global mobility has significantly increased international migration, resulting in greater cultural diversity within countries (Lee et al., 2023). When countries become highly diversified, societies within become more exposed to a wider range of cultural elements, including different languages, traditions, and religions which may enhance communities by fostering new perspectives and intercultural understanding of one another. However, this diversity also brings complications, especially in institutions such as schools, where students from different cultural backgrounds interact with each other on a daily basis. Similarly, in modern world, classrooms have become increasingly diverse, encompassing students from different cultural backgrounds (Naz et al., 2023; Peterson & Jensen, 2025). Such learning environments, which consist of students from different ethnicities, religions, mother tongues, and cultural traditions, are referred to as “multicultural classrooms” (Ben Peretz et al., 2006, as cited in van Tartwijk et al., 2009). As a result of this diversity, teachers are required to adjust, and adapt their classroom management strategies, as different cultural backgrounds of students may influence how they respond to classroom practices (Guzelergene et al., 2025).

When it comes to effective classroom management, addressing student misbehavior, and disruptions is essential. However, perceptions of what considered a misbehavior may differ across cultures (Wubbels, 2015), as culture shape individuals’ thinking patterns, communication, behaviors as well as how they make sense of the world around them (Baumann et al., 2020). Therefore, perception of what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior is not universal, but rather an idea which varies depending on one’s cultural background.

Studies demonstrate that “expectations and norms of classroom participation are often culturally situated” (Schultz, 2009, as cited in Mariskind, 2013, p. 597), highlighting that cultural influences affect how students participate in learning activities. According to Pun (1990), students those who have studied in Western contexts often view teacher as a facilitator and are more likely to participate in learning activities when it allowed them to

explore ideas, or find answers by themselves. In contrast, students from Confucian influenced contexts perceive teacher as ‘an expert’ who transmits knowledge. As a result, these students prefer listening to the teacher and taking notes and receiving information directly from the teacher rather than questioning the teacher or exploring the answers by themselves. Therefore, these differences should not be understood as signs of lack of student engagement, but as culturally shaped beliefs about appropriate learning behaviors.

Furthermore, cultural values can also shape student’s preference for learning activities such as group work, or individual work. For instance, students those who are accustomed to cultures that value group harmony and cooperation, will prefer group work and shared decision making, whereas students those who are from more individualistic cultures may prefer working independently (Gomez et al., 1995). Similarly, in Confucian influenced contexts such as Korea, values of hierarchy, and respect may lead the students to accept teacher authority and behave in a more polite and respectful manner. In contrast, educational context which values individualism and equality may encourage students to express more informal interactions and active participation (Shin & Koh, 2008).

Overall, these studies demonstrate that culture is one of the elements that shapes student behavior in the classroom, and as a result when teaching in multicultural classrooms, teachers may face significant challenges understanding and responding to different student behaviors, as certain actions may seem inappropriate but may actually reflect a different cultural norm.

2.3 International Schools

The term ‘international schools’ does not have a clear definition, and there is no official body which governs how it is used , and as a result, educational institutes choose to call them selves as ‘international schools’ depending on many different reasons, including their student population, and the curriculum they offer (Hayden, 2006). One commonly used definition describes international schools as those offering an English-medium curriculum in a non-English-speaking country (ISC, 2015, as cited in Bunnell et al., 2016, p. 409) . However, Bunnell et al. (2016) argue that this definition does not sufficiently capture the complexity of what makes a school “international”.

Due to lack of strict regulation, international schools may vary from one another significantly. As noted by Hayden and Thompson (1995), international schools do not demonstrate a uniform group, but rather “a conglomeration of individual institutions which may or may not share an underlying educational philosophy” (p. 332) . This implies that, international schools cannot be defined in single way , but rather as a diverse and evolving group of educational institutions. Moreover, studies demonstrate that international schools appear in several forms. Hayden and Thompson (2013) state that many of these international schools are privately funded and that they often follow a curriculum which differs from the host country. To better understand, they divide international schools in to three main types. Type A, referred to as traditional international schools, which were originally established in order to serve the children of globally mobile expatriate families. Type B, named as ideological international school , those were targeted at promoting international understanding and peace (Bunnell et al., 2016). Final category, type C were non-traditional international schools, which have emerged recently and established mainly to cater to the children of wealthy local families of the host country (Hayden & Thompson, 2013; Bunnell et al., 2016). These categorization, further illustrates the diversified nature of international schools.

Studies indicate that international schools were not designed based on a single common idea, but rather emerged as a response to the practical needs of expatriate communities. As Hayden and Thompson (1995) explain, many such schools “have grown up in response to local circumstances on a relatively ad hoc basis” (p. 332). This suggests that international schools have been emerged when suitable education is not available in the host country. Similarly, Leach (1969, as cited in Hayden & Thompson, 1995) identifies that some international schools were established to cater educational needs of the citizens those who live abroad. Furthermore, Hayden and Thompson (2006) explain that international schools were designed to support relocating families by ensuring continuity in their children’s education in terms of language of instruction , curriculum , and future study opportunities. Collectively these views suggest that international schools were primarily established to support the globally mobile families by offering stability in education. Apart from expatriate families, recent studies indicate that many local students, particularly those who are from middle and high income classes, are attending international schools to seek alternative education options and opportunities to study abroad (Cao, 2022). Recent research shows that more local students, especially from middle and high income families, are attending international schools in order to

access different educational options and opportunities for studying abroad (Cao, 2022). This suggests an increasing interest, or a developing trend in global education, among local families.

Studies indicate that international schools often contain students from various cultural backgrounds. According to Hill (1994, as cited in Hayden and Thompson, 1995, p.337) such schools are known for having students and staff “representative of a number of cultural and ethnic origins,” which makes them different from national schools, that usually serves one main cultural group. This statement highlights that international schools aim to teach students from different national, language, and cultural backgrounds, making diversity a key part of their student groups.

2.4 UAE International School Context

United Arab Emirates (UAE) , stands out among one of the most culturally diverse nations in the world, in which expatriate population outnumbered the native Emiratis. This diversity can be observed throughout all sectors of the society , including schools (Al Alaleeli, 2022). To address this increased diversity of expatriates, UAE has established an education system which is strongly international in nature , offering different curricula including American, British, Indian as well as International Baccalaureate, thereby enabling a smoother transition for expatriate families (Waly, 2026). Due to the country’s commitment towards international education reform, the Ministry of Education has worked on recruiting well – qualified teachers by offering attractive employment opportunities, positioning UAE as a desirable location for international teachers (Muhammad, 2014, as cited in Murdock, 2022). Combined together , these factors result in a highly multicultural school environments, requiring teachers to engage in complex cultural dynamics in their work.

2.5 Expatriate Teachers

The majority of teachers in international school settings are expatriates, that is, educators who work outside their home countries. Garton (2013) states that schools “group their teaching staff into three distinct categories...host country nationals, ‘local hire’ expatriates, and ‘overseas hire’ expatriates” (p. 87). This categorization implies that expatriate teachers are not citizens of the host country and may either already reside in

the host country, or may be recruited from abroad. Consequently, international schools rely on foreign educators to fill teaching positions.

Similarly, Bunnell (2017) describes expatriate teachers as “teachers who are living and working abroad in international schools” (p. 194) and identifying them as a group of “non corporate expatriates”. Furthermore, he indicates that based on McNulty and Brewster’s (2017a) expatriate criteria, these teachers hold temporary contracts, are not citizens of the host country, and obtain legal authority to work abroad. Together, these ideas illustrate that expatriate teachers are foreign teachers those who intentionally travel outside from their countries for employment.

Studies indicate that there are various personal and professional factors that influence a teachers’ decisions to work abroad. Garton (2013) explains that these factors may include, better salary opportunities to save money, family circumstances, desire to live in places that offer good life style and travel options. He further explains that some teachers seek abroad teaching positions as they are dissatisfied with their home education systems ,or because they prefer careers that allow them to work in diverse global contexts.

However, working abroad also present difficulties for expatriate teachers as there is “little to no induction” before they arrive in the host country (Ceballos, 2020, as cited in Norris & Shriner, 2024, p. 48). This lack of preparation can make the early adjustments difficult for expatriate teachers, emphasizing the importance of understanding the culture and education system of the host country.

2.6 Classroom Management Challenges

Studies have shown that managing student behavior in multicultural classrooms can be challenging because teachers and students may have different cultural understandings of appropriate classroom behavior. Monroe (2006) explains that, Many disciplinary actions occur due to “misinterpretations of student behavior.” (p. 165), indicating that what teachers perceive as inappropriate behavior could be a culturally different way of communicating and interacting. For instance, drawing on earlier work by Hale (1982; 2001), Monroe argues that some students may communicate in more animated, overlapping, and emotionally expressive ways, which teachers may sometimes

misinterpret as disruptive or disrespectful, potentially leading to ineffective classroom management. Supporting this, a recent study by Güven et al. (2023) revealed that teachers those who teach in multicultural classroom settings often faced challenges, including behavioral issues such as bullying, and social exclusion, which has emerged because of cultural and language differences between native and minority students. Altogether, these challenges imply how cultural misunderstandings can shape interactions between students, which adds further complexity to classroom management in multicultural settings.

Students in multicultural classrooms often face communication challenges because they come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Singh and Rampersad (2010) note that, when students do not share the same language, misunderstandings could occur as learners are not always able to understand each other clearly. They further explain that these students may also vary in their proficiency level in the language of instruction, which could make communication even more difficult. Communication difficulties are not only about language but also about culture, and teachers sometimes misinterpret students' behavior because they are unfamiliar with their cultural communication styles. For example, the authors report that "educators admitted that because they did not understand the body language of their learners in relation to their different cultures, this often led to problems between themselves and their learners" (p. 14).

Furthermore, Singh and Rampersad (2010) report that differences in values and beliefs, along with prejudice, racism, lack of trust, and cultural stereotyping, act as barriers to communication among learners (p. 3). They note that these barriers may shape how students interact with one another, and the study revealed that "learners were in fact mostly associating with members of their own cultural groups." (p.4) because they feel more comfortable and understood. Overall, these findings suggest that communication in multicultural classrooms is shaped by both language and culture, and misunderstandings may arise when teachers and students do not share the same communication norms.

Expatriate teachers may face additional classroom management challenges as they are supposed to teach in unfamiliar cultural contexts. Since many expatriate teachers move abroad without proper preparation, they often encounter difficulties in adjusting to the

new context (Norris, 2024). Previous studies have shown that, expatriate teachers often experience classroom management issues, different curriculum adaptations, unfamiliar school policies, and cultural shock (Dunn, 2011; Fee, 2011; Finney et al., 2002; Hutchinson, 2005, as cited in Halicioğlu, 2015). These challenges may stem from the differences in the educational expectations, student behavior, and teaching practices of the host country. Furthermore, studies have revealed that differences in the curriculum also could create challenges for the expatriate teachers. For an instance, in certain Middle Eastern contexts, teachers are required to adjust curriculum in order to reflect Islamic beliefs, and values (DeBeer, 2014, as cited in Halicioğlu, 2015). This implies that expatriate teacher may not only need to adjust their classroom management strategies, but also adapt their lesson content according to the expectations of the host country. Furthermore, Altaai and Gokgoz Kurt (2023) found that expatriate teachers commonly struggle with language barriers, unfamiliarity with the culture, and the education system of the host country, and discussed further about how some Turkish EFL learners were reluctant to participate in classroom activities making it difficult for expatriate teachers to maintain an effective learning environment. Overall, these studies suggest that expatriate teachers must adapt to the cultural, educational, and behavioral expectations of the host country, which could complicate their classroom management.

In addition to challenges which emerge from classroom interactions, studies have shown that boarder contextual factors also can affect classroom management in multicultural settings. For instance, socio economic background of the student has been recognized as one such factor. Research has indicated that students, those who are from low socio economic backgrounds tend to experience challenges such as social isolation, and bullying from other students who are from higher income backgrounds (Setiyowati, 2018), limited access to learning resources, and insufficient academic assistance from home, which can influence their engagement in classroom activities and behavior (Güven et al., 2023).

Güven et al. (2023) further highlights in his study that students' behavior, motivation, and participation in classroom activities are deeply influenced by family circumstances. Participants of their study confirmed that some parents were reluctant to involve in their child's education and relied solely on school, by assuming learning of their child is a responsibility rested mainly on school. Furthermore, teachers claimed that students usually mirror the attitudes of their parents. For instance, when parents are intolerant

towards people those who are different , their children too behave and demonstrate patterns in a similar way in the classroom when interacting with students from different cultural backgrounds. Together these factors may contribute to increased complexity for teachers when managing multicultural classrooms. Moreover, teachers have complained about challenges occurring with regards to managing students with special educational needs (SEN) in multicultural classrooms. Evidence from studies suggests a perceived lack of preparation among teachers in supporting such students (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011), especially when they have not received adequate training related to managing students with special needs (Güven et al., 2023). Moreover, Güven et al. (2023) indicated that teachers often received limited support from the families of SEN students, which made it more challenging for the teachers to address the concerns of those students. Together, these factors exacerbate classroom management for teachers , as they need to address and cater to diverse needs of the students concurrently.

2.7 Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM)

Multicultural classrooms consist of students who come from different cultural backgrounds those who may have different perspectives of what appropriate behavior should be. Therefore, traditional classroom management approaches will not always be effective in such contexts. Weinstein, Tomlinson Clarke, and Curran (2004) argue that perceptions of appropriate behavior are influenced by culture, and as a result, conflicts may occur when teachers and students come from different cultural backgrounds. They further explain that, “given the increasing diversity of our classrooms, a lack of multicultural competence can exacerbate the difficulties that novice teachers have with classroom management.” (p. 25), indicating that lack of multicultural competence may make the classroom management more challenging for teachers. Therefore, teachers also need methods that consider students’ cultural backgrounds, rather than depending solely on traditional classroom management techniques. Such approaches require teachers to understand students’ cultural norms, communication styles, and behavioral expectations. Without this understanding, teachers may misinterpret student behavior, and respond in ways that increase misunderstandings or disagreements. Therefore, Weinstein et al. developed Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM) as an approach to assist teachers those who work in culturally diverse classroom environments to effectively manage their classrooms.

Similarly in UAE international schools, expatriate teachers often work with students who are from different cultural backgrounds. In such environments, teachers may often misinterpret student behaviors, if they only rely on their own cultural assumptions, and beliefs which might lead to classroom management challenges (Weinstein et al., 2004). Therefore, this study adopts the framework of 'Culturally Responsive Classroom Management' in order to understand the classroom management challenges, and the strategies expatriate teachers use in the UAE international schools.

2.8 What is CRCM?

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM) can be understood as a classroom management approach that intentionally incorporate students' cultural backgrounds into consideration. According to Weinstein et al. (2004), CRCM emphasizes how culture shapes student's behavior, communication patterns, participation in classroom activities, and interactions with others. Furthermore, authors imply that contrasting with traditional classroom management approaches which mainly focus on student behavior, and discipline (Ahmed, 2020; Postholm, 2013), CRCM emphasizes the importance of teachers' understanding on their students' cultural values, norms, relationships and lived experiences when effectively managing multicultural classrooms. Weinstein et al. (2004) describe five main components in the CRCM which includes, includes "recognition of one's own ethnocentrism; knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds; understanding of the broader social, economic, and political context; ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate management strategies; and commitment to building caring classrooms" (p. 26). They further highlight that CRCM is "a frame of mind" (p.27) that affects how a teacher interact with students and make decisions, rather than a common set of classroom management techniques. CRCM therefore, does not focus on controlling students, but rather it ensures that all students have fair learning opportunities (Weinstein et al., 2003, 2004).

Weinstein et al. (2004) identify recognizing one's own ethnocentrism as the first key element of culturally responsive classroom management. They argue that "we are all cultural beings, with our own beliefs, biases, and assumptions about human behavior" (Weinstein et al., 2003, p. 270), and without this awareness, teachers may unknowingly misinterpret behaviors of culturally diverse students that simply reflect different cultural

norms ,or practices rather than misbehavior, which can lead to misunderstandings and unfair treatment. Therefore, when teachers recognize their own implicit cultural assumptions, they are less likely to misinterpret students' behavior and better able to respond in an equitable way (Weinstein et al., 2003, 2004).

The second component is developing knowledge about students' cultural backgrounds. According to Weinstein et al. (2004), it is important for teachers to be aware of students' family backgrounds, communication styles, traditions, values and learning styles. As Sheets and Gay (1996, as cited in Weinstein et al., 2004) explain, teachers need to understand "the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups... their rules of decorum, deference, and etiquette," as well as their "communication styles, motivational systems, and learning styles" (p. 29), as this awareness can help teachers interpret students' actions more effectively and reduce the risk of interpreting behaviors which are culturally different as inappropriate. Therefore, understanding students' cultural backgrounds can help teachers address student behavior more effectively and create a classroom environment which is more respectful of and embrace cultural differences among children.

The third component of CRCM is understanding the broader social, economical, and political context which influences students' lives. Weinstein et al. (2004) argue that schools do not occur separately from the society and will be influenced by the inequalities and discriminations which already exist in the society . As a result, students' experiences in the schools may be influenced by factors such as social class, gender, or race. Therefore, teachers need to understand that students may face challenges depending on their social, economic , and political circumstances. They further explain how schools may sometimes exacerbate inequalities through practices such as unequal resource distribution , and certain disciplinary actions that may affect a particular group of students more than others. Therefore, understanding the wider social , economic , and political context can help teachers view student behavior more objectively and avoid misinterpreting based solely on their personal perspectives.

The fourth component of CRCM is the use of culturally appropriate classroom management strategies. Weinstein et al. (2004) describe that teachers should always think about whether their classroom management practices provide equal learning opportunities for students. This indicates that teachers need to consider whether their

classroom rules, discipline methods, communication styles, and other learning activities are suitable for the students of different cultural backgrounds. As authors explained, cultural diversity should be “a lens through which we view the tasks of classroom management” (Weinstein et al., 2004, p. 32). Therefore teachers are encouraged to consider about their classroom practices and inspect whether they may unintentionally affect some students of certain cultures, or groups negatively. Weinstein et al. (2004) argue that, teachers should consider whether they treat all the students equally despite their cultural backgrounds. They note that teachers can sometimes be more supportive towards some students, while reacting negatively towards others due to assumptions on race, language, appearance or culture. Therefore, culturally appropriate classroom management requires teachers to be aware about their behavior and ensure students are treated equally. They also point out that teachers should reconsider traditional ideas about “what works” in classroom management, as some techniques may not be effective for all students. The authors further introduce the idea of “mutual accommodation”, which indicates that while teachers respect students’ cultural backgrounds, students should also learn to adjust according to school expectations such as punctuality, appropriate behavior, and attendance when required. Overall, these challenges emphasize the importance of culturally appropriate classroom management to be flexible, and reflective to the diverse cultural backgrounds of the students.

Fifth component of the framework is, building a caring classroom, which the authors viewed as essential for an effective classroom management. Weinstein et al. (2004) state when students feel that teacher genuinely care about them, they tend to cooperate more in the lessons. In the CRCM framework, caring does not solely referred to as nurturing, but it also includes expecting high academic standards, and supporting students in achieving them (Gay, 2000, as cited in Weinstein et al., 2004). They further highlight that when students are from other cultural backgrounds, those that differ from the school norms, they get benefitted from caring relationships as these relationships help them feel understood and valued. Therefore, this component poses caring as a vital element in culturally responsive classroom management.

2.9 Strategies/Adaptations in Multicultural Classrooms

In order to response for the classroom management challenges occur in multicultural classrooms, teachers are required to adapt a variety of classroom management

strategies. Rather than solely depending on a single fixed method, teachers need to be flexible and respond to student diverse needs (Weinstein et al., 2004). Accordingly , variety of strategies have been identified in the literature to support teachers , those who are managing multicultural classroom.

Building positive teacher-student relationships

Studies have shown that building positive teacher – student relationships as an important strategy in managing multicultural classrooms. For instance, Sheets (1996), as cited in Weinstein et al. (2004), argues that students are not just at the receiving end of teachers’ actions, but rather they actively choose whether to engage or disengage based on their perception of teacher’s caring towards them. This highlights the close relationship between classroom management and quality of the relationship between teacher and student, whereas a positive relationship will enhance the student engagement which in turn will help teacher to manage the classroom effectively. Similarly, Gay (2002) argues that, caring is a “pedagogical necessity” (p. 109), implying that it is essential for effective learning and teaching. She further describes that caring requires teachers to form “ethical, emotional, and academic partnership with ethnically diverse students” (Gay, 2000, as cited in Gay, 2002). Therefore, these ideas emphasize the importance of building strong relationships between teachers and students in managing multicultural classrooms.

Behavior management

Another key component in classroom management is behavior management, and it becomes more complex in multicultural classroom settings due to various cultural influences. Expectations and norms about appropriate behavior is culturally influenced, and misunderstandings could occur when teachers and students come from different cultural backgrounds (Weinstein et al., 2004) and therefore, behavior could not be judged without considering cultural backgrounds of the students. In this regard, Gay (2002) argues that teachers should have a knowledge about students’ cultures, including cultural values, learning styles , communication, and traditions , as this is important when teaching ethnically diverse student groups. Building on this, in order to address behavioral challenges which occur in multicultural classrooms, McIntosh et al. (2021) emphasize the use of culturally responsive behavior management strategies, which includes components like strengthening the relationship between teachers and students,

explicit teaching of expected behavior, and addressing behavior through supportive interventions rather than using punishment based approaches.

Instruction adaptation

Since multicultural classrooms consists of students of various cultures, previous studies have illustrated adapting instruction to better suit their learning needs , and cultures was as a strategy used by teachers . For instance, Gay (2002) highlights that teachers need to identify the limitations in their current curriculum and “make the changes necessary to improve their overall quality” (p. 107), implying that curriculum should be treated as something flexible rather than something fixed. Similarly, Ituma (2025) found out in her study that, teachers use a variety of differentiated instructional strategies in multicultural classrooms that include flexible grouping, use of learning stations, and “giving students a choice (p. 7)”.

Such strategies allow teachers to address and respond to learning needs of diverse students through a wide range of approaches . For instance, in flexible grouping, as explained by Ituma (2025) , the teacher may group the students according to their task, learning style, or cultural backgrounds and as a result, students get an opportunity to blend with others who are similar to their cultural background as well from different cultural backgrounds, and this will promote collaboration and respect towards each other. Similarly, learning stations enable students to engage in different learning tasks depending on their abilities , while allowing students to have a choice in their learning will let them select their own learning activity according to their interest and preference (Ituma, 2025).

Parent - teacher collaboration

In multicultural school context, classroom management extend beyond the classroom, requiring teachers to collaborate with parents. Studies indicate that teachers adopt different kinds of approaches to engage with the families/parents of the students in multicultural classrooms, aiming to better understand the student background and support classroom management. For instance , Mäe & Ümarik (2025) noted in their study that, holding preliminary meetings with the families of the students were regarded as a key strategy by the teachers , as it allows them to gain insights about child’s prior learning experiences, decide on expectations, and familiarize them with the school practices. In addition, parent- teacher collaboration was identified as a key factor in

managing student misbehavior (Adewale & Moyo, 2025), as parental involvement can assist in minimizing disruptive behavior in the classroom. Similarly, Baikovich and Yemini (2025) highlighted that, positive relationships between teachers and parents can enhance the well being of the student, with teachers noting in their interviews that supportive parents “help the children” and allow both parties to “work together as a team” (p. 550). Together these studies claim that teacher collaboration with parents play an important role in multicultural classroom settings.

Studies on classroom management in multicultural environments have identified a range of challenges (Altaai & Gokgoz Kurt, 2023; Yıldız et al., 2022), and have highlighted the importance of culturally responsive strategies (Weinstein et al., 2004; Gay, 2002; Guzelergene et al., 2025). However, there is limited research specifically focusing on how expatriate teachers in UAE international schools navigate this issue, and adapt their classroom management strategies. This can be considered as a notable gap, as the multicultural nature of UAE classrooms may present unique challenges that require context specific strategies. Therefore, current study aims to explore the classroom management experiences of expatriate teachers in UAE international school, and examine their classroom management strategies , and adaptations they use in practice to overcome this issue.

3 Methodology

This chapter presents the methodology which was used to explore the experiences regarding classroom management of the expatriate teachers working in UAE international schools. This section outlines the research design, sampling method, data collection methods, data analysis procedure, and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness of the study. In addition, it further examines my positionality as the researcher, addressing possible bias, particularly in relation to my past experience as an expatriate teacher in the UAE, as well as the measures taken to ensure objectivity throughout all the stages of the study.

Guided by the framework of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) developed by (Weinstein et al., 2004), two research questions of this study are as follows;

- 1.What are the main classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers in the UAE International schools?
- 2.How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International schools?

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach ,and it is appropriate for this study as it seeks to understand participants' lived experiences, and perceptions related to classroom management (Agius, 2013). In the context of UAE international schools, classroom management is influenced by number of factors including various cultural, linguistic and student - teacher expectations, that requires in depth, context specific approaches. A qualitative design enables this, as John W. Creswell (2013) argues, qualitative research allows the researcher to build a comprehensive and thorough understanding of the issue, making it appropriate for this study. Given the two research questions of the study, which aim at capturing (1) classroom management challenges , and expatriate teachers' (2) adaptive strategies to these challenges, a qualitative design is more suitable, as it enables the researcher to explore context specific insights, that cannot be otherwise captured through quantitative methods (Lim, 2025). In order to capture participants' experiences, data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, allowing them to reflect on their teaching practices and adaptations.

3.1.1 Researcher Positionality

As the researcher has prior working experience in UAE as an expatriate teacher, researcher's positionality is particularly relevant in this study and may have impact the study to a certain extent. However, several steps were made to ensure that analysis stay aligned with participants' accounts. Researchers' prior experience may shape the assumptions about classroom management challenges and practices. Therefore, in order to minimize potential bias, deliberate actions were implemented throughout the research process. For instance, participants were not recruited from researcher's own personal or professional network in order to prevent previous relationships influencing data. All the participants of this study were recruited through alternative networks such as through teacher communities in WhatsApp groups, and LinkedIn. In addition, when developing the interview guide, consideration was given to support a balanced discussion by allowing participants to share their general classroom experiences, and strengths before exploring the challenges. This approach was implemented to reduce the risk of leading the expatriate teachers towards providing overly problem faced responses. Furthermore, during the data analysis stage, researcher remained aware of their own experiences, and thoughts and made sure that interpretations were based solely in what the participants shared. These steps were employed to ensure that findings reflect perspectives of the participants rather than researcher's prior experiences.

3.2 Context of the Study

This study is situated within the context of international schools in United Arab Emirates (UAE) an oil rich, gulf region country located in the Middle East. It is widely known as a highly diverse multicultural nation due to the large expatriate population, which out numbers the native Emiratis. This significant variation among expatriate and the Emirati population can be witnessed through many areas of the country, such as work places and education system (Al Alaleeli, 2022). Number of international schools have been spread out through the country to address the educational demands of the increasing expatriate population, delivering a wide range of international curricula including, American, British, Indian and International Baccalaureate (Al Taneiji, 2025; Waly, 2026). These curricula are offered aiming at providing education for students, those who are from different cultural and educational backgrounds. As a result, international schools in UAE are characterized by a highly diverse student population, and multicultural classroom environments, where

students and teachers come from different cultural backgrounds and engage with each other on a daily basis (Al Alaleeli, 2022).

Therefore, in such multicultural contexts, expatriate teachers take on a crucial role navigating and managing culturally diverse classrooms, which make this context particularly suitable for examining classroom management experiences of expatriate teachers. Different cultures, languages, and teacher – learner expectations add different layers of complexities for classroom management, requiring teachers to adapt their classroom practices continuously. Therefore, UAE international schools provide a meaningful setting for exploring classroom management challenges, and to seek strategies expatriate teachers employed within multicultural settings.

3.3 Participants and sampling

This study involved six expatriate teachers, employed in UAE international schools, all of whom had direct exposure to teaching in multicultural classroom environments. At the time of the data collection, five teachers were actively teaching in the UAE, while one had relocated back to their home country after completing two years of teaching at an international school in UAE. This participant was included in the study, on the basis that they had professional experience relevant to the research.

Purposive sampling method was employed in order to deliberately select expatriate teachers those who had relevant teaching experience to participate in the study. Since the study intend to examine expatriate teachers' classroom management experiences related to challenges and adaptations in UAE multicultural classroom settings, only the individuals those with direct experience in such classroom contexts were considered as eligible. This reflects the concepts of purposive sampling, as participants were chosen based on researcher's previous understanding of the population, and their suitability for the study (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Therefore, all the participants those who were recruited for the study had a minimum of two years of experience in teaching in an international school in the UAE, ensuring that they were able to offer well informed and meaningful contributions to the study.

3.3.1 Inclusion Criteria

To ensure relevance and the richness of data, participants were selected upon meeting certain inclusion criteria. To begin with, only non-Emirati expatriate teachers were

included in the study as the current study focuses solely on experiences of expatriate teachers working in UAE. This criterion ensured that, collected data purely reflect the perspectives of the teachers those who work in a context which differs from their own cultural background, which is crucial for current study.

In consistent with Savva's (2017) findings that "prolonged exposure to new cultural norms elicited changes in intercultural perspective" (p. 576), the next criterion was that participant should have at least minimum two years of teacher experience related to UAE international schools. This criterion makes certain that selected participants had adequate teaching experience, and familiarity with the given multicultural educational context of the study, so they could provide the study with trustworthy accounts of their experiences. These criteria were implemented to ensure that the study includes teachers who are meaningfully engaged in UAE international schools, allowing to provide more informed insights into classroom management in multicultural contexts.

3.3.2 Recruitment Strategy

Participants were employed through a combination of professional networking and snowball sampling. Originally, the researcher tried to gain access to relevant participants through contacting school principals. But due to concerns regarding school policies and confidentiality and sensitivity of the study, access to teaching staff was not possible. Therefore, the researcher decided to recruit participants through online professional platforms, including LinkedIn, and a WhatsApp group formed for teachers working in the UAE. A concise explanation of the study was shared through both above mentioned platforms, and interested individuals who met the requirements were invited to participate voluntarily. Two expatriate teachers were recruited through this method and after conducting the interviews with them snowballing sampling was used to identify any additional participants. Through referrals from these two participants, 4 additional expatriate teachers, those who meet the relevant criteria were recruited for the study.

This approach was particularly useful as it allowed the researcher to reach participants, who were not easily accessible through other formal recruitment methods. For instance, although the study was shared through platforms as LinkedIn, or through a Whatsapp group which consists of more than 200 active users, it resulted in significantly low number of responses. In addition, although there were several potential participants who expressed their interest to participate in the study, later withdrew, after learning that

participation required to be interviewed through online (zoom meetings) rather than an online survey. These incidents highlight the challenges associated with recruiting participants for qualitative studies which include interviews, where time constraints , and sensitive nature of the study topic may affect participation.

Therefore, in such situations, alternative sampling methods should be considered. As Naderifar et al. (2017) explain, snowball sampling is useful when participants with certain characteristics are difficult to access. Similarly, Marcus et al. (2017) describe snowballing sampling as “a cost-effective and practically useful alternative is to ask a limited number of relatively easily accessible participants to recruit informants to whom the researcher has no personal access” (p. 636). In this study, snowballing sampling method proved crucial, as referrals from initial participants allowed the researcher to recruit additional teachers those who were eligible and were willing to participate in the study. Therefore snowball sampling enabled the researcher to gain access to participants who could not have been identified through other recruitment strategies, which enhance the depth of the collected data.

3.3.3 Sample Size and demographic presentation

Six expatriate teachers employed in UAE international schools were involved in the study, each of them had direct experience teaching in multicultural classroom settings. At the time of data collection, five teachers remained employed in the UAE, while one participant had returned to their home country after serving for 2 years in a UAE international school. This participant was included in the study due to fact that their professional experience was relevant to the study.

Participants included in the study are five female teachers and one male teacher and represented diverse national backgrounds, including 4 Sri Lankan, 1 Indian and 1 Pakistani expatriate. Participants varied in their teaching experience within the UAE, ranging from 2 to 10 years.

Table 1 Participant Demographics

Name (pseudonym)	Gender	Nationality	Total years of experience in UAE	Current status
Meera	Female	Sri Lankan	3.5	Currently teaching
Sharon	Female	Sri Lankan	10	Currently teaching
Inya	Female	Sri Lankan	2	Previously taught in UAE
Danu	Female	Sri Lankan	2	Currently teaching
Maryum	Female	Indian	2.5	Currently teaching
Awab	Male	Pakistani	6	Currently teaching

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Semi structured interview

As Irving Seidman (2019) states, interviewing is a “powerful way to gain insight into educational and other important social issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives reflect those issues”(p.14), implying the suitability of interviews for the current study. Accordingly, data for this study were gathered through conducting semi structured online interviews with each of the six participants. Semi structured interviews were employed as the data collection method as it is considered as “suitable for studying people’s perceptions and opinions” (Kallio et al., 2016, p. 2959). In the context of the current study, , having an understanding of expatriate teachers’ experiences is crucial, as classroom management in multicultural learning environments is not something fixated on certain rules, but rather it depends on how the teacher understands and responds to various classroom situations when working with students who come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is important to explore their lived experiences in order to get a deeper understanding of how they interpret these classroom situations and develop appropriate strategies.

Kallio et al., 2016 further explains in their study that, semi structured interviews promote interactions between the participant and the researcher, allowing the interviewer to generate useful follow-up questions, which results in a collection of rich and context specific data. Such flexibility was especially advantageous for this study, as it allowed the participants to convey their experiences in their own words , while also allowing the researcher to look deeper into new ideas that come up during the interview process.

3.4.2 Interview Guide

A semi – structured interview guide containing open ended questions was developed as the data collection instrument of the study (see Appendix 1). This guide was developed focusing on two guiding research question of the study – exploring expatriate teachers’ classroom management challenges, and their adaptation strategies in UAE international schools. The semi structured interview guide followed a progressive structure. Guide began with a participant demographic section, with the aim to gather relevant background information of them, including professional information, and teaching experience. After the demographic section the interview guide followed a four-section structure as section A,B,C, and D.

Section A focused on expatriate teachers’ “typical classroom day”, where the teachers were encouraged to express about how their lessons usually proceed, how students normally react, and any daily classroom routines. This opening section was deliberately included to provide participants with a neutral feeling, and to enable them to describe their classroom experiences without immediately framing any challenges. This approach particularly helped to minimize the risk of leading participants toward problem focused responses and supported for a collection of more balanced responses.

Next section (section B) of the interview guide focused more on classroom management practices, focusing “strengths and weaknesses”. Expatriate teachers were first encouraged to reflect on any positive aspect in terms of their classroom management, before discussing any challenging aspects. This structure was designed to ensure a balanced exploration of expatriate teachers’ classroom management experiences while avoiding the risk of leading them towards a problem – focused perspective. The interview guide then included questions regarding strategies and adaptations (Section C) teachers employ to manage multicultural classrooms.

The last section of the interview guide included reflective questions, encouraging teachers to consider about how their classroom management practices may have changed overtime, or how have their understanding of classroom management has evolved overtime. This section was included in order to gain deeper understanding about how teachers may have changed and adapted their classroom management practices over time. Overall, this semi structured interview guide was designed with a focus to

capture expatriate teachers' rich and in depth experiences, while maintaining flexibility of the guide through open ended questions.

3.4.3 Pilot testing

The aim of pilot testing of the interview guide is to check whether the interview guide covers relevant content, and to identify any need for question revision, and to test its implementation (Kallio et al., 2016). Before conducting semi structured interviews with the participants, interview guide of this study was pilot tested via zoom with two individuals, who had teaching experience and professional background relevant to the study, although they were not included in the final sample. The purpose of the first pilot testing was to ensure that participants could clearly understand what was being asked. Therefore, after the first pilot interview, the researcher identified few areas regarding questions that need to be reworded and simplified for clarity. After the first pilot interview, a second pilot interview was also employed in aim to confirm that the revised questions were clear, relevant and helped generate intended responses.

3.4.4 (Interview Procedure) and ethical considerations

A total of six semi structured interviews were conducted with the expatriate teachers working in UAE international schools. Since the researcher was based in Finland at the time of the study, and the participants were located in the UAE, all interviews were held using online communication platforms. Each interview session lasted up to 60 to 90 minutes.

Prior to the interview, UTU consent form (Appendix 2), along with the privacy notice (Appendix 3) were shared with the participants which included detailed explanation about the purpose of the study, nature of the participation, and how the data will be used, and upon receiving the completed, and signed consent forms from the participants, suitable dates and times were mutually discussed to hold the interviews. Interviews were conducted through online platforms as zoom, and MS Teams depending on the convenience of the participant. At the beginning of the interview participants were briefed about the purpose of the study including how their data will be handled and processed securely, they were also assured their identities and schools names will be anonymized, and about their voluntary participation with a reminder of the option to

withdraw at any stage. Furthermore, before the commencement of the interview, researcher received verbal consent from the participants to audio record the session.

Then these interviews were transcribed verbatim, generating an average of 15-20 pages per participant. Participants were not forced to turn on their cameras during the interview, giving freedom to choose what felt comfortable for them. All the interviews were conducted in English language as it was the common language shared by both researcher and the participants. Furthermore, all research materials including audio recordings, and transcripts were securely stored according to the General Data Protection Regulations, and can only be accessed by the researcher. These procedures ensure that the data collection was carried in an ethically and systematically grounded way.

3.5 Data Analysis

Transcription and Data Preparation

Following the completion of conducting semi structured interviews with the participants, all the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim in order to organize the data for analysis process. An automated transcription tool was used to carry out transcription, which generated transcripts with time stamps. Since, automated transcription may sometimes produce mistakes due to various pronunciation patterns of the participants, each transcript was carefully checked again line by line, by the researcher and corrections were done, while listening to the audio files. Furthermore, all the identifiable information were either removed or replaced with pseudonyms, protecting participants' privacy and retaining integrity of the data. These anonymized transcripts were then arranged for data analysis. In addition, this procedure allowed the researcher to become more familiar with the data, which is an important step in qualitative data analysis.

3.5.1 Thematic Analysis as the data analysis method

Data which was collected from semi structured interviews were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (TA). According to Braun and Clarke (2006), "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (p. 79). This implies that, TA is not solely about collecting data but rather, it enables the researcher to organize the data in a meaningful, and structured way which allows for a systematic exploration of expatriate teachers' classroom management experiences, making

thematic analysis an appropriate choice for the current study. In addition, thematic analysis is appropriate for this study because it allows the identification of patterns across the dataset. As Braun and Clarke (2006) note, “thematic analysis involves the searching across a data set...to find repeated patterns”(p.86) ,therefore this method is particularly suitable for the present study as it aims to recognize common classroom management challenges , and strategies among expatriate teachers.

Current study uses a combination of inductive and theoretical thematic analysis approach. Initially, study used the inductive TA, allowing themes to appear directly from expatriate teachers’ responses , than from a predetermined theoretical structure. This aligns with Braun and Clarke’s (2006) explanation on inductive TA as a process where themes are emerged directly form the data. Next, deductive TA was applied, where the data were revisited by the researcher with reference to the culturally responsive classroom management theory, which is the study’s theoretical framework. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), theoretical TA is a theoretically oriented approach to data analysis, guided by the theoretical framework of the study, that concentrates on selected aspects of the dataset. This study combined both the approaches , in attempt to have a comprehensive understanding of the data through capturing themes form both participants’ experiences as well as through the theoretical lens of the study.

With the incorporation of both inductive and deductive TA , this study followed Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six step TA process as follows:

1.Familiarizing with data:

Analysis process began by familiarizing myself with the data. Once the audio recordings were transcribed , the researcher reviewed each transcript while listening to the audio recordings, and made relevant refinements including, adding pseudonyms where necessary , and revising any unclear words. This stage required the researcher to read the transcripts in detail, enabling early immersion with the data after which, they were transferred to the NVivo software for further analysis.

After uploading the refined transcripts to the NVivo, they were read again to get a holistic understanding of expatriate teachers’ experiences. During this process attention was given to the two research questions of the study , and the five components of the CRCM framework, while remaining attentive to any other emerging ideas from the data. This

stage allowed me to become deeply familiar with the content of the data and its context, prior to formal coding.

2. Generating initial codes:

During this stage, initial codes were generated, through the careful examination of transcripts and identifying meaningful segments of data, that are related to the two research questions of the study. Codes that related to classroom management challenges were organized under the research question 1 (RQ1), while codes related to strategies and adaptations were organized under research question 2 (RQ2). This process was primarily inductive as the codes were developed through expatriate teachers' accounts (data driven). However, the transcripts were revisited by the researcher with the awareness of five CRCM components in mind, which guided the interpretation of identified classroom management strategies, and adaptations. Through this approach, the analysis remained rooted in both participants' data as well as relevant theoretical perspectives, incorporating an inductive and deductive analysis.

In the initial stage of coding, for research question 1, 33 codes were identified and 74 codes were identified for research question 2. Following this, the researcher noticed that there are some overlaps and similarities across the codes and the data they represent, and therefore these codes were further merged, while there were some codes which were refined, and expanded to better capture the nuances of participants' responses. This refinement process resulted in having 31 codes for the research question 1, and 76 codes for the research question 2. The codebook which developed using NVivo, including code name and relevant descriptions is attached in Appendix 4, to demonstrate the coding structure employed in the analysis (See Appendix 4).

3. Searching for themes:

After creating initial codes, the code book was exported from NVivo, which included code name, its description, files, and references. In order to make this more useful, the researcher added another column to the existing code book and named it as examples. In this newly added column, the researcher manually inserted relevant example extracts for each code from the data set. After this process, similar codes were color coded, and then compared their examples with the other similar color coded codes. These groups of similar codes were then moved to another word document, where they were further

observed to understand how they can be combined to form a more broader meanings. Through this process , the researcher developed the initial themes.

4. Reviewing themes:

In this stage, the initial themes were refined to ensure that they accurately represent the data which was coded. During the process, researcher examined whether the codes within each theme aligned with each other and reflect a consistent meaning. All the extracts were examined within each theme to see if they form a reasonable pattern. If the codes or the extracts doesn't fit, they were moved to a more suitable theme or created a new theme, if the data suggest a pattern. Therefore, at this stage the researcher had to refine , revise and reorganized some themes and codes accordingly to make sure they align with the dataset.

5. Defining and naming themes:

At this stage , themes were further refined and closely observed to identify their main idea, and to see what part of data is represented by them.

6. Producing the report:

As the final step, the refined themes and relevant extracts from the participants' responses were combined to develop a coherent illustration of the findings of the study. The relevant extracts were chosen in order to support the themes and to clarify their relationship with the research questions.

3.6 Validity and Reliability

Several strategies were implemented to ensure that the findings of this study accurately reflect the experiences of expatriate teachers those who were interviewed, and to maintain consistency and transparency throughout the research process. This section therefore discusses about the approaches used to enhance the validity and reliability of the study.

According to Noble and Smith (2024), validity is “the precision in which the findings accurately reflect the data” (p. 206). This study employes several methods to enhance its' validity . For instance, the study employes semi structured interview as its data collection instrument. Unlike using a survey which limits the participant responses, by using semi

structured interviews , the researcher allowed the participants to freely share their experiences , while ensuring that the related topics for the study also been addressed consistently. Apart from that, interview transcripts were revisited multiple times, and themes were compared against the raw data to make sure the decisions remained grounded on participants' accounts. Furthermore, since the interviews were audio recorded, it allowed the researcher to include rich verbatim quotes using participants' own words. This allows the readers to understand the basis of the interpretations, by connecting those interpretations with the data, which ensure that the themes do represent participants' experiences.

As discussed in the “Researcher Positionality” section of this study, I acknowledged on how my previous professional background may influence the interpretations of this study. This aligns with Noble and Smith's (2024) view on , that credibility of qualitative study is strengthened when researchers explicitly disclose their experiences and views. Therefore, by making my positionality explicit and implementing strategies to minimize its' influence such a, not recruiting individuals known to me , the study ensure the findings remained focused on participants' perspectives.

As defined by Noble and Smith (2024), reliability is “the consistency of the analytical procedures, including accounting for personal and research method biases that may have influenced the findings” (p. 206). In order to address the reliability of this study, same semi structured interview guide was used when interviewing all the participants, and this approach helped reduce variations in the interview process. Moreover, as identified by Noble and Smith (2024), reliability was enhanced through auditability. Researcher documented each stage of the research process and took detailed notes during research design, data collection , as well as during data analysis process demonstrating how the interpretations and decisions were made.

4 Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the study, which focuses on the classroom management challenges, and strategies experienced by the expatriate teachers in the UAE International schools. Aim of this section is to provide participants' experiences in detail, based on the data collected from the semi structured interviews. Findings are presented using themes, and sub themes while supported by relevant quotes from the participants. The findings are structured according to the following research questions.

1. What are the main classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers in the UAE International schools?
2. How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International schools?

Findings of the first research question which explores the classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers is presented through the following 5 themes namely, Cultural and Linguistic Diversity, Student Behavioural Challenges, Managing students with special educational needs (SEN), Family and socioeconomic influences, and Institutional and Structural Constraints. Whereas the findings of the second research question, about strategies and adaptations is emerged through themes as, Developing an Understanding of Students and Their Backgrounds, Adapting Teaching Practices and Learning Activities, Building positive Relationships and Supporting Students' Emotional Well-being, Managing Classroom Behaviour and Learning Environment, and Collaboration and communication with parents and school staff. Through presenting the findings in the above demonstrated structured way, this chapter aims to elaborate the classroom management challenges expatriate teachers encounter, and the strategies they use to overcome them when teaching in multicultural classrooms in UAE.

4.1 What are the main Classroom Management Challenges Faced by Expatriate Teachers in the UAE? (Research Question 1).

This section presents the findings related to the research question 1, which explores the classroom management challenges explained by the participants. Thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews revealed multiple challenges which were categorized in to five main themes. The first theme to reveal was "Cultural and Linguistic Diversity" challenges

teachers face when interacting with multi diverse student populations in their classrooms.

4.1.1 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

This theme captures the experiences described by the participants regarding how their diverse classrooms which consists students from different cultural backgrounds, norms, perspectives, languages, and language abilities influence classroom management practices and create specific challenges for the teachers.

Several participants revealed that diversity in students' cultures and languages as a major challenge for them when managing classrooms. They further highlighted that this diversity shapes students' behaviors, interactions with each other, expectations, and learning habits, which creates additional challenges and often requires teachers to continuously adapt their teaching and classroom practices. This theme is further explored through two sub themes: Cultural diversity and linguistic diversity.

Cultural diversity among students has been perceived as a central challenge in maintaining peer interactions during classroom activities by several participants, especially with relation to interactions within students who are from different cultural backgrounds. One of the major problems revealed by one of the participant was that students are forming groups or gangs which she referred to as "cliques". According to her, these "cliques" are being formed based on students' nationalities or cultural backgrounds. For example, she explains how these groups avoid interaction and engagement with other peers -those who come from different backgrounds:

They have cliques, right, And I'll just name them as clique A, clique B, clique C. So, let's say grade 7b class, they have four cliques, A, B, C, D. Click A will never speak to click D. They will never. If another student comes and sits right behind, or beside them, nope, that's it. She or he will stand up and tell, 'I don't want to sit here. I want a different chair' (Meera, Middle school Music teacher)

This behavior posed difficulties for the teacher , especially when conducting group performances or activities, as students will refuse the teacher instructions to work with peers from a "different clique". Such incidents could disrupt the classroom activities making it difficult for the teacher to maintain an inclusive classroom environment. Apart from students forming "cliques", some participants commented about instances where students refusing to interact with their peers that are form specific countries , or cultural

backgrounds. For instance, Danu, a kindergarten teacher, shared her experiences about how some younger students in her class resisted to communicate with peers from 'other' countries:

Challenging situations are mostly... it's about the nationalities... 'I don't want to talk to him. He's from this country. I don't know him. I don't like him'. So, these things happen like in every class, every year, like for the past two years, this has happened (Danu)

Although this could sometimes stem from being unfamiliar with other peers, it could also be linked to personal biases. Another participant also commented on an instance where students explicitly resist being physically close with certain peers due to their skin color: "So, some of them, they don't want to touch the black child...they can't stand by them" (Meera).

As a response to such behaviors, one participant shared about instances where she verbally tries to reinforce positive attitudes in to students; as illustrated by Danu who described: "So, that is the most challenging part to tell them 'no, we all love people. We all love to talk. It's not about the skin color. It's not about how they speak'"

Interestingly, the findings revealed that this division among cultures is not limited to different nationalities. One participant explained about how students from the same country have been divided in to several groups based on their regional, ethnic or language differences. She further explained that although they are from the same nationality , they won't interact with each other, and prefers to socialize with only those who are from the similar background , creating another complexity for classroom practices.

...we have majority are Indians right, so even inside India you have so many states, I believe that's the proper term so ... Gujaratis would not want to sit with Marathis and if it's like that .They don't want to get mingled with anyone. Gujaratis should be with Gujaratis. Marathis will be in that corner. Malayalis, nobody will speak to Malayalis. They are the "Malayalis". They'll be in one corner. Tamils are something else... (Meera)

Teachers also commented on how changes within one nationality such as ethnicity, and language differences add complexity to their daily classroom practices . For instance, Meera shared an experience where she had to change her tone based on the student group, even though they are from the same nationality.

The way it's all about the tone also, right? Even with Indians, it's different. Hindustani one way, Malayali a total different way... But yes, I have to be quite rough with them with the tone (Meera)

This incident implies that even within one nationality we could not expect identical behavioral patterns from individuals, there are variations which exist within.

Apart from explaining these challenges, participants also provided notions on how they perceive cultural differences. For instance, during her interview, Meera stated that “So, one is the cultural background that the children are coming from, right?” suggesting her view on cultural diversity as a main feature which defines her classroom. Another participant, Danu stated that managing students with multiple cultural backgrounds, inside the same classroom can be highly demanding. For instance, she explained this situation as a “very, very challenging” one for her, expressing difficulty and complexity of addressing diverse expectations and behavioral norms all at the same time.

Overall, the data suggests that expatriate teachers sometimes perceive cultural diversity as a challenge in their daily classroom practices, especially when students form cliques, or exclude or refuse interacting with certain others which create barriers in implementing inclusive classroom activities. Other than that, some also noted about the divisions within one nationality group and how it affects their teaching habits. These findings emphasize the complexity teachers have to experience when teaching in culturally diverse classrooms especially with regards to inclusion, participation and interaction. As a result, teachers are required to adapt and change their classroom management practices accordingly, to create an effective and inclusive classroom environment, that addresses the needs of every student.

Another major challenge identified by the participants was the “linguistic diversity” among students. Having classrooms with students, those who come from different languages, or different mother tongues, and students demonstrating different level of proficiency in English (medium of instruction) was perceived as a challenge by several participants.

During the interview, one participant, Awab shared his thoughts about challenges faced when managing multicultural classrooms:

...in UAE, you know some students – they need to have some additional language, English language... I have faced that challenge when classrooms include multiple nationalities...you can see this difference in language proficiency, especially English for the students and some kind of Arabic for us (Awab).

According to Awab , different proficiency levels in English among students has been a key issue when managing classrooms. As many International schools in the UAE has English as their medium of instruction, he perceives this imbalance in English language proficiency in students as a factor which hinders his teaching practices. He also comments that, language could be a barrier for the teachers like himself as well , especially with regards to Arabic language. This particular idea about teachers not knowing enough Arabic language can be understood in the context of some international schools in the UAE, where majority of the student population comprises of Arabic or Emirati. In such situations when the teacher doesn't speak or understand students' language , it could create limitations on teacher-student communication and classroom management. Moving forward with the interview, Awab further went on explaining that, sometimes because of this 'language mismatch' in the classrooms, where he does not understand Arabic and student do not fully understand English, has lead to students not fully understanding instructions!

Sharon, a kindergarten teacher shared her thoughts on how linguistic diversity affects her classroom practices. According to her, in the early years classes the main challenge is encouraging the child to speak English. This was what she had to say :

...because we have a multi-language country so most of time ... we always fight with the language barrier...we need to make them learn English first, to speak. So yeah that is the challenge (Sharon)

She further illustrates about how linguistic diversity has created challenges in understanding a students' basic needs. For instance, she shared her experience as follows:

...he's from India but different section and he was like actually that language even it's very hard to like recognize what he's telling but actually one of my conductor helped me... because he want to go washroom but it's a very very very different language he's talking (Sharon)

This incident implies how linguistic diversity among students can make basic classroom communication and interactions with each other complicate, which could influence classroom management.

4.1.2 Student behavioural challenges in the classroom

This was the second theme revealed from the data related to the research question one . It intends to capture instances of student behaviors, which makes classroom

management difficult for the teacher. It depicts notions such as students' avoidance or non-participation in classroom activities and learning, as well as instances where students resist and challenge teacher authority. Findings depict that expatriate teachers face considerable amount of such student behavioral issues when managing culturally diverse classrooms. The theme is further divided in to two subthemes as ; student disengagement , and challenges to teacher authority

Several teachers noted that students' disengagement as a visible concern, in terms of classroom management. For instance, Meera stated that she has noticed during her teaching that some students are “ in another world...” or “spaced out” and that “Some children keep spacing out for absolute no reason”, emphasizing how students could mentally get disconnected during lessons, making it difficult for her to maintain a focused learning environment.

Teachers also described disengagement as notions of students' resistance for answering questions or not actively participating in learning activities. Some also noted students struggling for concentration or were “not having enough energy” (Inya, a High school English Literature/Psychology teacher) during lessons. She further connected these behavior patterns with students' cultural backgrounds, implying that some teachers perceive student behaviors based on their own perceptions of the cultures of the students. For instance:

...they were reluctant to answer some of the questions because they could not focus. They have no enough concentration sometimes (Inya)

There were also instances where students actively avoid learning tasks. For example:

Yes, there was a student...He happens to go all the time out from the classroom. He says, I am hungry-I want to eat something, now I want to get the water bottle. I want to go to the washroom. And he goes out and sometimes going into the offices and get the non-academic staff talk with him, chatting with him...(Inya)

These instances reveal that student disengagement can take the form of passive and intentional. In the above mentioned case, student deliberately avoids task by distancing himself from learning activities and such incidents add more complexity towards the classroom management of the teacher and will impact the overall effectiveness of her classroom practices.

Another participant explained how transitions between lessons or activities are challenging for her classroom management. When inquired about situations where classroom management feels more challenging, Danu described that after the lunch time of the kindergarten students it was more difficult, and the kids can't "sit still", as if the "playing must happen continuously." This was what she had to say:

Yeah, this is going to sound like really, really, really simple, but after the interval...it is like they are horrible...since they like, during the interval we don't disturb them, they can eat, they can play with their friends, they sometimes normally play with their foods also. So after that time, they are very energetic. They can't like sit still. They think, okay, the playing must happen continuously. So that is the part every day to manage the classroom right after the interval. We have to get their attention from that playing vibe. Otherwise, they will continue the rest of the day just playing (Danu).

Apart from instances of student disengagement, some interview transcripts revealed situations where students questioning teacher authority, which has been perceived as a challenge by the participants, when managing multicultural classrooms. Data conveyed patterns linked to student resisting discipline, challenging authority, and lack of respect for teachers. Findings revealed that some participants perceived lack of student respect towards expatriate teachers could be originated from their perception of the teachers being an "outsider" from their country, which results in creating challenges when maintaining authority in classrooms, (such as resistance for discipline). This is what Danu had to share about it:

...I feel like the kids, they have this stubborn vibe going on. Normally they do not listen to teachers as well ...they think that because it is their country... we have come to another country ...okay, this teacher is not from my country, this is just a teacher. And then they have this mindset as well. We earn their money, their parents give money to school and then that's how we earn money...normally they do not listen to the teachers (Danu)

Danu further went on explaining, that due to this issue of students questioning expatriate teachers' authority, she should be "very very very tricky" and "cunning" and get the student's' approval or acceptance as a teacher. This example illustrates that authority is not automatically given, and she as an "outsider" should negotiate for her teacher authority. Moreover, she explained that although some students (younger aged) do respect for her as a teacher, with some students she still struggles to get this "approval".

...so we have to like be very very very tricky...and then we have to be very cunning to take that back and to show that we are teachers... Even now I have tried for two years, I've been a teacher for two years, but still I did not change the mindset of the kids. Like , some kids are very adaptable. They are like, 'oh my God, it's the teacher', because of their age and all. But some kids, they always raise their voice and , we can't control them at all times. So those are the challenging aspects (Danu)

Another teacher shared her thoughts on how a certain high school student questioned her and argued with her directly regarding the content of a question paper, presenting challenges for teachers' classroom management . Following is the incident explained by the participant:

Every time he wanted to challenge me regarding the questions in the question paper. He just says all is incorrect. Every time he happens to criticize the person who made the question. He was telling this question is wrong. This paper is all bullshit! And he was talking like that and it was very difficult to control him. It was very difficult to make him understand what the question says... Sometimes he changed the question and he writes something else. And he always says, 'because this question is wrong teacher, can't you understand? This is not the way. It's impossible. This cannot happen.'(Inya)

Such incidents are likely to result in student disengagement as well disruptions for an effective learning environment. These findings indicate that questioning or challenging teacher authority , resistance to discipline and lack of respect towards the teacher were significant challenges faced by the participants and it could have influenced their classroom management practices.

4.1.3 Managing students with special educational needs

This was the third theme to be emerged from the data, and it intends to capture instances related to challenges teachers face with regards to managing students with special educational needs(termed as Students of Determination or SOD , in the context of the study). Teachers highlighted that inclusion of SOD added another layer of challenges for them, which can create a considerable impact on their daily classroom practices as well as on individual student engagement. Some of the participants perceive this as something they are not 'trained for' ,or challenging and as a novel experience, as back in their home countries the so called 'special needs kids' were sent to different schools. Maryum, had to state the following regarding her experience:

Okay, this has to be when I just came to UAE. And as I told you, the systems are really different in India. Like for the special needs kids, there's like a

different, like usually they are in different schools. Okay, like specialized schools, but UAE does not really promote such kind of education. They want even the special needs to be with us, like in the normal classroom setting, trying to adjust themselves, and it is good, I feel. So, but initially that was a very big challenge because some we are not specifically trained for special needs kids in India. So, like we may have like a branch of it wherein like, you know, we are just exploring it and they give us a basic knowledge. But when we came here and trying to like manage the special education need children, it was difficult, yes (Maryum)

Maryum then shared an experience where at the beginning of her teaching in the UAE how she had to face some challenges managing a Student of Determination(SOD).

...he would just throw things in the class, whatever he had his hands on, he would just throw it. Especially in the play area, he would actually manhandle my TA. So it was very difficult...So I couldn't manage him, like I couldn't contain him (Maryum)

According to her the student showed reluctance to participate in classroom activities and it was difficult for her to 'make him participate'. Further she explained that almost every school year she would encounter with students with special needs in her class. As she is a kindergarten home room teacher , after years of teaching in similar contexts with special needs student she confidently stated:

...but yeah, it became manageable because I just understood what channels I have to use and who I have to approach to make it like, you know, easier for me... But yes, definitely it has not subsided. And it occurs throughout the lesson.

Although she commented on it has 'become manageable' , going further with the interview she indicated instances which she still finds challenging when managing SOD.

You cannot just leave them alone, especially if the kids are like, you know, volatile. Even in play area or PE class, you have to take care of them (Maryum)

This implies that , unlike from the typical perception about PE period or play area time being a 'break' for the class teachers, this situation created an additional workload of consistent supervision and participation in management for them, emphasizing the intensity of classroom management demands. Another teacher Meera, described about instances where special educational needs children have displayed aggressive behaviors towards teachers and shared an experience she encountered:

...because sometimes um kids of determination, they hit right, they get aggressive with teachers so certain incidents happened and sometimes they can't control their bowel movements So, most of them, yes, it happened during my lesson (Meera)

This incident depicts the unpredictable nature of a classroom. It highlights the complexity of managing inclusive classroom environments where teachers need to adapt their strategies rapidly and accordingly to address various needs of students with special educational care. Another important issue revealed from the data was parental resistance to acknowledge learning and behavioral concerns of the students. Few participants described that when they contacted the parents regarding such student needs, some were uncooperative, creating difficulties for the teacher to implement suitable interventions to support the child. For instance, Meera shared her experience in this regard:

I realized even if I tell them the child is having an issue, the parents are not willing to admit it or accept it...However, when I realize things are not going the way how it's supposed to and how the adults are handling things, especially the parents who are, I can't say neglecting their own child, but more like ignoring- Ignorance is never bliss. I don't agree with it. So they keep ignoring the status of the child, right? And they don't accept (Meera)

Another participant Sharon, highlighted the difficulties she faced as a result of parents not being transparent enough about their child's learning and behavioral needs. She explained that based on her classroom experiences, some students displayed certain behavior cues that led her to assume they were suffering from certain spectrum conditions, but this information was not conveyed to her by the relevant parents. As she noted :

They don't want to tell it to the teacher. They have a mild, mild autism spectrum. They don't want to inform. But when they are working with us, with their behavior,... sometimes we feel... There must be mild stuff... but when we are having the conversations with them, they doesn't want to let us know... some parents they are challenging us so they doesn't want to accept anything, and we are wrong persons and we are telling lies so they never ever accepted what happened (Sharon)

As it has been illustrated in the above scenario, this gap between the parent and the teacher of not being open about the issue, tends to create many challenges for the teacher , and it could hinder her ability to support and provide the child with necessary interventions. This reflects teacher's beliefs of unmet student needs and demonstrates how lack of clarity or parental resistance can impact effective classroom management. Moving forward, the participant had to share the following :

...if we can help them very early, actually sometimes those spectrums, we can help them ... be a normal child and study well. But because of the parents not accepting that one, so that is the major, major thing we are facing(Sharon)

This excerpt demonstrates that if the teachers were notified about such needs of the students earlier, there is a possibility of early treatment, and possible preventions. But due to the lack of parental communication with teachers, these support systems get delayed and will add additional challenges for the teacher in creating an effective learning environment.

4.1.4 Family and socioeconomic influences on student behaviour and engagement

This theme was the fourth to be emerged, and it discusses about instances when student 's family or socio economic background influenced classroom practices. Several participants shared some incidents connected with students' family background, parents, and socio economic status which were perceived as challenges in managing multicultural classrooms. Furthermore, expatriate teachers pointed out that students' emotional status , family situations, and socio economic circumstances could also influence students' beliefs, interaction with each other and their behavior patterns. This theme was further divided into two sub themes as; parental and family influences on classroom management, and socioeconomic influences on student motivation and engagement.

Several teachers shared their ideas on how family influences could contribute to concerns regarding their daily teaching practices. Following is an incident described by Meera, which demonstrates how family related matters affect child's behavior in classroom:

So, once I had a child ...last year, he was such a great kid, but something must have happened. And his mood changed entirely, not just for music, but I spoke with other teachers as well. And then we figured out that he has been going through, I mean, his parents got divorced or something. So many things affect children, right? And they never share anything with us...(Meera)

This incident implies that concerns regarding a student's family situation could influence their emotional stability and classroom behavior. The participant noticed that the student's mood 'changed entirely', which was also noted by other teachers. Such changes in student's emotions and behavior could affect challenges for teacher's classroom management practices as well. Therefore, this decreased engagement coupled with emotional instability of the student could disturb his attention span and

require the teachers to pay additional attention in supporting their learning. Another expatriate teacher, Maryum had the following incident to share:

...I would say, it was very evident he had a father issue. So whenever we would talk about values or anything as such, or we would talk about families, he would just lose it. And he would just not participate. He would be really cranky and he would even say words ...like, 'this is stupid. You are stupid. Why are you teaching me this?'(Maryum)

This situation demonstrates how a family related matters act as emotional triggers for the student, leaving him disengaged from the lesson and making him use strong language towards the teacher. Such disruptive behaviors create complexities for the teacher's classroom management practices and could affect the engagement of the rest of the class as well. There were also some incidents shared by teachers regarding how certain parental styles resulted in creating challenges. For instance, Inya shared her thoughts about a student, who has been 'pampered very much' at home:

she's the only one child in the family and she was pampered very much. And she's always has to be the first one. If anything, if they're running, she has to be the first. If we are talking, she needs to be the first. wherever she want- to make the lineup for the wash. So, she thinks even school time she had to be the first (Inya).

According to Inya, the student consistently expected to be given priority in all the activities at school too. She further explained, if these expectation were not met or if she did not receive the attention she expects, then the student will become upset, and would react by crying, or 'throwing things' at the teacher. Moreover, she explained 'So, that's the child I think in my life, the first time, with that much tantrums,' implying the seriousness of the situation. This incident implies a situation where student's expectations, which were shaped by their home environment, not aligning with the nature of a normal classroom setting. Instances of such student behaviors can create challenges for the teacher when maintaining the order and providing attention for the whole class which could influence her classroom management.

During their interviews, Meera described a situation where parents' expectations did not align with her classroom realities. She described that during the parents' meeting, often many parents would approach her although she is not a 'main subject' teacher. Parents would come to her with certain expectations about their child's learning. This is what she had to share:

Even though I'm a co-scholastic teacher, they always come to me during the parents-teacher meeting and they inquire, 'is she learning how to play the piano? We heard that you're the piano teacher'(Meera)

Meera explained that such parental expectations were hard to achieve within the limitations of her classroom. she further went on explaining, 'so I'm like, I have 25 students per class, so I cannot give individual attention...I can only teach them the basics.' This situation depicts how parental expectations create an imbalance between what teachers can practically offer and what parents expect to be offered, creating additional pressure for the teacher and making the classroom management practices complicated. Apart from demanding high learning outcomes from the teacher, another participant revealed about an instance where parents held certain expectations about how a lesson should be delivered to their child. According to her, the parents were often very sensitive about their child and expected a certain teaching approach from the teacher. Maryum shared the following regarding her experience:

And even the Emirati kids, you have to be very, very soft with them. You cannot be like, see, the parents, no matter how understanding they will be, they are very sensitive when it comes to their child. Most parents are...because they are expecting a certain standard from you and ...they want you to deliver a lesson in a particular way (Maryum)

This illustrates that parental expectations go beyond learning outcomes, to requiring certain shifts in teaching pedagogies to suit individual students, which can in turn hinder the teachers' freedom and flexibility in managing the classroom. Therefore, these findings imply high parental expectations and resistance towards child's learning and behavioral needs can create a layer of complexities in terms of managing diverse classrooms.

Furthermore, one expatriate teacher reflected on the role of socioeconomic background in influencing student motivation for learning. She indicated that some students, those who are from well privileged or wealthy backgrounds tend to have lower motivation towards learning activities:

...They got everything. Actually, there's no need for them to learn anything, no need of schooling. When they come to this world, they have everything... So, they were not very keen on getting learned...even though they failed or passed, they are sent to universities because of money. So they had no problem (Inya)

This excerpt indicates the perceptions of the participant, about students from wealthy backgrounds exhibiting lower academic motivation, as they may not perceive education

as an essential factor due to their affluent socioeconomic status. This instance further implies that teachers may perceive student engagement, and motivation in classroom activities based on socioeconomic backgrounds of their students and this understanding will shape their overall classroom practices. It will also present more challenges for classroom management, as varying levels of student motivations influence different participation and engagement levels from the students. Other than influencing motivation and engagement, participants also emphasized on how socioeconomic background influences the behaviours of students and their expectations within the school environment. One participant explained that students from wealthy family backgrounds are accustomed to luxurious lifestyles, and this mindset shapes their expectations, and how they interact with others in the school context. For instance, she expressed the following:

They become so aggressive, with other cleaners and all. That's what I saw. Inside the class, I don't let them get aggressive ...But with the cleaners, with the people in the cafeteria, you know, they get so angry and they complain. They go to their parents, parents call for the director. Lots of trouble. Yes, it was like that. Even for one student, there were like eight servants sometimes. They have a very luxurious life, so when they go out from home, they expect that same luxuriousness even at school. So, we can, nobody can do like that (Inya)

This excerpt illustrates that some students from the privileged families were perceived to display signs of frustration and aggression when their expectations were not met. As described by the participant, these behaviors would go beyond the classroom in to the wider school setting, such as when interacting with cleaners. These instances could create additional challenges for teachers in managing student behaviors.

4.1.5 Institutional and structural constraints on classroom management

This theme intends to capture the notions where participants described institutional and structural factors as features influencing their classroom practices. Participant shared their ideas ranging from school level conditions, such as large class size, time constraints to the need of adapting to the broader institutional system according to the educational expectations and rules of the host country. These aspects were discussed as guiding factors on how teachers manage student behavior, and conduct their teaching in multicultural classrooms. Data were divided into two sub themes as; large class size

and limited individual support, and adapting to host country's educational system and requirements.

Some participants highlighted the classroom size as a factor hindering their ability to provide individual attention for the students. During the interview, Meere explained that having 25 students in her class makes it difficult for her to provide individual attention, for instance like teaching to play the piano, which requires individualized teaching and attention. Therefore, during the parent 's meeting when a certain parent required form her whether their child is learning to play the piano, she had to state, " I have 25 students per class, so I cannot give individual attention".She further explained that , due to constraints she could only focus on teaching the basics, or recommend an external music institution for the child . Stating:

"However, what I can do is to teach them the basics. And also if you are interested in sending the child for exams or the child to learn an instrument, of course I can recommend many institutions here" (Meera)

Another participant, Awab noted that 'some classes we have 30 to 35 students. So, I feel that there will be challenging'. These statements point out how larger classroom sizes were perceived to limit the time allocation for individual attention for students, making it a challenging aspect for the teachers to address the individual needs of the students in their classrooms , which may in turn hinder the overall classroom management.

Several expatriate teachers mentioned about adjusting their teaching practices to align with the curriculum requirements of the host country. Some also have perceived this adaptation as challenging, due to subject content been different from what they taught back in their native countries. One participant explained about the curriculum change she faced when she start teaching in the UAE. In her previous teaching experience in her native country , she has focused mainly on the theoretical aspect of the subject , but when she moved to the UAE it was totally the opposite. This was what she had to share:

In my country, from grade 6 to 11, we have a proper curriculum...That's a curriculum where they follow theory of music, right? Every term they have a paper... we do have a paper set as a theory of music paper, right? ... But in UAE, it's just practical. There's zero theory of music lessons being conducted here.(Meera)

Moreover, she explained, ‘that’s the biggest challenge I had here, because I was so used to teaching the theory at the beginning’ indicating that she perceived this shift in curriculum as a ‘challenge’. Other than shifting to different curriculums, participants also explained challenges regarding adjusting to the different educational systems, different from what they have in their home countries. During the interviews, when inquired about a challenging situations, one participant , Maryum had to state the following:

Okay, this has to be when I just came to UAE. And as I told you, the systems are really different in India. Like for the special needs kids, there's like a different... usually they are in different schools. Okay, like specialized schools, but UAE does not really promote such kind of education. They want even the special needs to be with us, like in the normal classroom setting, trying to adjust themselves, and it is good, I feel. So, but initially that was a very big challenge because some of we are not specifically trained for special needs kids. in India. (Maryum)

This implies that while participant viewed the ‘educational system’ of the host country positively, she also emphasized that some expatriate teachers may not be ready , due to the lack of training, or prior experience in such educational settings. This was perceived as a challenge by the participant as it could create additional burden on classroom management practices.

Participants also explained about how certain regulatory guidelines have influenced the content they can teach. One participant describes that certain words or topics were limited within the curriculum, which made her adjust her lesson content according to the requirements. For instance, Meera had to share the following about how she revised the song ‘Old Mc Donald’ to align with the content restrictions by omitting the verse about pig:

And the word pig we cannot use. So obviously, you know, ‘Old McDonald had a cow, pig, you have e-ay-ay-o and oink, oink here’. So I have to omit the verse about the pig. So it's like that. Certain terms are there where we have to omit or avoid teaching.(Meera)

Moving forward with the interview , she explained how the government guide lines has influenced their classroom management practices with regards to student discipline. Following was what she had to share:

“I cannot raise my voice at any other students. I can't even punish them according to the proper law. I can't make a child standing up for more than 10 minutes as a punishment. It's not allowed. Right? You can get banned” (Meera)

These examples indicate how regulatory guidelines influence the way a teacher could deliver a lesson or manage student behavior. Such constraints could limit a teachers' flexibility in addressing student behavior, when managing the classroom. Additionally restrictions of certain content could create limitations for the teacher's instruction delivery and add additional preparation and planning, which could affect the overall teaching practices. The findings revealed that expatriate teachers in the UAE international schools experience a diverse range of challenges with regards to the classroom management. Furthermore, the data indicates that these challenges stem from cultural and linguistic diversity , different student behaviors, managing SEN students, and the influence of family socio economic background of the student. In addition, Institutional and structural constraints such as large class size and curriculum differences, and regulatory guidelines were also perceived as factors affecting teachers' effective classroom management practices.

4.2 How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International schools? (Research Question 2).

This section presents the findings related to the research question 2, which examines how expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International Schools. Data uncovered a range of strategies and adaptations, which were grouped according to Thematic analysis into 5 themes. Following sections will further explain the 5 themes in detail.

4.2.1 Developing an Understanding of Students and Their Backgrounds

This was the first theme revealed for the second research question of the study. It aimed for capturing notions about the attempts expatriate teachers made in order to develop an understanding of the students and their backgrounds. This theme was further divided in to 3 sub themes as; learning about students as individuals, understanding cultural and language differences, and becoming more aware as a teacher.

Teachers explained how understanding and learning of students is being developed through various observational methods and , interactions with students. Some

participants claimed this understanding helped them in identifying different student needs and helped them adjust and respond to them accordingly.

Some also explained , that understanding of students could occur through ongoing interactions , such as ‘talking’. For instance Danu, a kindergarten teacher described , that sometimes she would not be limited to the ‘lesson plan’ and would ‘go with the flow’ as it will give her an opportunity to understand the child. Following is what she had to share:

“And with that, with the children talking and giving me their ideas, so like sometimes I don't go according to the lesson plan because the children, they get their talking in a different path. So I go with that, go with the flow, and then I will get to know, okay, I can get to know, like, children more. “(Danu)

Another participant, Meera shared her experience about how identifying a change in a student’s behavior provided her with important information about the underlying issues the student was experiencing :

Quite recently, last month, grade eight, one of the student he was such a great singer, an outgoing character, and he changed. And I felt it because he was not engaging in the lesson. And I had written so many good remarks about him, and that particular week I had nothing to write. So I was like, ha, he didn't even ask a question. He didn't sing properly. Nothing happened. His parts, the harmony parts were never there. So, I observed for a couple of weeks, and then I went and I spoke to the inclusion department then to see he has been bullied, by a couple of students. So bullying is also there. So you can just, from the change in their behavior, you can just gauge the idea, okay, something is not right. (Meera)

This excerpt illustrates, that even subtle changes in student’s behavior such as not engaging in the lesson or not asking questions from the teacher, could be a sign that the student is experiencing some issues, and that careful observation allows the teacher to better understand and address students’ needs. This implies that awareness of students’ behavioral changes allow teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the student and their individual circumstances which might need immediate attention. Meera, further described how she video recorded her lessons in the classroom , (with prior permission from the school) to observe challenging student behavior . She went on explaining how this helped her become a ‘better teacher’. She stated that, by using this observation method she can monitor the movements of the student, and get better ideas on how the child reacts right before the challenging situation occurs, as she stated ‘calm before the storm’. Following was what she had to share :

sometimes they can't control their bowel movements So, most of them, yes, it happened in my during my lessons so, I always have the recording and I observe, so right before it happened, what was their mood like? Did they change? Did they at least sit down or do something, you know, just for me to witness, okay, the calm before the storm will happen, for me to see the surrounding, the atmosphere. So yes, it helped me to, it helps, when I record, it helps me to be a better person, a better teacher, obviously.(Meera)

This experience implies that monitoring student behavior using videos, gave the knowledge which could assist the teacher to anticipate similar situations in the future and respond more effectively to them. Monitoring students' behavior in such a systematic way overtime could serve as an important method for the teachers in developing an understanding of students as individuals , as well as their unique needs.

Participants also explained about the importance of understanding the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the students when managing multicultural classrooms, as this diversity will affect their learning preferences , and behavior in the classrooms. This highlights about the importance of recognizing cultural and linguistic diversity, for the teachers to interpret student's learning needs, and adapt their teaching practices accordingly. One participant Danu, explained that:

So, here the children comes from different cultural backgrounds. OK, so we need to like keep that also in mind whenever we plan activities and when doing all these classroom things in the classroom. So, we have to actually check. OK, now this child is used to this type of teaching. (Danu)

This indicates that some teachers perceived that teaching approaches should be adjusted based on the students' previous learning experiences and expectations, that are usually shaped by student's cultural backgrounds. This excerpt implies that understanding those cultural differences help the teacher to respond to the different needs of the students effectively.

Another teacher, Meera described about how she developed an understanding about student needs ,and backgrounds through observing their behaviors in the classroom , and through their song preferences. For instance , Meera stated:

And sometimes when it comes to students, I can see if I play a slow song, I know who likes slow stuff. And if I play a fast beat, some students are into it, whereas some are not. So with that, I can just tell who's calm and who's not, who's having a very noisy background at home. (Meera)

Moving forward, she explained about how some students keep on playing instruments in the music class, even if she asked them to not to, which she described as:

Some children just take their tambourines and keep playing. And I know why that is, even if I'm asking them not to. And if they're still tapping it, I know who the attention seekers are. So, it's when you observe, you can just get the background that they're coming from. And it's easy for me to get to know them, of course, not just by talking to the teacher...(Meera)

These excerpts imply that rather than solely relying on communication to get an idea about students' backgrounds, teachers interpret students' actions and behaviors in the classroom as signs of their individual needs, and home environments. Moving forward, few participants also mentioned about how student's communication styles vary from culture to culture, which in turn influence student participation in the classroom. This implies that understanding cultural differences in communication is a key aspect of interpreting student's behavior in multicultural settings. One participant explained that back in her native country the students were more of passive listeners, which made it challenging for teachers to get an idea if the student understood the content or not, but in UAE it is the opposite, where students are more verbally engaged. For instance Danu, compared her experience of communication difference from her home country to the UAE.

So, now I think in a way, Back in Sri Lanka, the children, even they didn't understand anything, they wouldn't raise questions. They would just go home. But here, we get to know if the child has not understood what we have taught, because they are very verbal..(Danu)

Similarly, another teacher explained how students respond differently for various communication styles. As per her experience, she had witnessed how students from one cultural background would respond to calm instruction, whereas another student group from a different cultural background responds more to a 'harsh' teacher voice.

She further stated that she perceives this difference to be stemmed from family backgrounds of the students. This was what she had to say:

when it comes to (Students from country A), I'm not going to raise my voice at them, not even once. Only one instruction I can give them. Children sit down, they sit down. Children stand up. they stand up, right? With (Country B, Country C), I have to yell because that's how their parents have brought them up. They're used to rough voices. If somebody uses a soft voice, it's not going to work with them.(Meera)

This emphasizes the need for teachers to identify and adapt to the different communication styles of their students in order to maintain an effective classroom environment. Overall the findings suggest that this understanding of cultural differences on communication styles of the students, is an important part in developing an understanding of students' cultural backgrounds, which in turn supports for an effective classroom management.

Several teachers also explained how their understanding of students developed through increased cultural awareness, and by rethinking of their own beliefs. Some teachers described that having to work in a multicultural environment had exposed them to new cultural norms, beliefs and expectations. This situation has made them reconsider their preliminary thoughts, or perceptions. For an instance , one participant shared her thoughts about , how the regulations or certain restrictions on lesson content had her made more aware as a teacher.

...so that was quite strict in terms of not even showing them the rainbow, you know, not even giving the notion of LGBTQ or anything at all. So everything is quite strict to two genders, male, female, that's it. That's the end of it. And so yeah, that was not a challenge, but an eye-opener for me. There are different parts of the world where people have certain beliefs and When you are in Rome, act like a Roman. So that's what I'm doing here. Okay.(Meera)

Although at the beginning of her teaching in the host country , she questioned against why it is not probable to include these materials , specific images or words in to her lessons, gradually her thinking shifted to reconsider , as she reported as an 'eye opener' suggesting that by being exposed to a new cultural context , teachers tend to become more aware and accept the cultural differences.

Moving further, she explained a similar experience where the term 'pig' needed to be excluded form her lesson materials due to cultural constraints and according to the host country's curriculum restrictions. Similar to the 'rainbow' incident , this situation has also improved her awareness of the cultural norms of the country. Which she implied by stating:

And at first I was like, nope, I don't think it'll work. It's not proper. I want everyone to realize that a pig is just an animal... you know, an animal, cute, cute pig, a piglet, you know. But no, then later on I realized how it tallied with their mentality and the way how the government sees things. (Meera)

Another participant explained that:

Each child, where they come from, does make a lot of difference. Because as I told you, the upbringing and everything in one particular country is very different from others. (Maryum)

This suggests that teachers have an awareness about how different cultural backgrounds shape students behaviors, personalities, and interactions. This excerpt explains that upbringings differ across cultures, and this implies teacher's understanding on students actions, and attitudes are shaped by "where they come from". This increased awareness of students' backgrounds support teachers in building deeper understand of their students which is essential for managing multicultural classrooms.

4.2.2 Adapting Teaching Practices and Learning Activities

This theme aims to capture notions about teachers describing adaptations of their teaching practices to better suit the diverse needs of the students in multicultural learning environments. Findings revealed this adaptation through various strategies ranging from differentiation of instruction, adjusting content, use of age appropriate strategies, to integrating technologies. The theme is further divided in to three sub themes as; adjusting teaching to student needs, making lessons engaging, and supporting participation and inclusion.

In this study, 'differentiating instruction' was evident among many participants as a strategy used to address students' diverse needs. Participants described how they would tailor educational activities depending on student's ability to understand the lesson contents. For instance, one participant mentioned that she would allow the students, who are capable of completing the task by themselves with a "challenge worksheet" while those who are struggling to grasp the concept will receive additional guidance from her.

I know who can do the worksheet independently, and who is still struggling. that I'm always trained them so, who struggle- they will stay with me in the carpet until they get the concept I'm talking, but for those who knows it - there is a challenge worksheet so they go to that their tables and they do the challenge worksheets. (Sharon)

Another teacher explained about adapting her lesson based on student's preference and engagement levels. This was what she had to share:

So, I know the kids who are quite involved with music or who are active in the class and who are not so much and who are barely maintaining themselves to be there. So according to that level and according to the genre of music that they like, I change it (Meera)

Although none of these teachers explicitly used the term ‘differentiating’, their shared experiences exhibit an understanding of different student needs and the importance of flexible teaching strategies. Furthermore, some teachers shared about the use of ‘stations or corners’ according to individual needs and preferences. For instance, one teacher shared that in her class she would have these ‘stations’, and child could select the station, based on their preference and interest or learning. For example, Maryum share the following:

we have different like stations. So in these stations, like different for individual needs, the learning is happening. Okay. So for an example, if we take literacy, rhyming words, a child, one child might like write in it. So they go to the literacy corner. But one child might like building it with build the word using building blocks. So they go to the construction corner(Maryum)

This implies that other than adapting their teaching practices, teachers also focus on arranging their physical classroom environments to support differentiated learning activities to cater for the different student needs.

Few participants mentioned about how using age appropriate strategies could be used to enhance the overall teaching learning experience in the multicultural classrooms. For instance, one participant claimed that unlike some of her other staff at school who had problems about student discipline, she rarely encountered such mishaps because she never ‘boss’ students around, and when teaching she will ‘go down to their level’.

...the way I cope, actually I was very friendly with them...I was in their level. So, it was very easy for me...I'm experienced in teaching from primary to A level and university students as well. But when I teach primary students, I become, I go down to their level. When I'm with teenagers, I'm also becoming a teenager. When I'm with university students, I become a university student. I go to that level and it's easy. Otherwise, if we happen to be the boss all the time, controlling them and shouting at them, advising, they don't like it, nobody likes it. Okay, we have to go down to their level.(Inya)

This emphasizes that teachers adapt their teaching styles to better suit the age level of their students, by becoming like “one of them”. Inya’s example implies that she tries to connect with her students and make the learning more meaningful for them. Another teacher highlighted how students’ song preference or lesson content varies across different age groups, which has influenced her teaching. She explained that different

grades have their own preferences, and she always adapts her lessons according to it .
For example, she shared:

I mean, see, again, it depends. With kindergarteners, what I have noticed is, I think you're familiar with the song Apt- Apt, right? The song Bruno Mars and Rose. So even though they are four-year-olds or five-year-olds, if I play that song, they're going crazy over it. They can sing, they can play. So, but when it comes to grade six or seven or eight, if I play a song like Lily or any other rap song, That's it. That's their jam. So it depends according to the age. Teenagers, they have a different way...But when it comes to grade 3, 4, 5, that's a separate category. They're like, what are the songs that they interest? If I teach them a classical song one week, then the next week they are looking forward to learn a modern song(Meera)

This highlights how teachers adapt their teaching content according to the age levels of students and their interests, which is a way of differentiated teaching. Teachers perceived that through the appropriate subject content selection , which aligns with student's' age and preferences , they can make the learning more meaningful and interesting, which could contribute towards an effective learning experience. As a way of catering for the needs of the students , teachers also highlighted how they incorporate student's preferences to the subject content in a systematic way . For an instance, when inquired about the strategies she used in her class , Meera stated that , at the beginning of each academic year she would gather students and then 'communicate' with them about their preferred music styles which they would like to learn during the coming year. She further explained that , this method let her update her song list, so she doesn't need to be framed for the same song list.

I always communicate with them and check the first lesson every year at the beginning of the academic year is me questioning them. What kind of music do you like? What kind of genre? Is it rock, pop? So I play them as well. This is rock music, right? This is blues or swing or funk or now we have techno and a different era we are living in. So rap music, I play everything from classical, semi-classic, everything. And then I say, okay, now let you have a sheet in front of you. Just write down number one, two, three, which category would you prefer to learn? So out of that, I know how to update my song list because it's not going to be the same song list or same type of music that I'll be teaching every year. We need to be updated as well.(Meera)

Meera's experience suggests how she intentionally adapted her lesson content to cater for the diverse preferences, interests , and needs of the students, which will ultimately lead towards a more engaging classroom. Moving forward, she shared another similar experience where she adapt her lesson content according to the preferences of students, matching with their interests. She further added about an instance of how a student who

was not usually attentive in the lesson shifted to being active as a result of teachers' strategy to adapt the lesson content to match with student's preferences. This was what she had to share :

So, I know the kids who are quite involved with music or who are active in the class and who are not so much and who are barely maintaining themselves to be there. So according to that level and according to the genre of music that they like, I change it. So there are children who are into anime these days. Right? So I taught one anime song. She has never sung in the class, none of the songs that I've taught them. But on that particular day, she was the first one to sing or to repeat after me. So I know where they're going with it. Right? I know what they want. I've observed them. I know their needs. So at least once a month, I try my best to approach their likings also. So their likings or their needs are being met. So they're okay with it then. They're fine. So that's how we go, yes. So none of them are being left out. Okay. They're all being taken care of, yes. (Meera)

Furthermore, some participants stated that they have changed their preliminary teaching methods after moving to the UAE. Maryum explained that initially she had a teacher centered approach but gradually , over time she began to pay attention to teaching strategies which are 'working for students', and by molding herself according to student needs. Following was her statement:

...the only thing I've tried to do is I have to mold myself to the kids. So, initially, it was my instruction over their instruction, but later on, it became, like, we have to, like... pay attention to what is working for them, what is not working for them. And we have to mold ourselves according to that...(Maryum)

In order to make lessons more engaging, data revealed that participants are using a variety of methods such as use of familiar and popular content, integrating technology in classroom activities, use of engaging subject content, and games. Few participants commented on how subject content plays an important role in making a lesson more engaging for the students. One participant Inya, the high school English Literature and Psychology teacher shared her experience about how English Literature subject, would make the students engaged, when compared to other subjects such as Math. As an English Literature teacher, she further described that literature lessons involved imagining ,and roll playing which assists in making students more engaged in the subject.

...as I told you, my subject was literature, right? So literature is... sharing experiences, language parts, and it's like sometimes, it's like a storytelling, right? After discussing a poem, inside the poem we see a story and life experiences and some very truth, maybe they are very negative, maybe they

are very positive or whatever. Students are so interested in listening to these things.(Inya)

She also went on explaining, that at times when she discuss difficult words in poems, students tend to listen attentively, and try to visualize the meaning behind it, often with 'open mouths', which implies that the students become highly focused, and become highly absorbed in the lesson.

They are trying to understand, because at once somebody cannot understand a poem. In a poem, when we select one word, in that word, there are a lot of things sometimes. These things, literal things, students did not know. I always had to explain. So with open mouths, sometimes they were listening, they were enjoying, they were imagining...(Inya)

Moving forward with the interview, she explained how engaging subject content, can positively influence students' behavior. She stated that:

Students changed a lot after a literature lesson. They changed their mood, they changed the way of thinking, they changed the way of behavior even. So literature was very much effective. So... That's why I think it was easier for me to do the classroom management.

Implying how literature lessons can impact the thinking, mood and the behavior of the student, highlighting that students often 'change' after engaging with poems or stories. She further stated that because literature has a positive influence over students, it made her classroom management 'easier'.

The above excerpts form Inya highlights how the nature of a subject content itself could promote student engagement. This indicates that when the learning content or the material is relevant and meaningful for the students, it allows them to be more engaged.

Another participant indicated that she uses familiar media, such as the cartoon 'Bluey', in order to engage younger students and encourage their positive behavior in learning activities. She described that through showing them the video clip of this cartoon character completing tasks related to studying, students will also be encouraged to imitate it since they are fond of the character. This was what Danu had to share:

There is a cartoon called Bluey. It's about a small blue colored dog. So there is this clip... So what I do is I play that Bluey study like it does his own work ,on the panel. So when they see that Bluey is doing his work all alone, the kids that like they get the encouragement from it. Okay, my favorite cartoon character is doing work, so I should also do work right now. So they do that. So it works well for me (Danu)

Meera also shared a similar incident where she uses popular and familiar songs to engage students. She explained that when familiar music is being played in the class, it increases student's enthusiasm and excitement :

I think you're familiar with the song Apt- Apt, right? The song Bruno Mars and Rose. So even though they are four-year-olds or five-year-olds, if I play that song, they're going crazy over it (Meera)

This suggests how teachers use diverse teaching practices in order to regain student attention, or engagement during classroom activities. Furthermore, all these findings suggest that use on familiar content in learning can increase student's engagement levels and participation in classroom activities.

Furthermore, findings also revealed number of strategies expatriate teachers use to ensure that every student is actively involved in learning, despite their backgrounds. As described by Meera, there are certain student gangs or cliques which were formed by the students depending on their cultural backgrounds, ethnicity, or based on the country they come from. She further explained that during most of her periods she has witnessed how these student groups were reluctant to interact with 'other groups' . Therefore, in order to support student participation and interaction in classroom activities, she had used few strategies which she termed as 'silly exercises'. The following extract explains the activity she implemented , and her perception about how it influenced the participation of diverse student groups during classroom activities, despite their backgrounds.

So from my point as subject teacher, especially as a music teacher, I always use silly exercises I would call them, where right before it ends, For instance, if I'm taking a song, You are my sunshine, Group A sings, and then Group B needs to continue, My only sunshine, and if there's any delay, then that's it. Group A&B both will be out from the game, so now... Once they finish the first line, they quickly look at them. You start, you start. And they say it also, you better begin. We don't want to stay out of it. We want to keep playing the game. So you better sing. So they actually communicate now. So with that, yes, I started making them feel how important, you know, the importance of speaking to one another. And it doesn't matter which color we are or where we are from, right? So now, of course, they come as one. And they just want to use the same instrument. So now they don't have any clash. They're just telling, Miss, he took the tamarind. And I was like, well, you and group A, right? So you can just stick with them. No, there's no group now, Miss. We're all one. I need the tamarind. So they have come to that level. So yes, it worked. At first it didn't, but it took time. So I think patience, yeah, finally paid off. (Meera)

This explanation from Meera, clearly suggests how she gradually managed to inculcate inclusion in to her teaching practice. This further implies that structured activities can pose an important role in promoting inclusion and interaction among diverse student groups. She further went on explaining how she encourages flexible participation options for students those who might be reluctant to engage in classroom activities. She described that if she observed a student who is hesitant to participate, she would offer them alternative ways to participate. For instance, she mentioned that, ‘if somebody’s not singing, then I will ask that child, okay, fine. If you can’t sing, can you tap a tambourine? Can you play the cymbal, a triangle?’. This suggests that when it comes to learning activities, students are not forced to participate in single fixed activities , rather they are being offered with a variety of alternative pathways to collaborate with their peers.

Maryum indicated that , some students in the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) classes struggle with hands – on activities as they are either used to work on their electronic devices such as tabs or the traditional methods such as writing on work sheets. As she mentioned, ‘ they don’t know what to do with the material that is provided for them, how they can use it to, like, enhance their education.’ Participant then noted that , when such instances occur she will provide alternative options for the student to engage in the learning. As she mentioned,...that helps it a lot, to give them opportunities to just explore their options while they are doing a particular activity(Maryum)

These examples suggest that, teachers does not limit participation towards a single activity , but rather provide various opportunities where students could adapt and thrive based on their abilities and preferences, which will help them continue their learning process without getting interrupted. Through the use of various pathways to participation teachers foster an inclusive environment where all the students could participate despite their individual differences.

4.2.3 Building Relationships and Supporting Students’ Emotional Well- being

This theme intended to reflect on instances where teachers attempt to build positive relationships with students and support their emotional well being . Findings suggest that some participants viewed building trust and earning respect as crucial aspects in effective classroom management. Teachers also described varies strategies they have implemented in order to maintain positive relationship with students, including

communicating with students , building positive teacher student relationships, and identifying student's emotional needs. This theme was further divided in to 2 sub themes. Building respect, and supporting students' emotional needs.

One expatriate teacher mentioned that in order to effectively deliver the subject knowledge to students , teachers must first gain student's attention, respect and then build a sense of trust and comfort . According to her:

Yeah, what we need to do is we need to take the attention of the students and we need to make sure that they are comfortable with us. Then only we can insert whatever the subject matter or whatever the thing into their heads (Inya).

This suggests that creating a positive teacher – student relationship is crucial for effective learning. She further highlighted the importance of building student respect as a strategy in effective classroom management. She noted that when she first joined the school , the students tried to 'check' her. But over the time, students got familiar with her friendly personality, and about her subject related knowledge and start 'respecting' her. This is what she had to state:

...During my lesson, yeah, they were all friendly with each other. They were attentive...At the beginning when I was a new teacher, they tried to make fun of me sometimes. They tried to "rag" me, you know, like they tried to check me actually, but once they understand who I am and I was a very friendly one. I had enough knowledge, I had more knowledge than them, so they had something to learn from me, so they start respecting me. So it was all good...(Inya)

Inya's experience implies that student's respect towards teacher and their engagement are influenced by the positive relationship, and perceived teacher competence. Another expatriate teacher Meera shared her thoughts about how gaining respect from students acts as a key component in building effective classroom management strategies in a multicultural setting. During the interview Meera explained that despite the country, students are all the same and they will display challenging behavior. In addressing these behaviors as a teacher, she mentioned the importance of careful observation of students, and establishing the respect before proceeding to teaching:

And what I do is, first I try my best to observe and gain the respect. Once I have it, I realize that I have it, then only I can proceed with the lesson.(Meera)

She further noted that once this respect is established, teaching and classroom management become significantly easier, stating that “once I have the respect, yes, everything falls into part.”

Moreover, teachers shared their ideas about how student’s emotions, and sense of safety affect their overall behavior and engagement in classroom activities. In addressing these emotional needs it was evident that teachers use a number of different strategies through classroom activities, and by providing students with necessary interventions. One participant Sharon, shared an experience about a student who exhibits challenging behavior towards his teachers and classmates. She described the student’s behavior as a ‘very harsh behavior’. Following is what she shared:

...always he like when together with the other children he always try to fight with others and no respect no listening like a very harsh behavior I can't say it's bad the bad very harsh behavior so then we inform to the parent yeah his behavior is kind of this sometimes even for the teachers he's kicking, shouting and it's like it's not the accepted behavior... So ,when one time when we informed to parents, the next day he come up with a lot of bruises. So, actually we were shocked...And even we told he have some behavior issues. Can you inform the parents? So simply told, even if I inform the parents, they will hit him. when he go home. So that time we got to know the parents are really harsh on him. So that's why his inappropriate behavior started in the school as well. So actually, after that incident we just give more love to him... then within two, three weeks, we felt the difference. He become a very lovable boy ... like within one and a half months he became the best students and start to write and read.” (Sharon)

Above incident highlights that students’ disruptive behavior may be closely linked to and stemmed from their emotional and family backgrounds. As teachers responded to this situation with a caring and supportive approach, rather than with punishment, it resulted in clear positive changes in student’s behavior and learning outcomes. This incident reflects the importance of addressing and supporting students’ emotional needs. It further depicts the main role of the teacher when identifying and responding to student’s emotional challenges. Another participant, Meera shared one of her experiences about a student , whose behavior changed significantly as a result of his parents’ divorce. She then used classroom activities as a way to support him emotionally and cope with the emotional difficulties he is currently going through. Following was what she had to share :

So last year, he was such a great kid, but something must have happened. And his mood changed entirely, not just for music, but I spoke with other teachers

as well. And then we figured out what he has been going through, I mean, his parents got divorced or something. So many things affect children, right? And they never share anything with us. (Meera)

Moving forward, she explained how she intentionally adapted her lesson content to resonate with the student's current emotional state and use it as a tool support him express his feelings:

So what I did the next day was I spoke to the entire class and I told some of us might feel like we don't want to sing anymore. Nothing is happening the way we want it to be, right? So why don't we sing a song about that? We're trying, we're trying, but nothing is happening. And I feel like giving up. We'll sing a song about it, shall we? And then I started. And yeah, he joined alone. And I could see he was just, he was at the verge of crying, but he didn't. But I can see he was telling, I won't give up. Like he wants to give up, but he's not going to do it. So he started singing and yeah, it took him a while, but yes, he's in a good place now. (Meera)

She also mentioned how she supports students when they are in challenging situations like 'crying, grumpy not in the mood to sing' by maintaining a calm and positive demeanor. She further explained that despite of student's behavior she 'keep smiling and nodding at them' trying to engage them using non verbal cues as well as gentle ,positive, and encouraging remarks as 'You got it? You got that line? Shall we go over it once? Yes, the first verse' although she knows , that some of the students does not want to engage in the learning activities. Following was what she had to share:

First thing I always do. is to stay positive and to stay calm. That is what I always go for. Doesn't matter whether the child is crying or in a different world and not in the mood to sing, is a little grumpy, doesn't matter because I'm going to maintain my posture, my calm demeanor. my positivity and I keep smiling and grinning and nodding at them and I keep engaging even though they hated some of them. I keep doing that. I keep looking at them. You got it? You got that line? Shall we go over it once? Yes, the first verse. And I clearly know they don't want to sing the same verse again, but I keep doing it. (Meera)

Meera also mentioned that she remains consistent in this approach until the , students follow and engage in the learning process. As she mentioned;

I wait, I observe, and then, yes, I proceed, but no matter what, I keep my positivity, I keep smiling, because then I know they are bound to smile, they are bound to do it back, so, yeah, I do that all the time, OK.

By being consistent in this approach, she creates a learning environment , in which the students are not being pressurized or forced to do the learning activities, therefore creating a supportive learning environment. This incident depicts of how non verbal

encouragement support students' emotional needs, through building a sense of safety , and an increased readiness to participate.

4.2.4 Managing Student Behaviour and Learning Environment

This theme intended to capture notions from participants interviews on instances where they have described about strategies used in order to manage student behavior, and the classroom environment. Findings revealed that teachers employ different methods in managing student behavior such as, positive reinforcement, proximity strategies, and attention regaining activities. When it comes to the managing of learning environments, participants shared strategies such as establishing routines, setting clear rules, and proper seating arrangement and groups. Furthermore, this theme divides in to 2 sub themes as ; managing student behavior, and organizing classroom environment.

Findings revealed that many participants use positive reinforcement strategies in order to manage student behavior. For instance, Sharon indicated about using 'reward board', and 'behavior points' as a method to promote positive student behavior in her classroom. She further explained about how the 'reward board' and 'behavior points' operate in her class, by starting with a set number of stars at the beginning of the school week:

...we have generally be given 10 stars... so the target is end of the week they need to keep the stars so then if he's still talking, okay - 'this star I'm going to remove it and it's for the teacher' so then the small ones they are like always ,like they feel it teacher took the star. So, then they try. At same time, we have behavior points. It's a red points and the green points. If they behave nice, they will receive the green point. If they talk it first, second, third, then they will get the red points... So they have chance to go to the reward box and they can took any reward what they choose. And they like,so, I have this, it's like a surprise box full of the toys and the stuff.I always showing this is the reward box. These are the things inside. If you be like this, you have a chance to go there and choose whatever you want.(Sharon)

As she mentioned in the above quote, the reward board creates an awareness in the student about his actions and its consequences , for instance, as the teacher mentioned, 'the small ones they are like always ,like they feel it teacher took the star. So, then they try', indicates that the younger students are sensitive towards this system and try to improve their behavior in order to secure all the stars, as well as to get a reward from the 'reward box'. Therefore, this example demonstrates how reinforcement strategies can both encourage positive behavior of students while also developing a sense of self

control in them. Another participant shared similar thoughts about how she uses 'stickers' to motivate the students to engage in classroom activities:

... I have kids in my class who get very happy with stickers, okay? So no matter where they are, what they are doing, if I just promise them, Oh, I'm going to give you five stickers today, can you do this? So because they're obsessed with it or like, you know, they really like collecting it, it becomes like a positive reinforcement (Maryum)

Apart from using reinforcement strategies to promote positive student behavior and engagement, one teacher also shares instances on how she uses her voice to manage student behavior in her classroom. During the interview, when inquired about what classroom management strategies she uses, Danu shared the following:

But like I have to repeat the same thing two, three times with a stern voice, then they settle in...Like normally when the kids, the behavior is out of control, when they shout and make noises in the classroom, like the thing that it is very simple, but the thing that works well is for me to be stern. (Danu)

According to her when student's behavior become challenging, for instance like shouting or making noise in the classroom, repeating instructions with a firm voice has been an effective strategy for her. She further went on explaining this strategy as a 'simple' method, which has always been effective for her when challenging behavior situations arise in her classroom. Interestingly, findings revealed that all the six participants have been using 'proximity strategies in their classroom management. For an instance, Meera explained that when she identified students those who are not engaged, or distracted she would invite such students come closer to her and then encourage them to observe her movements. For instance:

But that doesn't mean I can just let her or him be. Okay, you don't want to sing? Okay, fine. No, I'm not going to do that. So instead, what I always use is, fine, my dear, just come closer to me. and look at me. And when I play, when I talk, when I sing, they're going to observe me...(Meera)

She further went on explaining, because of this strategy how disengaged, or distracted students end up gradually being engaged in the lesson.

So, within the first 20 to 25 minutes, they always try to sing at the end. It happens automatically because they cannot see anything else. they can see me because they're being seated right in front of me. There's no other way they can even look at the wall because my eyes, my mouth is right in front of them. So even towards the end, they just at least mimic. I can see their heads being nodded, you know. They're nodding to the beat. Even though they're not

singing, they're not. I can see their feet are being tapped, you know, on the floor. They're tapping to the beat. So some sort of response is coming from them. And if I can see that, I will just simply tell, okay, go back to your place. You can go back and sit on your chair. That's fine. And then I know they're going to follow it through. So this has worked a couple of times, actually every time. (Meera)

As mentioned previously, similar strategies were evident throughout the six expatriate teachers. For instance, Danu explained that when she encounters with inappropriate behavior from the students, she would address this verbally and with proximity. Following was what she had to share:

...but when they know like done something bad then I have to like tell them directly I have to call that child in front of me and calm him down and talk to him okay you were disturbing the lesson at this point and I told you nicely two three times but you are not listening I think it works every time when you are calm and then we you call the kid in front of you and speak to them and then they get scared to do it like repeat it again and again. (Danu)

Apart from managing student behavior, some participants explained about managing their classroom environment as a strategy for better classroom management. But interestingly they did not limit their ideas solely to the physical setting of the classroom, such as seating arrangements, but they also discuss about routines, activity transitions, and rules which are guided by the teacher. Some participants emphasized the importance of clear classroom routines, and rules as strategies to an effective classroom environment. When inquired about strategies used to manage their classrooms, Maryum indicated that it is always good to have 'clear ground rules' and that 'there has to be a set routine'. She went on explaining that,

There has to be something like, you know, clear ground rules. Like, you know, I'm just going to tell them, okay, these are the ground rules for your classes. There has to be a set routine. (Maryum)

She further explains that while the students are given 'freedom to explore', it is important to maintain clear set of classroom rules to guide their behavior. For instance when the teacher instruct 'eyes on me', or 'last class on mat' the students should follow. Another participant Awab, noted that during one of the science lab sessions, he noticed some students were talking loudly during an ongoing experiment. Then in order to have the situation under control, he provided students with a 'friendly reminder about the rules'. He further went on explaining that he also demonstrated a non verbal signal of 'raising his hand' which indicated that the students should remain quite.

These examples demonstrate how structured routines and clear classroom rules coupled with non verbal cues are perceived as vital factors in managing classroom environment by the teachers. Inya mentioned during her interview that, classroom management should not only focus on student behavior, but also on the physical environment which assists the learning. Highlighting the importance of managing physical environment as it enhances the learning experience of the student by providing a supportive atmosphere.

So, during these processes, we have to manage the classroom, not only the students, but the physical things as the materials, the technology we use. Right, even it's not just human. When we say classroom management before, to our mind, it comes only the students, not that so. (Inya)

She further described how physical elements such as space, light systems, technology and materials become essential components when interactive learning happens, for instance like drama, where students and teachers need to manage the space and the light.

The materials, the space even we have to manage, right? Because we can't put the students into groups, for group activities, pair work. Sometimes we make them do a drama, we make them see. So, space we need to manage, materials, books, physical things, physical arrangements, especially with the technology, we need to manage. Even the light system. (Inya)

Moving forward with the interview, she reflected on how classroom management was less complex in her previous teaching contexts which contain lesser technological resources. This suggests that teachers did not perceive effective organization of classroom environment as solely focusing on students and their behaviors, but also as managing and arranging the physical elements of a classroom to better support diverse student needs.

4.2.5 Collaboration and Communication with Parents and School Staff

This theme intends to capture instances from the interview transcripts which discuss about how teachers collaborate with parents regarding student's learning, behavior, and well being. Additionally, it depicts notions from teachers who discuss about how they cooperate with their colleagues such as class teachers, subject teachers, and inclusion department when challenging student behavior occurs. This theme is further divided into two sub themes as; communication with parents, and working with colleagues.

Data revealed that strong teacher parent collaboration could result in improved academic development of the student. Furthermore, findings suggest that parent cooperation was gained through strategies such as parental engagement in school activities and evidence-based communication. One participant, Sharon shared her thoughts on a situation where she had to manage a student who had a challenging behavior which she perceived has stemmed from and developed as a result of the child being pampered at home. She explained that the child consistently wanted to be prioritized in all activities . For instance, she explains:

...if they're running, she has to be first. If we are talking, she needs to be the first. wherever she want to make the lineup for the wash. So she thinks even school time she had to be the first. If we are not letting her to be first, if I give another chance for another child, well, she throw the biggest tantrum in the school. So she cry roly poly, throw everything. It's the massive, massive drama she started. So that's the child I think in my life, the first time, with that much of tantrums, (Sharon)

To address this situation Sharon contacted the mother to discuss and to work towards the child's well being. As Sharon stated:

it's like actually we work with together after we talk in so many conversations with the parent. Yeah, finally mommy agreed. It's the long process we have to work. So actually now she's in year one, she is getting in. But still sometimes the tantrums are going on even year one. Sometimes teacher asks, if I can help them to make her down? Because if she didn't get what she wants, she started.(Sharon)

This incident suggests that managing student behavioral issues through parent teacher collaboration can be an ongoing process, which requires consistency and patience from both the parties. In the incident mentioned above ,the child's behavior has been continued over time, which implies that ongoing communication is required from both the parents as well as teachers, highlighting the importance of maintaining ongoing collaboration with parents. Another participant Meera stated that oftentimes she has observed a reluctance in parents' acceptance towards a child's behavioral or developmental issues. "However, when I came to UAE, I realized even if I tell them the child is having an issue, the parents are not willing to admit it or accept it." (Meera). Therefore , as a strategy she video recorded all her lessons with prior permission from the school, as well she maintained a 'log book' where she has records about students with challenging behaviors in each class. She went on mentioning;

So, what I do is I record for months and months. I think I did it with one student for four months. I record my lessons. I always record my lessons for my own

benefit, for me to improve myself. But with that, I quickly (inaudible) and not responding, not playing. And sometimes when I give the instrument, it just falls out. And I'm like, no, hold it. The grip is not there at certain times. So I always showed it. The parents were rejecting it, you know, they never accepted the emails. So what I did was I showed the videotapes and they were speechless... And they listened to me, they watched it and agreed to get a shadow teacher for the child. (Meera)

This incident highlights how some teachers use concrete evidence as a strategy to communicate with parents, especially with regards to situations which concerns about student's need for special care.

Several participants also noted instances where they approached other staff such as consulting the class teacher, or contacting the inclusion department when encountering incidents or when in doubt about certain students and their needs. For instance, Meera stated that when she identify a certain shift in particular student's behavior, she would communicate with the other teachers those who teach the student to find out the cause about this change. As she mentioned :

I spoke with other teachers as well. And then we figured out that he has been going through, I mean, his parents got divorced or something. So many things affect children, right?...So, it's all about talking to other teachers because I am, as a subject teacher, we cannot be involved fully when it comes to the management of it. As in the class teachers have all the documents, right, about their family, etc., etc. So, what I can do if I know a child is misbehaving or out of control or in another world. So I keep observing for a couple of weeks. And if it still happens, even though I'm using my all the best strategies or techniques, if the child is still not ready to be a proper student during the lesson, then of course I go and speak to the class teacher and get a proper update what's happening with him or her. (Meera)

After consulting the class teacher and then addressing situation of the student with other subject teachers Meera state that finally the 'school counselor spoke to him' and the situation was systematically taken care of. Moreover she stated that she would meet with the school inclusion department, based on the record of her 'log book'.

Not just recording, I also maintain my own logbook. It's more like a logbook where I have hyper students written in one go. So I always work together with the inclusion department in our school. So whenever a class comes, let's say 7A, when they come, I know. Three students, case of determination. Two students, mild, mild, but not yet, not identified as autistic or any other, they're not officially or clinically diagnosed. They are not. But we know they are in that path. But the parents are either not accepting, not admitting, et cetera. So I

have them marked in a different style. So I always observe, what do they do? How do they behave? So once a month, I update the inclusion department, as well as the class teacher. This is how they behaved (Meera).

All these instances highlight how collaborating with school staff, in order to address various student needs is crucial when managing multicultural classroom environments. By working together, teachers are capable of getting deeper understanding of student's nature and about their additional needs which is beneficial when implementing strategies which are effective for them. Another participant Sharon, also described about how she would collaborate with her staff when encountered with potential concerns regarding child development, or behavior. For instance, she explained that when she observe something unusual about a student behavior, she would first approach her co teacher , and discuss her observations with her, and if the co teacher agree upon her observations then they will seek a third person perspective of the situation by consulting another teacher. If the concerns remain persists , then she will seek the help from the inclusion department, where a specialized staff would come observe the student. Based on these steps, coupled with multiple observations a decision will be made regarding contacting the parents of the child.

This demonstrated how collaborating with staff members created a well informed approach in identifying student needs, which is based on shared observations rather than individual judgement. Overall, these findings suggest that collaboration among staff is a key strategy used by expatriate teachers when diverse challenging situations related to student needs arise in their classrooms. Through approaching from multiple perspectives and involving a specialized members of the staff , teachers are able to make more informed decisions and provide students with the appropriate support.

5 Discussion

This study explored the classroom management experiences of expatriate teachers working in the UAE international schools, focusing specifically on challenges encountered and the strategies they use to adapt their classroom management practices. Since UAE international schools are experiencing increasing cultural and linguistic diversity, classroom management has become more complex and has extended beyond just simply addressing student behavior to requiring teachers to navigate cultural differences, various behavioral expectations, and communication styles of students. This study was guided by two research questions: (1) What are the main classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers in the UAE International schools? and, (2) How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International schools? Findings for the first research question highlighted multiple challenges related to cultural and linguistic diversity, student behavior, special educational needs children, family influences, and institutional restrictions, whereas findings for the second research question demonstrated the importance of understanding students' backgrounds, adaptive teaching practices, building positive relationships, managing classroom behavior, communication with parents and school staff, and teacher adaptation and reflection.

The findings are discussed in relation to existing literature and interpreted through the CRCM framework. Furthermore, the discussion section aims to explore how expatriate teachers' classroom management experiences reflect the key aspects of the CRCM framework including recognizing one's own ethnocentrism, understanding students' cultural backgrounds, building caring classrooms, using culturally appropriate management strategies, and recognizing broader social, political and economic context (Weinstein et al., 2004). This chapter is organized into several sections. First, findings related to the two research questions will be discussed in relation to the previous literature and CRCM. Next, the limitations and the implication for future studies will be discussed. Finally the chapter will be concluded with the conclusion section.

5.1 What are the main classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers in the UAE International schools?

5.1.1 Cultural Diversity

Participants of the current study frequently described that managing students with multiple cultural backgrounds in the same classroom as “demanding” and “complex”. Similar findings were reported by Güven et al. (2023), whose study revealed that ethnic and linguistic diversity of students as the central challenge perceived by teachers when teaching in multicultural classrooms. The findings revealed that diversity in students’ cultural backgrounds had a considerable influence on peer relationships, and classroom interactions. Participants mentioned how students of similar cultural, or ethnic backgrounds often formed groups, while interactions between different groups appeared to be more limited. For instance, some teachers reported experiences about student reluctance to sit together, communicate, or engage in classroom activities with peers of different cultural backgrounds. In their study, Singh and Rampersad (2010) suggested that students in culturally diverse environments may often gravitate towards peers who have similar cultural backgrounds as they share common language and consider themselves to have similar beliefs and ways of understanding things. This may provide some explanation as to why the participants of the current study observed strong peer connections within similar cultural groups and limited engagement with others who are from different backgrounds. Similar findings have been identified in previous studies on multicultural classroom settings. For instance, Güven et al. (2023) reported that students who are from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds “were sometimes bullied and socially excluded” by native students (p. 4), while some native students were even unwilling to sit beside those who are from different cultures. Although Güven et al. (2023) discussed about native and non-native student groups within Turkish primary schools, similar to the current study, their findings suggest how cultural and linguistic diversity influence peer interactions, and contribute to social divisions in multicultural classroom environments. Present study further illustrates that these social divisions can also emerge in highly multicultural classroom settings as in UAE international schools, where there is no single dominant cultural group as students come from various cultural backgrounds.

5.1.2 Linguistic diversity

Moreover, data revealed that linguistic diversity caused communication difficulties which influence classroom interactions, instruction, and understanding between teachers and students. Participants mentioned about incidents where varying levels of English language proficiency of students created challenges in their understanding of lessons, and even ability to express basic needs, such as a simple bathroom request. Similarly, Singh and Rampersad (2010) found that varying fluency levels of language among culturally diverse students may create communication misunderstandings, which may affect how individuals understand and interpret what others' communicate. The participants' experiences in the current study appear to align with this, as they described various communication related challenges which occurred due to varying English proficiency levels of students such as teacher- student communication , and misunderstanding of instructions. Therefore, aligning with Altaai and Gokgoz Kurt (2023) findings, present study reveals that expatriate teachers commonly experience language barriers while teaching in multicultural classroom environments.

5.1.3 Challenges related to student behaviour

Another theme emerged through data , regarding challenges faced by expatriate teachers was student behavioral issues. Many participants had faced considerable amount of behavioral challenges relate to student avoidance or non participation in classroom activities and learning, as well resisting and challenging teacher authority and discipline. Different forms of student disengagements were perceived by the participants of the current study including students getting mentally disconnected during lessons, as well as some participants reporting incidents where students leaving classrooms during lessons demonstrating more deliberate forms of disengagement. Apart from these, some expatriate teachers mentioned challenges regarding maintaining teacher authority and student discipline in classrooms , including students questioning teachers' decisions, and resisting certain behavioral expectations, and respect towards teachers.

Similar trends in student disengagement were also evident in Güven et al. (2023) and in Altaai and Gokgoz Kurt (2023) findings, where expatriate teachers mentioned students

distancing themselves from learning and from other classroom activities demonstrating reduced willingness to engage in lessons. While some participants in the current study viewed disengagement as intentional, literature indicated that students withdrawal may also stem from limited language confidence and emotional insecurity. For instance, expatriate teacher participants in the study of Güven et al. (2023) claimed that, students disengage potentially because they ““felt excluded” and worried about “not being understood” (Teacher 177), suggesting that behaviors related to disengagement may arise as a way of self protection rather than being a deliberate resistance towards learning activities. Contrasting to my findings where teachers reported students challenging teachers’ authority through resisting instructions or questioning assessment activities, challenges described by Güven et al. (2023) are more related to behavioral aspects. For instance, such as students not following classroom rules or expectations, which suggests a difference in cultural understanding of behavior rather than deliberate academic resistance.

Additionally, the participants of the present study revealed that they felt they were perceived as ‘outsiders’ within the UAE multicultural classroom environment. As a result, some expatriate teachers felt that students do not fully respect their teacher authority or respond to discipline in the same way. Unlike the previous studies reviewed, which mainly connect students’ behavior challenges with language barriers, participants of the current study revealed that some authority related challenges were also related to their positionality as foreign teachers within UAE international school context, or how accepted they felt with in the classrooms.

5.1.4 Managing students with Special Educational Needs

Current study further revealed that, managing students with special educational needs (SEN) contributed additional complexities when managing multicultural classrooms. Participants mentioned about feeling less prepared or lack of necessary training to support special educational needs students especially when inclusive classroom practices were different from their home countries. Some participants mentioned that in their previous education contexts , SEN students were educated separately, which resulted in limited experience with inclusive practices.

Some participants of the current study claimed that not being sufficiently trained enough to manage students with special educational needs as a major challenge when managing multicultural classroom setting in UAE international schools. This idea has been mentioned in prior literature as well. For instance, Florian and Black Hawkins (2011) stated that majority of the mainstream teachers assumed they are not been adequately prepared to teach SEN learners, indicating their beliefs about in order to teach SEN learners they need expertise techniques which were not provided during their teacher education. Güven et al. (2023) also found similar findings in their study, where teachers openly acknowledged that their training was incomplete, as their education course did not provide sufficient knowledge on how to support students with special educational needs. However, Florian and Black Hawkins (2011) offer a contrasting point for this, where they argued that while teachers perceive themselves as undertrained, their everyday skills, or “craft knowledge” proves they are capable of teaching SEN students, even if they feel undertrained. Furthermore, they explained that teachers’ everyday problem solving techniques illustrate that they are more competent than they assume. This idea also appeared within the participants of the current study, as some of the expatriate teachers stated that although managing SEN students was initially challenging, through practical experiences, and increased familiarity with relevant support systems, over time their ability to support SEN students have been increased. Therefore these findings suggest that, effective classroom management in inclusive environments can be developed through experience and reflective practice.

Majority of the participants reported about parents being hesitant towards acknowledging learning or developmental issues observed in their children. Teachers described that some parents were reluctant to discuss about potential SEN related concerns about their child, although teachers observe student behavior which appear to be beyond typical classroom behavior, which made early intervention more difficult. Similar concerns regarding low parental cooperation was also identified in Güven et al. (2023), where teachers reported about difficulties receiving sufficient support from the parents of SEN students. In their study, one participant has mentioned about an incident where they tried to communicate with the family of an autistic child regarding classroom participation of the student but explained they did not receive any response

from the parents, showcasing how lack of parent- teacher communication may hinder student support processes. These experiences closely resemble the findings of the present study, where teachers encountered difficulties obtaining parental cooperation when discussing students' possible learning or developmental concerns.

5.1.5 Family, institutional and socio economic background

Furthermore, some teachers of the current study described situations where family related circumstances such as parental separation influenced students' classroom participation. Güven et al. (2023) also found that family circumstances and home environment may strongly influence student's behavior, motivation, and willingness to participation in classroom activities. They further noted that family related difficulties, such as low socio economic status may significantly contribute to student's withdrawal from learning activities and social interactions. Overall, the findings of the present study and the literature together suggest that teachers are often among the first to recognize possible SEN related concerns or emotional changes of the students. In terms of SEN related matters, if parental cooperation and support is limited, then it becomes difficult for teachers to provide students with suitable early interventions. Similarly, both my data and Güven et al. (2023) illustrated that family circumstances such as divorce, or financial pressure can strongly influence students' behavior and participation in classroom activities.

Another finding of the study was that some teachers perceived students' socio economic background influenced their attitudes towards education, behavior and interactions within the school. Participants' experiences indicated that some students' attitudes and behaviors seemed to reflect the influence of their affluent backgrounds outside the school. This implies that classroom management in UAE international school context can also be influenced by broader socioeconomic aspects.

Teachers further mentioned about institutional challenges which influenced their classroom management approaches, including unfamiliar educational systems and curriculum requirements. Similarly, Halicioğlu's (2015) findings suggest that teachers those who are working abroad, struggle with unfamiliar curriculum requirements, and delivery methods. Another challenge mentioned by the teachers of the current study

was curriculum requirements. For instance, one participant mentioned about removing certain words from the lesson content due to the curriculum regulations of the host country. This was supported by DeBeer's (2014, as cited in Halicioğlu, 2015), discussion on how some schools in the middle eastern context remove or revise Western texts and educational materials to better align with Islamic beliefs and culture. Together, these findings imply that expatriate teachers' classroom management in UAE international context include more than solely managing classroom activities, but it also involves adjusting to unfamiliar curriculum requirements, and cultural regulation of the host country, adding multiple layers of complexities for the expatriate teachers.

5.2 How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage multicultural classrooms in the UAE International schools?

5.2.1 Understanding students' backgrounds

Findings of the current study situated teachers understanding of student and their backgrounds as a main aspect in classroom management in UAE international schools. Data of the preset study illustrate that this understanding of students' cultural backgrounds was deeply tied with the relationships they develop with students. As mentioned by the teachers of the present study, when they observe students carefully and paid attention to detect sudden behavioral changes in them, or adjust their lessons plans so students could express themselves better made teachers understand about students' background as well as their personal needs. Teachers also described about situations where they reflected on their own assumptions about teaching, especially related to content of the curriculum of the host country and where they had to adjust certain materials according to the host country regulations. Instead of viewing this as a problem, participants adapted suitable approaches and became more flexible in their lesson delivery and teaching practices. This aligns with Weinstein et al.'s (2004) view that culturally responsive classroom management require teachers to be aware on how their own cultural beliefs and assumptions influence their teaching practices. Overall, these findings revealed two key ideas of culturally responsive classroom management discussed by Weinstein et al. (2004), particularly the importance of understanding

students' cultural backgrounds and recognizing ones' own ethnocentrism. Therefore in the present study, teachers were able to create a learning environment which is both supportive and culturally responsive, by adapting their teaching practices to better suit the cultural context.

5.2.2 Adjusting pedagogical practices

Another theme emerged from the data regarding the strategies teachers implement for classroom management was adjusting teaching practices and learning activities in response to student diversity. Data on this theme reflected key ideas related to CRCM framework, particularly with regards to knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds, and use of culturally appropriate management strategies (Weinstein et al., 2004). These adaptations, which were mentioned by the expatriate teachers of the current study stemmed from their understanding of students' cultural backgrounds, interests and preferences. For instance, the music teacher stated that she adjust her curriculum at the beginning of each academic year by incorporating students' interests and needs, by including the songs they prefer to learn, whereas some participants described they support diverse learning needs of the students by providing them with differentiated tasks, or by guiding them for learning stations. By focusing on student centered methods, reshaping lesson plans to be more flexible, and using content according to student preferences, interests and inclusive for students from different cultural backgrounds, findings of the current study supports Gay's (2002) idea that "culturally responsive teachers know how to determine the multicultural strengths and weaknesses of curriculum designs and instructional materials and make the changes necessary to improve their overall quality" (p. 108). Together, these findings illustrates how CRCM and adaptive teaching practices help support student engagement in multicultural classroom settings in UAE international schools.

Moreover, teachers of the current study stated that they used positive relationships, and emotional support when managing classrooms. Similarly, Weinstein et al. (2004) described that caring teacher student relationships are vital in culturally responsive classroom management, based on Gay's (2000, as cited in Weinstein et al., 2004) argument that "caring is a foundational pillar of effective teaching and learning, [and]

the lack of it produces inequities in educational opportunities and achievement outcomes for ethnically different students” (p. 33). Similarly, several participants of the current study claimed that they built positive relationships with students through (perceived) subject competence, responding to their emotional needs, and avoiding been overly authoritative. Furthermore, they explained these actions helped them gain student respect, which in turn made their classroom management easier. Therefore, these findings indicate that teacher authority in multicultural classroom contexts, such as in UAE international schools come from positive teacher student relationships rather than from strict control.

Another strategy used by the teachers of the current study when managing student behavior in multicultural classroom setting in UAE international schools were the use of positive reinforcement and setting clear classroom rules. As described in the study of McIntosh et al. (2021), these methods can be linked to the culturally responsive behavior strategies. In their study, they focused on “teaching desired behavior” and “increase positive interaction”. These ideas align with how the expatriate teachers in the present study encourage positive student behavior with setting clear ground rules or by giving stickers and points, suggesting expatriate teachers often promote appropriate classroom behavior without relying on punishment practices.

5.2.3 Collaborating with parents and other staff

Many participants of the present study illustrated about how they collaborate and communicate with parents and colleagues in order to address students’ various behavioral, and learning needs. Findings revealed this collaboration with parents, class teachers, subject teachers, and inclusion department play a vital role in classroom management practices of the participants. Adewale and Moyo’s (2025) mentioned that parental involvement is crucial in managing problematic behavior. Similarly, one participant of my study mentioned about a situation where she contacted the parents to discuss about a behavioral issue of a student, which resulted in arranging the student a shadow teacher. Furthermore, participants of the current study mentioned many incidents where they contacted the inclusion department when issues regarding SEN related students arose. Similar ideas were mentioned by Mäe and Ümarik (2025), in

their study where they reported about teachers frequently working with special educational needs personnels. Additionally, Adewale and Moyo (2025) described that supporting student behavior is usually a shared responsibility in school contexts. Similar ideas were mentioned by Mäe and Ümarik (2025), where they found that teachers prefer to work together with their colleagues when supporting diverse learners. This align well with the current study as that findings demonstrate that teachers often work with parents , colleagues, and inclusion department together rather than working alone. This also aligns with CRCM of Weinstein et al. (2004), as participants often worked collaboratively with parents, colleagues , counselors, and inclusion department which are aspects of broader social , and educational context, to better understand diverse student needs.

5.3 Limitations and implications for future studies

The study was conducted with a relatively small sample size of six expatriate teachers, which may limit the applicability of the findings. Although the aim of the study was to gain indepth understanding of the experiences of expatriate teachers with related to the UAE international school context, results of the study may not fully capture the experiences of all expatriate teachers working in different international schools. Since the study was particularly focusing on international schools in UAE, findings will be closely connected to the specific cultural and institutional characteristics of UAE, and as a result the findings may not be applicable for other countries or educational systems.

Furthermore, all the participants of the current study were from south Asian backgrounds, including Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India. Therefore, the study may not fully account for the perspectives of expatriate teachers from other cultural backgrounds including Western , East Asian, and European, whose experiences of multicultural classroom management may differ. Another limitation would be that the study is solely based on expatriate teachers' perspectives. Including additional perspectives from parents , and school administrators such as school principals would have provided a more broader understanding of the phenomena. The experiences of the teachers may have been influenced by the organizational and cultural contexts of the schools, such

as school leadership practices and the student population. Those factors were not examined separately in the study. Lastly, since the study used self reported interview data, responses of the participants may have been influenced by subjective interpretation or personal reflections of their experiences.

Findings of the present study indicate several important ideas for future studies on classroom management in multicultural school contexts. Future studies could include a larger and more culturally diverse groups of expatriate teachers as the sample to examine whether expatriate teachers from different cultural backgrounds perceive classroom management challenges and strategies differently. Additionally, as described in the limitations section of this study, future researchers may incorporate views from multiple sources including students, parents, and school management to have a comprehensive and broader understanding of classroom management in multicultural learning environments. Adding live classroom observations together with semi structured interviews would provide in depth knowledge about classroom management challenges expatriate teacher face and about the strategies they adopt in multicultural settings. Moreover, future researchers could decide on conducting a comparative study across different countries to identify how cultural and educational differences shape classroom management practices. Rather than based on a single method, future research may conduct using mixed method design, which combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain an in depth understanding of the classroom management in multicultural educational contexts.

5.4 Conclusion

This study explored experiences of expatriate teachers those who are working UAE international schools, particularly focusing on the classroom management challenges they faced and about the adaptive strategies they used to overcome such challenges. Involving six participants and using qualitative approach and semi strucrued interviews as the data collection method this study explored how multicultural classroom management was experienced by expatriate teahcers working in the UAE interantionl schools.

Findings of the current study revealed that teachers faced multiple challenges when managing multicultural classrooms, which are related to students' cultural and linguistic diversity, student behavioral challenges, managing SEN students, family and socioeconomic influences, and institutional and structural constraints. Expatriate teachers described about how variations in cultural backgrounds, languages, parental attitudes, and education systems shape their teaching practices. Moreover, the findings suggest that classroom management in UAE international schools was not solely based on maintaining student behavior, but rather it required the teachers to respond and adapt according to behavioral, cultural, and learning needs of diverse students.

In order to manage these challenges, participants described using a range of strategies. These strategies include understanding students cultural background, adapting teaching practices and learning activities, building positive relationships with students, managing classroom behavior, and collaborating with parents, colleagues, and inclusion staff. The findings further revealed that classroom management in multicultural setting required teachers to be culturally aware, flexible, and build positive relationships. Furthermore, findings strongly reflected the components of culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM). Overall, this study adds to the existing literature on expatriate teachers' classroom management on multicultural environments.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Participant Information Sheet

Demographics and Professional Background

Nationality:.....

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say

Teaching Qualifications:.....

Total Years of Teaching Experience:.....

Years of Experience Teaching in the UAE:.....

Years of experience teaching in home country (before coming to the UAE):.....

Type of School: ☐ British ☐ American ☐ IB ☐ CBSE ☐ Other:.....

Grade Level/s Taught:.....

Subject Taught:.....

Average Class Size:.....

Language(s) of Instruction:.....

Have you received any formal training in classroom management?

Yes ☐ No

Appendix 2 Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Interview Guide- Classroom Experiences of Expatriate Teachers in UAE International Schools

Briefing-

(Casually welcome and greet the participant, brief mentioning about the privacy notice form, consent/Inform about the audio recording, start audio recording)

Section A – Typical Day

Q:

Can you tell me what a typical day (or a normal day/ lesson) usually looks like in your classroom? Please feel free to talk about how the lessons happen, and how students are involved, and how the day usually unfolds.

Optional follow-up prompts (if needed):

- Can you tell me how students normally behave and engage with each other during lessons?
- Can you tell me about what are the responses of students to your teaching?
- Do you follow any daily routines or strategies to manage the classroom?

Section B – Strengths and Challenges

Main question:

Now once again, think about one of your normal days at school,

- 1.can you describe any aspects that you feel go well or work effectively?(probe: are there any routines or strategies you felt that worked well for you during this situation ?)
- 2.Can you remember any challenges or difficult situations that may have occurred in the classroom?

Follow-up prompts (if needed):

- Are there moments in your lessons that you feel go particularly smoothly?
- What parts of your classroom management approach are you most confident about?
- Are there specific situations or moments during lessons that you find more challenging to manage?(can you tell me about such a specific experience?)
- What factors do you think influence classroom interactions or routines in your classroom?
- Are there particular times or situations when classroom management feels more challenging for you?
- Did any of these challenges change (increase or decrease) over time as you became more familiar with the students or the context?

Section C – Strategies and Adaptations: Experience and Training for Multicultural Settings.

Main question:

When challenging situations arise during your lesson /in your classroom, what approaches do you use to manage them ?

Follow-up prompts (if needed):

- Can you give mean example of a strategy that worked well in a challenging situation?
- How do you adapt your teaching or management style to students' cultural backgrounds?
- How do you adapt your teaching or management style to students' individual needs?
- Have you made any adjustments to your classroom management or discipline approaches? If yes, can you explain?
- Are there strategies you use to maintain a positive and supportive classroom environment even when challenges arise?

- How do you reflect on or adjust your strategies after a lesson, to improve classroom management?

- Have any training programs, professional development courses, or prior education influenced how you manage classroom challenges or adapt your strategies?)

Section D: Reflection Questions

- Looking back on your experiences teaching in the UAE,how has your approach to classroom management changed compared to when you were teaching in your home country?

- What factors in the UAE context have influenced how you manage your classroom?(Please explain your answer).

- How do you see the difference of classroom management in your home country and in the UAE?

- Has teaching in the UAE changed the way you think about classroom management compared to your home country?.(Has teaching in the UAE influenced your beliefs or assumptions about classroom management?)

Optional follow-up prompts:

- have your expectations of student behavior changed? (if yes, how?)

- Have you noticed any personal assumptions or perspectives that you needed to adjust or adapt?

- Are there particular strategies or practices you now value more because of your experience in the UAE?

Appendix 3 Consent Form

Consent for participation in a scientific research

Research project title- Classroom management experiences faced by expatriate teachers in UAE international schools

This research is conducted as part of a Master's thesis at the University of Turku. The researcher responsible is Randima Hiyanthi Wijekoon, Master's student, University of Turku.

Supervisor: Dr. Suvi Jokila, University of Turku.

You have been invited to participate in the above-mentioned research.

I have read and understood the participant information sheet. I understand that participating in the research is voluntary and that I can at any point withdraw from participating in the research without giving any reason or cancel my consent without any negative consequences. The information collected from me until the withdrawal of consent may be used as part of the research data.

I have received sufficient information about the research and how my personal data is processed. I have had the opportunity to ask questions from the researcher. With my signature, I give consent for participating in the research. I consent to my interview being audio-recorded for research purposes. The recordings will be transcribed and anonymised, and I will not be identifiable in the research results. (Please tick your option).

Yes ☐ No ☐

Verification

Participant's signature-..... Date-.....

Contact information

Researcher: Randima Hiyanthi Wijekoon ,University of Turku

Email: rhwimu@utu.fi

Appendix 5 Example of NVivo codes for research question 1

UAE Expatriate Teacher Experiences

RQ 1-Classroom Management Challenges

What are the main classroom management challenges faced by expatriate teachers in the UAE?

Name	Description	Files	References
Adapting to a different curriculum	Situations where teachers describing challenges in adjusting to a new teaching content	2	4
Avoidance of classroom activities	Situations where students avoid learning activities by giving various excuses	1	1
Awareness of cultural hierarchy	Teachers recognizing status differences within the education system (eg;more authority for local teachers)	1	1
Constant supervision of students	Instances when the teachers need to observe constantly the students in order to maintain student safety	1	2
Cultural diversity of the students	Instances when the teacher recognizes how ,differences in students' cultural backgrounds influence classroom interactions, or behaviour.	2	2
Diversity within same national backgrounds	Instances when teacher recognises differences between the students from the same country.	1	1
Family influence on students	Instances when the teacher perceive that students' certain attitudes, behaviours, beliefs are influenced by parents , or family background, parenting style, or home environment.	3	7
Lack of attention	instances when students appear distracted, or unfocused.	1	1

Appendix 6 Example of NVivo codes for research question 2

RQ2- Strategies and Adaptations

How do expatriate teachers adapt their classroom management strategies to effectively manage the multicultural classrooms in the UAE?

Name	Description	Files	References
Adapting communication style to match student's culture	Instances when the teacher adapts/modify her communication style to better suit the student	1	4
Adapting teacher behaviour to students' level	When teacher adjust their teaching style to match student's level (age, developmental level...etc)without being too strict.	1	3
Adapting to host country's' cultural norms	teacher adjusting their perspectives or teaching practices to fit the culture of the country	1	1
Adjusting instruction to basics	instances where the teachers modify their content to basic due to contextual constraints.	1	1
Adjusting their previous beliefs	Teachers reflecting and adjusting their previous believes in accordance with the new culture they are working in.	1	1
Age appropriate strategies	Teaching or classroom management approaches tailored to students' age.	1	3
Adapting teacher behaviour to students' level	When teacher adjust their teaching style to match student's level (age, developmental level...etc)without being too strict.	1	3
Assigning leadership roles	Instances when teachers assign responsibilities /leadership roles for students in order to encourage positive engagement.	1	1
Attention regaining activities	Teaching activities used by the teachers to refocus students' attention during lessons when students become distracted or unfocused.	2	3