

A Longitudinal Study of Saudi EFL Teacher Perspectives on Classroom Management Strategies

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Received: March 13, 2022

Accepted: April 20, 2022

Online Published: April 29, 2022

doi: 10.5539/elt.v15n5p128

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v15n5p128>

Abstract

Using a rating scale, this study investigated Saudi English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' perspectives on the importance and implementation of classroom management strategies (CMSs) during three phases: T1, T2, and T3. Results differed significantly regarding the importance of positive CMSs for primary (T1 and T3) and secondary schools (T2). Additionally, results were significant for negative CMSs in favor of primary schools (T3). Results differed significantly regarding implementing positive CMSs for secondary (T1) and primary schools (T3). Last, results were significant for negative CMSs favoring primary (T1) and secondary schools (T3). EFL teachers' perspectives remain critical and researchable.

Keywords: CMSs, Saudi EFL teachers, perspectives, importance, implementation

1. Introduction

Effective classroom management (CM) is essential in creating a thriving learning environment. However, when addressing problems in the classroom, some teachers cannot differentiate among CM, discipline, and punishment (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Shaeffer (2006) defined discipline as "the practice of teaching or training a person to obey rules or a code of behavior in both the short and long terms" (p. 21) and punishment as "an action (penalty) that is imposed on a person for breaking a rule or showing improper conduct" (p. 11). Walters and Frei (2007) differentiated CM in particular from discipline, defining CM as the teacher's responsibility for how things are done in the classroom and discipline as the student's responsibility for how to behave inside the classroom. Additionally, Sieberer-Nagler (2016) stated that CM refers to "creating the setting, decorating the room, arranging the chairs, speaking to children and handling their responses, putting routines in place, developing rules, and communicating those rules to the students" (p. 163).

According to Quintero and Ramírez (2011), discipline is an issue that requires prompt attention and action to meet the quality criteria of the educational system. Discipline in the classroom is concerned with class control, management, and active involvement. Administrators define discipline as stillness, good behavior, and calm; students define discipline as rules, instructions, and regulations. As a result, practicum programs usually provide novice teachers with practical CM strategies (CMSs) to manage day-to-day classroom challenges. They must be taught to expand their teaching repertoire and become adept at recognizing difficulties. Sieberer-Nagler (2016) believed that creating a positive classroom atmosphere requires teachers to be knowledgeable to teach successfully in different areas such as providing feedback, praising, handling mistakes, posing and answering questions, and structuring lessons. Moreover, teachers need to use practical CMSs to reduce anxiety and enhance motivation, humor, and active learning time.

Furthermore, Kumar and Liu (2019) emphasized that teachers should learn how to maintain CM before learning how to teach because CM is an essential factor in teaching-learning process. Likewise, Franklin and Harrington (2019) pointed out that effective CMSs and successful evidence-based teaching and learning pedagogies assist new and experienced teachers in promoting a positive CM.

An increasing number of studies have investigated CM from different angles. For instance, Hunt et al. (2009) highlighted the need for teachers to obtain CM skills to develop successful teaching skills. Kayikçi (2009) reported a significant relationship between the dimensions of CM skills of teachers and the disciplinary behavior of students such as "recognition of student characteristics and needs," "setting up class rules and application," "management

of undesirable behavior,” and “arrangement of the classroom environment and physical structure.” Sieberer-Nagler (2016) emphasized the importance of teaching successfully, being knowledgeable in reacting to negative behavior and unpredictable incidents, and creating a positive classroom climate. Mudianingrum et al. (2019) found that CMSs contribute to students’ participation in the teaching-learning process. For example, having good organization, giving learning materials to students, and having students work in groups or practice in pairs encourage interaction among students. Abdullah (2020) stated that some factors such as a lack of teacher training, poor time management, high classroom size, student absenteeism, student demographics, and a lack of student motivation can hamper CM and make conducting it more challenging. Abu Habil and Abu Lifa (2020) pointed out that 100% of teachers agreed that behavioral problems could disrupt teaching and learning processes. In particular, a large class size affects the quality of teaching and affects the monitoring/evaluation of lessons. Additionally, Ahmad et al. (2021) highlighted the significant role of the lesson plan in promoting practical CM. It allows teachers to control what is essential to teach effectively in the classroom setting.

Ample research findings support the effective role of CMSs in English language classrooms, especially when English is taught as a foreign language. For example, Aliakbari and Bozorgmanesh (2015) examined how Iranian teachers follow assertive CMSs and whether these strategies affect student performance. The results showed that teachers apply CMSs of organization, teaching management, teacher-student relationship, and teacher punishment-rewards (consequences). The results also revealed a positive relationship between teachers’ assertiveness and student performance. George et al. (2017) investigated the effects of CMSs on secondary school Nigerian students’ academic performance, concluding that secondary school students differ significantly in academic performance based on provided verbal instruction, corporal punishment, instructional supervision, and delegation of authority to learners.

In an experimental study, Umar (2017) explored the effects of the classroom environment (favorable/poor) on EFL learning by first-grade secondary school Sudanese students. The results revealed significant differences between the achievements of the experimental and the control groups in English in favor of the experimental group, who had studied under favorable classroom conditions.

Moreover, Habibi et al. (2018) explored EFL CM problems and coping strategies of Indonesian school teachers. Seven major themes emerged: (1) challenges caused by students’ participation and motivation; (2) management of students’ behaviors: between punishment and encouragement; (3) the problem of dealing with three languages in class; (4) teachers’ performance as a source of challenges in CM; (4) teachers’ discipline: rule-breaking due to lower salary; (5) non-major English teachers forced to teach English; (6) struggles with time management; and (7) struggles with managing large classes.

Zarei et al. (2019) investigated whether EFL teachers’ use of socio-affective and pedagogic strategies tightly related to the cultural context of education affects learners’ willingness to communicate. The results demonstrated that Iranian teachers’ friendly and supportive behavior encourages intermediate students’ participation. When teachers are lively and enthusiastic, they seem to affect the social climate of the classroom. Therefore, it is suggested that EFL teachers use discourse moves to make input more comprehensible.

However, there is little published data on CM in Saudi EFL classrooms, and it remains a significant challenge for teachers. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate female Saudi EFL teachers’ perspectives on the importance and implementation of CMSs by type and school level.

1.1 Statement of Problem

As an EFL teacher supervisor, I observed that in-service EFL teachers face discipline issues during class regardless of age, years of experience, or familiarity with misbehavior. A preliminary study was conducted in the first semester of the 2015 academic year to explore the opinions of 37 EFL teachers regarding classroom indiscipline. Teachers were asked to answer the question, “Do you face unacceptable student behavior in your language classes?” The responses were ranked on a 4-point Likert scale (*Always* = 4, *Occasionally* = 3, *Rarely* = 2, and *Never* = 1). The results showed that 70.27% (26) of the participants always faced challenging and chronic indiscipline situations, 18.92% (7) occasionally faced them, 8.11% (3) rarely faced them, and only one teacher (2.70%) had never faced them.

During data collection for the preliminary study, the Saudi government launched its 2030 Vision, wherein education was listed as a prominent axis of change. The new vision statement argued that old-fashioned teaching methods are no longer suitable for preparing nations for the rapidly changing world, with shifts that were unimaginable just a decade ago (Saudi Vision 2030, 2016).

Saudi Vision 2030 directed the Ministry of Education (MOE) to develop an education system that can equip graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to adapt to such changes. Based on the strategic goals from Saudi Vision 2030, the MOE made fundamental changes with regard to developing curricula, implementing interactive teaching methods, and integrating authentic assessment techniques at all school levels (Alabdulaziz, 2019).

Furthermore, the MOE funded various professional development programs (PDPs) for teachers to improve their professional knowledge, competence, skills, and effectiveness. Moreover, the PDPs paid greater attention to the learner-centered approach as a new movement and a core change in the Saudi educational system. For this reason, innovative teaching methods such as active learning, collaborative learning, project-based learning, and peer learning, were implemented (Alabdulaziz, 2019).

The MOE launched the e-learning platforms IEN (Yousif, 2020a), SHMS (SHMS, 2020), Future Gate (Al-Khalidi, 2019), and Madrasati (Yousif, 2020b) for learners, teachers, administrative staff, and parents to enhance teaching-learning quality. These educational changes revisit CM, wherein student silence and non-reactivity are no longer acceptable. Consequently, teachers' perspectives on CMSs are expected to change.

Based on the new Saudi educational movement, the results of the preliminary study, and the contributions of previous research demonstrating that CM is a critical issue for EFL teachers (Ibrahim, 2016; Mohammed, 2016; Mudianingrum et al., 2019; Soleimani & Razmjoo, 2016), the researcher developed the current study.

The purpose of the study was to investigate female Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance and implementation of CMSs by type (positive and negative) and school level (primary, intermediate, and secondary) during three phrases: T1 (2015–2016), T2 (2016–2017), and T3 (2017–2018).

The data were separated into three periods, with data collected from the same samples in each period to observe changes over time. The study attempted to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the differences in Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance of CMSs by type and school level at T1, T2, and T3?
- 2) What are the differences in Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives on implementing CMSs by type and school levels at T1, T2, and T3?

1.2 Hypotheses

The researcher proposed that there were no statistically significant differences among the mean scores of Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives toward the following:

- H₀1. Importance of positive and negative CMSs and school levels during T1
- H₀2. Importance of positive and negative CMSs and school levels during T2
- H₀3. Importance of positive and negative CMSs and school levels during T3
- H₀4. Implementation of positive and negative CMSs and school levels during T1
- H₀5. Implementation of positive and negative CMSs and school levels during T2
- H₀6. Implementation of positive and negative CMSs and school levels during T3

2. Literature Review

The following literature review is divided into two main sections. The first section discusses studies that showed factors affecting CM. The second section summarizes studies that discussed CM in EFL classrooms.

2.1 Factors Affecting CM

Hunt et al. (2009) argued that establishing well-managed classrooms is a critical issue for teachers and that doing so positively contributes to students' engagement and achievement, specifically when classroom rules are concrete, explicit, and functional. Therefore, teachers should be aware of (a) CM theories, (b) CMSs, and (c) CM styles to address disruptive behavior and create better classroom environments.

First, teachers should learn relevant CM theories to learn strategies for solving classroom problems. Based on a considerable body of literature (Arthur-Kelly et al., 2003; Praveen & Alex, 2017; Sugai, 2015), the researcher classified CM theories into three overlapping groups (Figure 1).

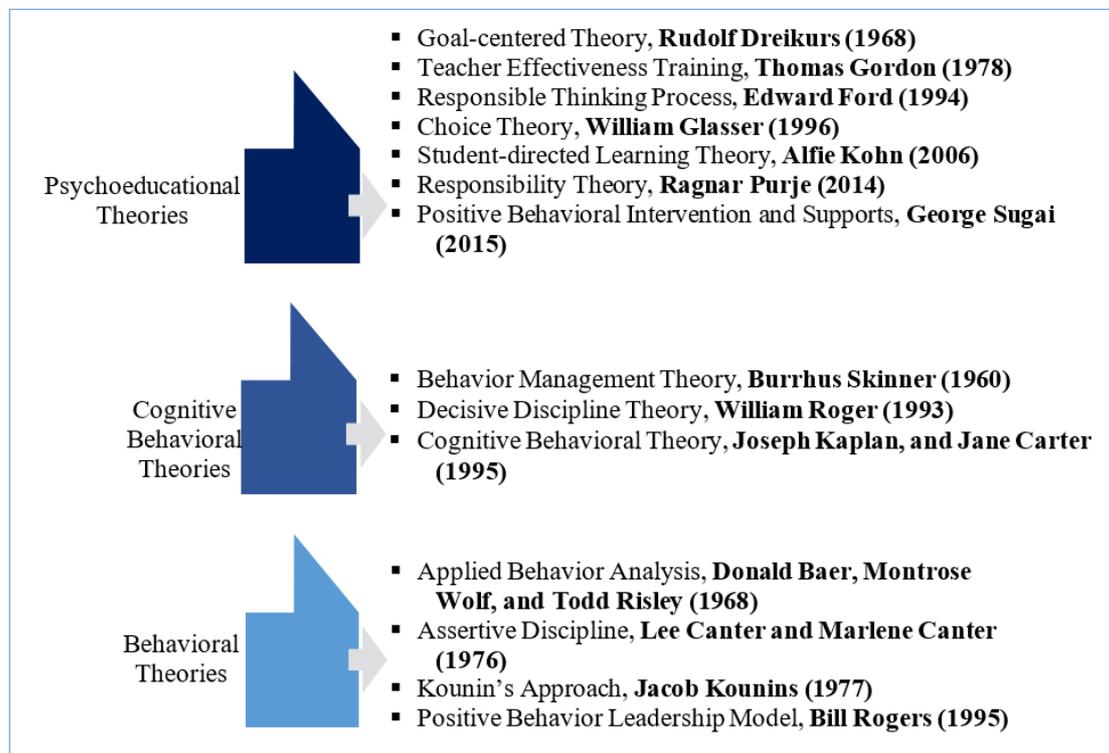


Figure 1. Summary of CM theories

CM can primarily be classified as psychoeducational, cognitive, or behavior theories

Understanding these theories' characteristics allows teachers to engage with theory- and evidence-based practices. Additionally, comparing and analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of CM theories helps teachers develop a personal theoretical approach to CM that reflects their personal teaching philosophies.

Second, effective CMSs are essential goals for effective teachers. Hunt et al. (2009) argued that teachers should have essential professional characteristics in three categories: knowledge, skills, and dispositions. First, teachers should have at least three types of knowledge: professional knowledge of the teaching profession in general; pedagogical knowledge of concepts, theories, and methods in all subject areas; and pedagogical content knowledge of teaching approaches, methods, and strategies in a particular subject area. Second, teachers must demonstrate the necessary skills to integrate knowledge effectively in the teaching-learning process. Third, teachers must have appropriate dispositions, ethics, beliefs, values, and attitudes that influence their behavior to promote learning for all students.

Sieberer-Nagler (2016) recommended that teachers vary their effective CMSs, such as providing feedback, using praise, handling mistakes, answering questions, reducing anxiety, enhancing motivation, and structuring lessons. Moreover, Goss et al. (2017) suggested that teachers use various CMSs to prevent behavioral deterioration, such as explicitly teaching CM rules and procedures, indicating high expectations for every student, maintaining warm teacher-student relationships, encouraging and praising students, and establishing clear consequences. According to Gasimova (2018), teachers should adopt CMSs, including stating clear learning objectives, using equitable classroom behavior, and showing awareness of student needs.

Additionally, CM is an essential component of teaching, and student management tactics should be implemented to improve academic performance. Claxton (2008) suggested that teachers adopt deliberative methodologies that employ communication, discussion, debate, simulation, role-play, and individual or group presentations to maximize student involvement in the learning process. Furthermore, Claxton indicated certain crucial features of such methodologies that may help teachers manage their classrooms and maintain discipline (Figure 2).

- ① Develop student knowledge through practical experience.
- ② Assist students in applying gained knowledge to real-world situations.
- ③ Engage students in an active learning atmosphere.
- ④ Develop an array of challenging 21st-century skills.
- ⑤ Shift to learner-centered settings to raise student participation.
- ⑥ Build on different student learning styles, needs, and abilities.

Figure 2. CM methodologies

Features of deliberative methodologies that assist CM

In sum, if the primary goal of CM is to prevent disruptive behaviors that interrupt students' focus while learning, the interwoven nature of teaching methods and CMSs may optimize both the classroom environment and instruction.

Third, as managers of their classrooms, teachers should address and diffuse situations linked to student misbehavior. Teachers should adopt CM styles that complement established rules and anticipate previously encountered problems. Figure 3 summarizes the most common teacher CM styles, based on Drobot and Roşu (2012), Hunt et al. (2009), and Wubbels et al. (2006).

<p>Authoritarian The teacher is restrictive and cold, even seeing students as passive receivers.</p>	<p>Directive The teacher is not close to students. The class is task oriented.</p>
<p>Laissez-faire The teacher is not involved in decision-making, and students are left to make decisions.</p>	<p>Tolerant The teacher is seen as disorganized but interested in students' personal lives.</p>
<p>Authoritative The teacher is enthusiastic and shows warm student-teacher relationships.</p>	<p>Aggressive There is decreased association between the teacher and students, causing conflicts.</p>
<p>Democratic The teacher avoids making decisions alone and usually involves students.</p>	<p>Repressive The teacher overreacts to small transgressions in the classroom.</p>

Figure 3. Teachers' CM styles

Most common CM styles and descriptions of each

Because the style affects CM's success, teachers have to switch among the above styles and adopt the most appropriate one when managing classroom problems.

Goss et al. (2017) categorized disruptive behaviors that affect learning settings into three major types: (1) passively disengaged behaviors, in which a student is compliant but quietly disengaged from learning; (2) low-level disruptive behaviors, in which a student is noisy, restless, or interrupting others and disengaged in learning; and (3) aggressive and anti-social behaviors, in which a student is highly uncooperative or fails to comply with classroom norms (p. 9). Some teachers cannot teach in the face of such problems and may become aggressive, stressed, or unable to react fairly and consistently (Abu Habil & Abu Lifa, 2020; Khodabandeh & Jamali, 2019; Soleimani & Razmjoo, 2016). Hunt et al. (2009) noted that students who feel safe, fairly treated, and meaningfully involved in the learning environment show successful performance and subject-content development.

2.2 CM in EFL Classrooms

As in other classrooms, foreign language classrooms may also lack discipline, promoting anxiety, stress, and competition rather than collaboration and communication (Yüksel & Halıcı, 2010). Well-educated language teachers can identify how to foster a non-threatening learning environment that achieves both linguistic goals and effective classroom discipline (Finch, 2004). Soares (2007) stated that EFL teachers play various roles to ensure that language learning occurs. They serve as planners by determining the language skills and/or aspects to be taught and how to teach them, and they serve as facilitators by integrating strategies to bridge gaps in language learning. Moreover, EFL teachers play the role of managers, potentially the most challenging role, by

creating effective learning environments that encourage interaction and communication among students and prevent negative behavior, such as disruptive talking, extensive use of the first language (L1), and lack of attention to language tasks (Soares, 2007).

Moreover, Macías (2018) reported that language teachers face two unique issues that influence CM. First, effective foreign language instruction requires speaking a language that students can understand. Second, it requires activating participation, discussion, and motivation, which significantly affect language performance. According to Claxton (2008), using a set of diverse, deliberative methodologies that focus on context-rich materials and allow argument rather than merely rote learning might decrease indiscipline in the language classroom.

To summarize, aspects such as foreign language use, the interactive nature of the target language, and innovative teaching methodologies establish distinctive features in foreign language instruction and may thereby influence CM in many ways.

Over the past two decades, significant research has been conducted to analyze teacher responses to CM in EFL settings. Several attempts have been made to determine commonalities among teacher attitudes across nationalities. Wahyuni (2016) found that Indonesian EFL teachers' beliefs changed due to contextual variables, such as life and teaching experience, reading and professional development, adopted strategies, and a deep belief in the necessity to change. Khodabandeh and Jamali (2019) reported a positive and significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' creativity and CM. Debreli and Ishanova (2019)' findings indicated that Turkish EFL teachers preferred to implement CMSs rather than punishments to handle student misbehavior in their classes.

Koutrouba et al. (2018) investigated Greek elementary school teachers' perceptions of CM orientation, specifically whether they prefer an interactionalist, interventionist, or non-interventionist style in behavior and instructional management. The findings revealed that most participants are interactionalists when it comes to instructional management and interventionists when it comes to behavior management.

A recent study found that the beliefs of Indonesian EFL teachers differed by teacher category, teaching organization, and working status but not by gender (Isa & Widiati 2020).

Other studies have documented the types of student misbehavior exhibited in EFL classrooms.

Sakui (2007) recommended CMSs to occupy students in EFL classrooms, such as reading aloud, copying texts in their notebooks, and writing translated sentences. Tartwijk et al. (2009) reported that Dutch teachers in secondary education were aware of the significance of certain CMSs, such as stating clear rules and responding to misbehavior, but firmly believed in reducing any negative influence of corrections on the classroom environment.

Yüksel and Halıcı (2010) found that to grasp the attention of young EFL learners, teachers should implement practical language activities, such as games, realia, role-playing, and drama since young learners tend to rely on visualization, involvement, and positive motivation while learning languages. The researchers suggested CMSs for EFL classrooms, including preparing real-life materials, using technology in language learning, motivating students intrinsically and extrinsically, employing cooperative teaching methods, and designing interactive language activities and tasks.

Quintero and Ramírez (2011) highlighted the most successful CMSs used by teachers in EFL classrooms, including giving clear instructions for classroom tasks, planning well-organized and attractive lessons, keeping students occupied, and managing class time. They added that teachers should clearly state classroom rules, procedures, and routines; indicate student responsibilities; monitor students in the classroom; consider individual differences; and pay attention to divergent learning styles.

Yazdanmehr and Akbari (2015) collected general guidelines for teacher management skills from expert Iranian EFL teachers, including teacher authority and power, use of external discipline preventive strategies, and observation of learner behavior. They also listed effective CMSs, including clarifying expectations, establishing rules, and using body language. Similarly, Soleimani and Razmjoo (2016) revealed three primary themes in CM issues: (1) instructional challenges, (2) contextual challenges, and (2) behavioral and psychological challenges such as unfinished homework assignments and insistence on speaking in the L1. The results highlighted the CMSs Iranian EFL teachers suggested, including warnings, eye contact, and teacher-learner conferences.

Likewise, Wahyuni (2016) found that Indonesian EFL teachers implemented CMSs such as linguistic or nonlinguistic cues, warnings, establishment of class procedures, punishment, teacher-student conferences, reinforcements, and administrative interventions. Another Indonesian study by Mudianingrum et al. (2019)

found that EFL teachers applied seating arrangements, learner motivation, positive attitude demonstration, and interactive rapport building with students.

Marashi and Assgar (2019) argued that the effective use of CMSs by EFL teachers positively affects learners’ language learning. Therefore, several studies have suggested appropriate CMSs for EFL classrooms to control and manage disruptive behavior.

Abdullah (2020) identified CMSs employed by public- and private-sector EFL classrooms, such as specific teaching strategy use, effective lesson planning, and student support. Abu Habil and Abu Lifa (2020) reported that 100% of Libyan EFL teachers agreed that CM problems, such as large class sizes with diverse abilities and dysfunctional classroom seating arrangements, disrupt the teaching-learning process.

In the Saudi context, Ibrahim (2016) explored the influential roles of EFL teachers in both the development of CM and improvement of learner achievement, finding that teachers’ variations in voice tone and continuous reflections upon lesson plans, teaching methods, and strategies, and students’ record keeping are effective CMSs that lead to fundamental changes in learners’ critical thinking and CM. Mohammed (2016) investigated CM procedures that Saudi EFL teachers use, discovering that CM style orientation is the most common issue new teachers face. Furthermore, the findings clearly showed that novice teachers did not participate in a training program in advance.

3. Methods

In this quantitative study, a longitudinal research design was implemented that “examine[d] information from many units or cases across more than one point in time” (Neuman, 2014, p. 44).

3.1 Population and Sample

Three representative samples of female Saudi EFL teachers were recruited from public government schools in Madinah, Saudi Arabia. The sample was delimited to female EFL teachers because it was socially and culturally permissible to keep their contact information for further communication during the research phases. Additionally, it was possible to visit them in their female schools, whereas this was not possible for male schools.

The population of 856 teachers was distributed as follows: 267 in primary schools, 277 in intermediate schools, and 312 in secondary schools (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1. Study sample school levels

EFL Teachers in Schools		<i>n</i>	%	Total
Participating EFL Teachers	Primary School EFL Teachers	22	14.76	149 (100%)
	Intermediate School EFL Teachers	66	44.30	
	Secondary School EFL Teachers	61	40.94	
Participating Schools	Primary Schools	20	45.45	44 (100%)
	Intermediate Schools	11	25.00	
	Secondary Schools	13	29.55	

As Table 1 shows, the study sample that agreed to participate consisted of 149 (100%) EFL teachers, 22 (14.76%) of whom taught in 20 (45.45%) primary schools, 66 (44.30%) of whom taught in 11 (25.00%) intermediate schools, and 61 (40.94%) of whom taught in 13 (29.55%) secondary schools.

Table 2. The study sample’s annual participation

Annual Participation	School Levels			Total
	Primary School	Intermediate School	Secondary School	
2015–2016 Academic Year (T1)	22 (14.76)	66 (44.30)	61 (40.94)	149 (100%)
2016–2017 Academic Year (T2)	22 (14.76)	66 (44.30)	61 (40.94)	149 (100%)
2017–2018 Academic Year (T3)	22 (14.76)	66 (44.30)	61 (40.94)	149 (100%)

3.2 Analysis Methods

The researcher devised a rating scale for the two questions this study addressed: perspectives on the importance and implementation of CMSs. The rating scale was constructed based on the previous literature (Alkhuzay, 2015; Alotaibi, 2014; Koutrouba et al., 2018; Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017; Shaeffer, 2006).

Twelve EFL teachers at primary, intermediate, and secondary schools and three expert EFL educational supervisors reviewed the scale to ensure its content validity. The scale was adjusted according to their suggestions.

The final rating scale consisted of 30 CMSs repeated for the two parts, importance and implementation, including 18 positive and 12 negative strategies. Importance was ranked on a 5-point Likert scale (*Strongly Agree* = 5, *Agree* = 4, *Undecided* = 3, *Disagree* = 2, and *Strongly Disagree* = 1), and so was implementation (*Always* = 5, *Very Often* = 4, *Sometimes* = 3, *Rarely* = 2, and *Never* = 1).

The rating scale was piloted with 37 EFL teachers to measure internal consistency. Table 3 presents the Cronbach's alpha results for the 30 items.

Table 3. Description of the construction of the research instrument

Rating Description	Scale	Importance of CMSs		Implementation of CMSs	
		Positive CMSs	Negative CMSs	Positive CMSs	Negative CMSs
Items		18	12	18	12
Likert Scale		<i>Strongly Agree</i> = 5 . . . <i>Disagree</i> = 1		<i>Always</i> = 5 . . . <i>Never</i> = 1	
Cronbach's Alpha		.848	.677	.825	.706
Total Items		30 Items		30 Items	

3.3 Data Collection

After obtaining official permission from school principals to conduct the study, all participants gave their written informed consent to participate in the study. T1 data were collected on March 20, 2016; T2 data were collected on February 6, 2017; and T3 data were collected on January 23, 2018. The submission dates were chosen based on the beginning date of the second semester of each academic year, which differs from year to year.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed inferentially with multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to detect statistically significant differences in participants' perspectives on the importance and implementation of CMSs by CMS type and school level at T1, T2, and T3. The researcher employed the generalized linear model (GLM) (MANOVA at $P < 0.05$). Preliminary assumptions for the MANOVA test, namely, sample size, normality, linearity, homogeneity of the variance-covariance matrix, and multicollinearity, were checked, and no violations were found.

3.5 Study Limitations

This study has some limitations. First, because the participants were exclusively female, examining the potential impact of gender on the findings was beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, the study involved only Saudi EFL teachers in Madinah. Hence, further studies on a wider scale in the Saudi context are encouraged to generalize the results. It may be possible to use different quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to broaden the scope of future investigations.

4. Results

The initial results of Box's test of equality of covariance matrices regarding the importance of CMSs in T1, T2, and T3 indicated that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables were equal across groups (Box's $M = 3.730$, $F = 0.605$, $p = 0.726 > 0.05$; Box's $M = 17.761$, $F = 2.882$, $p = 0.080 > 0.05$; and Box's $M = 4.982$, $F = 0.808$, $p = 0.563 > 0.05$, respectively). Further, Levene's test of equality of error variances showed that the assumptions of equality of variance for dependent variables were not violated at T1, T2, and T3, respectively ($p = 0.274$ & $0.351 > 0.05$; $p = 0.197$ & $0.351 > 0.05$; $p = 0.463$ & $0.305 > 0.05$).

Regarding the implementation of CMSs in T1, T2, and T3, the initial results indicated that the observed covariance matrices of the dependent variables were equal across groups (Box's $M = 6.586$, $F = 1.069$, $p = 0.379 > 0.05$; Box's $M = 15.371$, $F = 2.494$, $p = 0.201 > 0.05$; and Box's $M = 8.503$, $F = 1.380$, $p = 0.218 > 0.05$, respectively). Additionally, Levene's test showed that the assumptions of equality of variance for dependent variables were not violated at T1, T2, or T3 ($p = 0.808$ & $0.336 > 0.05$; $p = 0.091$ & $0.117 > 0.05$; and $p = 0.248$ & $0.116 > 0.05$, respectively).

Because the initial results showed that Levene's tests' values at T1, T2, and T3 were not significant, Wilks' lambda was used as a multivariate test of significance.

Results of Perspectives on the Importance of Positive and Negative CMSs

Table 4. MANOVA results for perspectives on the importance of CMSs at Time 1 ($n = 149$)

Measures	Primary ($n = 22$)		Intermediate ($n = 66$)		Secondary ($n = 61$)		Sum Squares	of <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> -value	η_p^2
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>					
Positive CMSs	75.50	12.99	67.74	10.55	66.90	11.23	1271.435	2	5.060	.008*	.065
Negative CMSs	32.41	8.65	29.92	7.81	28.03	7.97	329.334	2	2.572	.080	.034

As Table 4 shows, the results indicated statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance of positive CMSs. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that primary school EFL teachers were more strongly in favor of positive CMSs. The value of η_p^2 of 0.065, considered as indicating a moderate effect, represented only 6.5% of the variance in scores for T1.

Moreover, the results showed that there were no statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance of negative CMSs. Based on these results, the first null hypothesis was partially rejected.

Table 5. MANOVA for perspectives on the importance of CMSs at Time 2 ($n = 149$)

Measures	Primary ($n = 22$)		Intermediate ($n = 66$)		Secondary ($n = 61$)		Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> -value	η_p^2
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>					
Positive CMSs	64.23	9.02	66.77	13.33	70.51	8.84	795.487	2	3.235	.042*	.042
Negative CMSs	33.45	8.29	32.70	10.37	33.28	7.60	15.015	2	.092	.912	.001

With respect to T2, the results of the MANOVA analysis shown in Table 5 indicated that there were statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance of positive CMSs. The mean scores indicated that secondary school EFL teachers were more strongly in favor of positive CMSs. The value of η_p^2 of 0.042 was interpreted as indicating a small effect.

However, the results showed that there were no statistically significant differences in perspectives on the importance of negative CMSs. Based on these results, the second null hypothesis was partially rejected.

Table 6. MANOVA results for perspectives on the importance of CMSs at Time 3 ($n = 149$)

Measures	Primary ($n = 22$)		Intermediate ($n = 66$)		Secondary ($n = 61$)		Sum Squares	of <i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> -value	η_p^2
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>					
Positive CMSs	71.14	10.80	65.05	12.07	62.18	11.31	1305.771	2	4.866	.009*	.062
Negative CMSs	34.27	8.56	29.15	9.30	33.44	8.92	759.324	2	4.643	.011*	.060

As Table 6 shows, the results of the MANOVA analysis for T3 indicated statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance of positive CMSs. The mean scores indicated higher perspectives in favor of the primary school level. The value of η_p^2 of 0.062 was considered to show a moderate effect, explaining 6.2% of the variance in scores at Time 3.

Additionally, the results showed statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance of negative CMSs. An inspection of the mean scores indicated higher perspectives in favor of negative CMSs at the primary school level. The value of η_p^2 of 0.060 was interpreted as indicating a moderate effect, explaining 6.0% of the variance in scores at T3. Because of the significant differences in the mean ratings, the third null hypothesis was rejected.

Results of Perspectives Toward the Implementation of Positive and Negative CMSs

Table 7. MANOVA results for perspectives on the implementation of CMSs at Time 1 ($n = 149$)

Measures	Primary ($n = 22$)		Intermediate ($n = 66$)		Secondary ($n = 61$)		Sum of Squares	df	F	p-value	η_p^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD					
Positive CMSs	58.55	10.95	60.89	10.82	64.46	9.40	712.134	2	3.369	.037*	.044
Negative CMSs	33.68	7.83	29.73	8.03	27.70	6.74	584.656	2	5.206	.007*	.067

As Table 7 shows, the results of the MANOVA analysis for T1 indicated that there were statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of positive CMSs. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that secondary school EFL teachers were more strongly in favor of positive CMSs. The η_p^2 value of 0.044 indicated a small effect.

Further, the results showed that there were statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of negative CMSs. The mean scores reported higher perspectives in favor of negative CMSs at the primary school level. The value of η_p^2 of 0.067 was considered to indicate a moderate effect, explaining 6.7% of the variance in scores at T1. Because of the significant differences in the mean ratings, the fourth null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 8. MANOVA results for perspectives on the implementation of CMSs at Time 2 ($n = 149$)

Measures	Primary ($n = 22$)		Intermediate ($n = 66$)		Secondary ($n = 61$)		Sum of Squares	df	F	p-value	η_p^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD					
Positive CMSs	60.91	10.96	60.15	9.07	58.98	12.68	75.841	2	.316	.729	.004
Negative CMSs	30.59	5.82	28.76	8.86	29.10	7.16	55.956	2	.459	.633	.006

In contrast, the results of the MANOVA analysis for T2 indicated no statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of positive CMSs. Similarly, there were no statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of negative CMSs. The fourth null hypothesis was accepted because of the lack of significant differences in the mean ratings.

Table 9. MANOVA results for perspectives on the implementation of CMSs at Time 3 ($n = 149$)

Measures	Primary ($n = 22$)		Intermediate ($n = 66$)		Secondary ($n = 61$)		Sum of Squares	df	F	p-value	η_p^2
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD					
Positive CMSs	66.36	9.10	58.82	10.94	59.33	11.04	1007.689	2	4.370	.014*	.056
Negative CMSs	31.68	7.61	25.91	7.77	31.74	9.63	1242.721	2	8.472	.000*	.104

As Table 9 shows, the results of the MANOVA analysis for T3 indicated statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of positive CMSs. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that primary school EFL teachers were more strongly in favor of positive CMSs. The value of η_p^2 of 0.056 indicated a small effect.

The results also showed that there were statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of negative CMSs. The mean scores indicated stronger agreement with the importance of negative CMSs at the secondary school level. The value of η_p^2 of 0.104 was considered to reveal a large effect, explaining 10.4% of the score variance in teachers' perspectives at T3. The sixth null hypothesis was rejected because of the significant differences in mean ratings.

Last, significant results for EFL teachers' perspectives on the implementation of negative CMSs showed few major differences between the mean scores at the primary and secondary school levels.

5. Discussion

Analyzing the rating scale revealed unexpected findings on EFL teachers' perspectives toward the importance and implementation of CMSs.

5.1 Importance of CMSs

Time 1.

Primary school EFL teachers indicated stronger agreement with the importance of positive CRMs during T1. The efforts the Saudi MOE made prior to T1 to implement educational changes in accordance with Saudi Vision 2030 may explain this phenomenon. In 2016, for instance, the MOE launched intensive practical initiatives to provide PDPs and workshops for teachers on how to manage recent Vision-2030-related changes effectively. These efforts may have stimulated teachers' agreement.

Teaching EFL to young learners in Saudi Arabia is important but challenging. Since the government approved the integration of the English language as a subject in primary school in 2003, contradictory arguments have been made regarding teaching English at this level, revolving around the difficulty of learning foreign languages at such an early age, conflicts with and negative influences of the second language (L2) on the L1, and the lack of clear learning goals and a well-designed EFL curriculum for the primary stage. This uncertainty may cause EFL teachers to value the critical role of CMSs in language classrooms, confirming the findings of Alotaibi (2014). Alotaibi stated that when the MOE considered introducing EFL in the upper grades in primary school in 2003 and later at grade four in 2012, some Saudi parents rejected the idea because of age, subject difficulty, and undesired cultural, linguistic, or academic effects on young Saudi learners.

Another possible explanation for the teachers' agreement might be EFL teachers' beliefs regarding the importance of positive rather than negative CMSs. Positive CMSs include ignoring misbehavior, changing students' seats, praising (positive behaviors), using nonverbal communication, talking to misbehaving students privately, changing the tone of voice, discussing indiscipline, rewarding individuals or groups, posing questions, and giving breaks. Evidence from the literature justifies this view. For example, Sakui (2007), Sieberer-Nagler (2016), and Tartwijk et al. (2009) reported that teachers must vary their effective CMSs by setting clear rules, providing feedback, using praise, answering students' questions, creating interactive activities and tasks, and so on.

The results of this study showed no statistically significant differences in participants' perspectives on the importance of negative CMSs during T1. A possible interpretation of this result is that it reflects teachers' uncertainty regarding the necessary changes and requirements for successful CMS employment. Moreover, the implementation of Saudi Vision 2030 that occurred during T1 primarily focused on training teachers and developing their knowledge, skills, and attitudes toward changing paradigms. It might have been too early for teachers to have formed opinions on the types of CMSs.

This interpretation also seems consistent with Alkhuzay (2015), who claimed that Saudi EFL teachers faced difficulties when introducing a foreign language in primary schools. As a result, they would require pre-training programs to comprehend the new language curriculum and meet the demands of their pupils. Furthermore, they would require in-service teacher training and development programs to be equipped with new teaching strategies and to be ready to adjust any difficulty they may encounter.

Time 2.

Secondary school EFL teachers' perspectives toward the importance of positive CMSs had changed by T2. As Mitchell and Alfuraih (2017) reported via their inclusive and broad timeline description of the English language curriculum for Saudi Arabia's primary, intermediate, and secondary schools, in 2013, the English language curriculum division in the MOE and Tatweer Company for Educational Services English Language Teaching Development Initiative developed a working relationship and in essence partnership for grades 4–12 (2014–2020). In 2015, this resulted in the provision of customized English language teaching textbooks and other supportive materials. Moreover, Tatweer Company for Educational Services implemented English language proficiency testing, pedagogical skill development, and innovative teaching strategies accompanied the customized textbooks in collaboration with the MOE (Mitchell & Alfuraih, 2017). Therefore, it seemed inevitable for EFL teachers to pay attention to their CMSs while struggling to achieve the new curriculum goals.

Another possible explanation for the change in perspective is that secondary school EFL teachers were teaching complex content to EFL students with low proficiency and might thus have found that the new teaching paradigms made language classes more student led and less controlled. Students were given multiple opportunities to practice, communicate, and use the language inside the classrooms. As a response, EFL teachers

may have developed different beliefs regarding their new flexible roles during instruction, including encouraging students to determine how to learn, enabling them to be productive, and facilitating their use of higher-order mental abilities to solve problems. This idea confirms the findings of Soares (2007), who concluded that EFL teachers should play various roles to ensure that language learning takes place, such as those of planners, facilitators, and managers, and should encourage involvement in learning English and establishing well-managed learning settings.

The age of secondary students might also have contributed to the change in secondary EFL teachers' perspectives. Teenagers may have a mixture of psychological, social, and academic problems as well as difficulties coping with learning a foreign language. However, secondary school EFL teachers need to be easy-going and careful when dealing with disruptive behavior and need to increase the use of positive CMSs as much as possible. This interpretation aligns with the findings of Tartwijk et al. (2009), who stated that secondary school teachers believe in reducing negative CMSs; instead, they work hard to develop positive teacher-student relationships.

Similar to the results about the participants' perspectives on the importance of negative CMSs during T1, no statistically significant differences across subject groups were found at T2. One possible reason for these results is EFL teachers' lack of attention to different types of CMSs that could be used to deal with disruptive behavior such as constant rudeness and chatting, harassment of others, frequent lateness, or a general reluctance to participate in class.

Time 3.

The results indicated that participants' perspectives on the importance of positive CMSs differed at the primary school level during T3. This implies that EFL teachers in primary schools had a high sense of concern for their CMSs during T3. These results may be due to the fact that teaching young learners in primary school requires concentrating on both effective CMSs and interactive language teaching methods, such as games, role-playing, total physical response (TPR), visual activities, and drilling techniques. Developing such concentration can be challenging, but it is important to handle classroom indiscipline. Claxton (2008) argued that teachers might adopt deliberative methodologies with communication, discussion, debate, simulation, role-play, and individual or group presentations to maximize students' involvement in the learning process and reduce disruptive behavior. Alkhuzay (2015) supported this notion, stating that introducing the English language at the primary school level required setting aside plenty of time for EFL teachers to be well-prepared to teach and for students to learn. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers enroll in different PDPs to obtain their instructions on teaching young learners and managing new English classes. This recommendation seems to be consistent with Ibrahim (2016), who indicated that teachers' variations in voice tone, reflections upon lesson plans, and use of effective teaching strategies were effective CMSs that led to fundamental changes.

Another possible explanation for participants' perspectives may relate to student age and psychological needs at Time 3. Primary EFL teachers seem to prefer positive CMSs to create comfortable and secure language learning settings and employ various teaching strategies that meet their needs. In so doing, EFL teachers need to set clear and simple rules, procedures, and consequences appropriate to young students. This interpretation agrees with the findings of Yüksel and Halıcı (2010), who highlighted the significance of implementing effective language activities such as games, real objects, role-playing, and drama because young language learners tend to work best with visualization, involvement, and positive motivation. Yüksel and Halıcı also suggested using positive CMSs for young EFL learners, such as integrating technology in language learning, motivating students intrinsically and extrinsically, and designing cooperative language activities and tasks.

It is somewhat surprising that the results showed significant differences in participants' perspectives toward the importance of negative CMSs at the primary school level during T3. A possible explanation is that even though Saudi EFL teachers currently use a learner-centered approach wherein deliberative methodologies are recommended to fit 21st-century learners and fulfill the new phases of development in Saudi Vision 2030, they still use some negative CMSs to control their classes. Therefore, EFL teachers might favor some negative strategies and believe in their importance for managing language classroom discipline problems. Negative strategies include asking misbehaving students to leave the class, stopping the lesson until the disruptive behavior stops, criticizing misbehaving students, issuing verbal threats, and sending misbehaving students to the principal's office or the school psychologist. This explanation is consistent with the findings of Sakui (2007), who revealed that CM seemed more challenging for Japanese EFL teachers even when using CLT activities, thereby highlighting the importance of managing classes using appropriate CMSs.

This result also indicates the importance of varying CM types or tactics, such as authoritarian, authoritative, democratic, or tolerant, according to the type of disruptive student behaviors. This is in with Goss et al. (2017), who suggested using the most appropriate and effective CM styles to manage the learning environment, such as preventative, responsive, or authoritative, in combination with other positive CMSs, such as maintaining warm teacher-student relationships, praising students, and establishing clear consequences to prevent repeated misbehaviors.

5.2 Implementation of CMSs

Time 1.

Regarding the implementation of positive CMSs, EFL teachers showed significant differences in their perspectives at the secondary school level during T1. Secondary school EFL teachers tended to raise students' performance and competencies in the English language as a response to the new vision; they used recommended methods and strategies to enhance language learning and control indiscipline.

These differences may also be related to the maturity and experience of secondary school EFL teachers in the subject matter, allowing them to implement new methods and manage discipline problems. Moreover, because of student age, secondary EFL teachers may feel confident about the effectiveness of positive rather than negative CMSs, such as asking for a summary of the major points in the lesson, giving opportunities to discuss and express reasons beyond indiscipline, and talking privately to misbehaving students. This interpretation is supported by previous research that highlighted CMSs that had proved to be effective in EFL classrooms, such as clarity of expectations, giving of clear instructions, attractive lesson planning, use of body language, motivation of learners, demonstration of positive attitudes, and consideration of individual differences and learning styles (Ibrahim, 2016; Mudianingrum et al., 2019; Quintero & Ramírez, 2011; Yazdanmehr & Akbari, 2015).

However, the results showed statistically significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of negative CMSs at the primary school level during T1. This may be due to lack of experience, student age, the nature of EFL as a new subject area at that level, and Saudi young learners' attitudes toward EFL. This interpretation is supported by the findings of Mohammed (2016), who concluded that the negative perceptions of Saudi EFL teachers toward CMSs are influenced by their limited teaching experiences after the recent launch of the EFL program by the MOE in the early grades of the primary level in Saudi Arabia and by the inadequate orientation of the teaching-learning objectives and guidelines. Likewise, this interpretation is supported by Alkhuzay (2015), Alotaibi (2014), and Mitchell and Alfuraih (2017), who stated that the introduction of the EFL program at the primary level requires more attention to be paid to coordination with the existing EFL curriculum (i.e., at the intermediate and secondary levels). Moreover, the MOE should prepare teachers with sufficient language skills and qualifications to instruct young students. Care should be taken to ensure the materials used are acceptable for the learners' age level and cultural values. Teachers should be trained to establish a classroom environment that allows young learners to develop a foreign language via meaningful communicative situations.

Saudi colleges of education do not offer teacher preparation programs for EFL primary school teachers; consequently, teaching methods and strategies are developed independently or with the help of seniors. EFL teachers at the primary school level face difficulties in making the English language an attractive and acceptable subject for young learners presented in a well-managed setting. Thus, it seems that EFL teachers believe in the necessity of managing disruptive classroom behavior to enhance language learning. This result is consistent with the results of previous research (Soleimani & Razmjoo, 2016; Wahyuni, 2016), which concluded that EFL teachers who are concerned with CM use both positive and negative CMSs, including warnings, eye contact, punishment, and administrative intervention.

Time 2.

The results showed no statistically significant differences in participants' perspectives toward the implementation of positive and negative CMSs at T2. Because the results previously indicated significant differences regarding EFL teachers' perspectives toward positive and negative CMSs, the current results should be interpreted with caution.

One possible explanation for these results is that using positive or negative CMSs during this period was not a focal point for EFL teachers at any school level. First, after the intensive PDPs and training workshops, most of their efforts and time were spent on smoothly integrating the new teaching paradigms into the teaching-learning process. Second, EFL teachers at all levels were busy converting their lesson plans, classroom activities,

homework assignments, and assessment techniques to align with the requirements of the new vision. Third, supervisors' visits at Times 1 and 2 focused more on the implementation of the recent trends in teaching than of CMSs, as indicated by the fact that the supervisory checklist during a class visit was reformed in 2016 to match the changes in instruction with little focus on CMSs. The above interpretations seem consistent with the conclusion of Mitchell and Alfuraih (2017) that Saudi EFL teachers require structured PDPs in a variety of areas, including curricula, textbooks, pedagogies, proficiency, time management, motivation and engagement of students, and teaching of mixed-level courses. Besides, many EFL instructors indicated the need for a variety of initiatives to be implemented to enhance teaching methods and strive for quality in English teaching and learning.

Time 3.

The results indicated significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives toward the implementation of positive CMSs at the primary school level. This may be due to the fact that intensive workshops and the series of PDPs launched by MOE since 2016 enhanced primary school EFL teachers' abilities and skills, allowing them to implement new teaching methods, design interactive activities, integrate authentic assessment techniques, and manage disruptive behaviors.

Another possible interpretation is that EFL teachers may have become confident in the effectiveness of positive CMSs. In other words, after three years of training and orientation, they may have realized the advantageous effects of positive CMSs, including (a) young students' abilities to concentrate more during learning; (b) teachers' abilities to involve learners in effectively collaboration and communication; and (c) teachers enabling the learning environment to be more productive, secure, and encouraging. This interpretation accords with Wahyuni (2016) and Isa and Widiati (2020), who found that EFL teachers' beliefs regarding CMSs changed due to contextual variables, such as teaching experience, professional development, teaching institution, working status, and adopted strategies.

Regarding the implementation of negative CMSs, there were significant differences in EFL teachers' perspectives, with slight differences between the mean scores at the primary and secondary school levels during T3. A possible explanation for these differences is that the continuous use of negative CMSs is not preferable for EFL teachers at all school levels. They only employ CMSs in specific situations, such as when students' disruptive behaviors require punitive reactions.

These results preliminarily indicated that Saudi EFL teachers are conscious of the most appropriate CMS types for their classrooms and may select CM tactics that align with modern society's needs and goals as stipulated by MOE and Saudi Vision 2030.

6. Conclusions and Practical Implications

The current longitudinal study investigated Saudi EFL teachers' perspectives on the importance and implementation of CMSs by type and school level during three periods.

Based on the analysis results, it appeared that establishing CMSs and controlling misbehavior were significant issues for female Saudi EFL teachers at the primary and secondary school levels but not at the intermediate school level.

These results have pedagogical and practical implications for the MOE, school supervisors, and EFL teachers. The MOE should offer frequent and various PDPs to improve teachers' professionalism in alignment with the ministry's vision and goals. It should also ensure that all teachers at all levels, primary, intermediate, and secondary, have access to professional development opportunities that focus on changing teachers' attitudes toward managing student disruptive behavior in class and improving teaching methods. Further, the MOE should establish teacher preparation programs in Saudi colleges of education to certify EFL primary school teachers.

School supervisors should direct teachers to join the PDPs the MOE offers to steer them toward using effective CMSs for students who are at risk academically and socially. Furthermore, school supervisors should connect teaching strategies and CMSs when monitoring and assessing teacher performance. The teacher assessment checklist must be reformulated to be comprehensive and fit changes in EFL instruction. School supervisors should include teacher performance in the checklist and provide constructive feedback regarding academic issues to be reviewed, modified, or changed.

This study recommends that future research do the following: first, assess the long-term effects of positive CMSs on students' discipline, such as by comparing the attitudes, motivations, and preferences of individuals at the same school level. Second, researchers should estimate the impact of CMSs on minimizing specific types of discipline. Third, researchers should replicate the current study with male and female EFL teachers to generate

more profound insights into their perspectives of the importance and implementation of CMSs. Fourth, more research is needed to explore the relationship between the implementation of CMSs and language teaching methodologies to help EFL teachers struggling to teach English in changing circumstances. Finally, it is highly recommended to further investigate and experiment with the impact of a mixture of positive CMSs, teaching strategies, and assessment techniques on students' achievement, satisfaction, and self-esteem.

Acknowledgements

The researcher wishes to express her sincere gratitude to the female EFL Saudi teachers involved in this study for their high level of responsiveness. The researcher is grateful to EFL educational supervisors and school principals for their invaluable academic and administrative support.

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