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Pedagogical Skills and the Classroom Environment: A Sociological and Empirical Inquiry

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between pedagogical skills and the classroom environment from a sociological perspective by synthesizing qualitative evidence from existing research. These documents were systematically retrieved from well-reputed academic databases, including Google Scholar, Taylor & Francis, SAGE, Emerald Insight, JSTOR, Springer Nature, and Wiley. A total of 157 published research studies were purposively selected to achieve theoretical saturation, guided by clearly defined inclusion criteria focusing on the relevance of titles and alignment with the core research area. The selected studies were subjected to thematic analysis using qualitative techniques to identify recurring patterns, concepts, and sociological dimensions of pedagogical practices and classroom environments. The findings highlight that effective pedagogical skills such as instructional strategies, teacher–student interaction, and classroom management play a critical role in shaping inclusive, participatory, and conducive learning environments. From a sociological perspective, the study underscores how classroom environments are socially constructed spaces influenced by power relations, institutional norms, and cultural contexts. The study contributes to the sociological understanding of teaching and learning by synthesizing empirical evidence and offers implications for educators, teacher training programs, and educational policy aimed at improving classroom practices and learning outcomes.

Keywords: Pedagogical Skills, Classroom Environment, Sociology of Education, Qualitative Study, Thematic Analysis

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Introduction

Pedagogical skills of students have been observed very important in Global North and Global South. In Global North, the students have been the center of the classroom (Shoaib, Ali, Iqbal, & Abdullah, 2025a, 2025b, 2025c). Participation of the students in classroom activities has been very active and responsive (Kearney & Tangney, 2023; Kelly & Cuccolo, 2024; Kerrigan & Kwaik, 2024; Zhang, 2022; Abdullah & Nisar, 2024). Students are confident to get engaged in classroom communication physically as well as mentally (Ali, Shoaib, Iqbal, & Abdullah, 2025a, 2025b). Classroom environment plays an important and powerful role in learning of the students (Budirahayu & Saud, 2023; Kearney & Tangney, 2023; Rensaa & Fredriksen, 2022; Abdullah & Ullah, 2016). Classroom activities and discussion topics are always the extension of the previous knowledge so that the students will have better and comprehensive learning rather than selection of random topics and activities (Shoaib, Rasool, & Iqbal, 2025a, 2025b; Abdullah & Ullah, 2022). In Global North, the classroom structure and organization is always in accordance with the needs and requirements of the students both males and females including sitting arrangements, audio and video assistance devices, controlled environment with least barriers and supportive atmosphere etc. (Shoaib, Iqbal, Rasool, & Abdullah, 2025; Shoaib, Rasool, Iqbal, & Abdullah, 2025a, 2025b; Shoaib, Zaman, & Abdullah, 2025).

Gender neutrality in classroom is observed in these countries. Students are encouraged to communicate and share their ideas in classroom despite the reference of their gender (Shoaib, Rasool, & Zaman, 2025a, 2025b, 2025c; Shoaib, Rasool, Zaman, & Abdullah, 2025). Male students and female students have equal opportunities in classroom including selection of the group members, selection of the research subject and topic and in other classroom related activities as well (Shoaib, Ahmed, Iqbal, & Abdullah, 2025; Shoaib, Rasool, & Iqbal, 2025c; Shoaib & Ullah, 2025; Abdullah, Matloob, & Malik, 2024). Students use their skills and knowledge in classroom to get better and comprehensive learning through creating a link between new and already existing knowledge (Shoaib, Ahmed, & Iqbal, 2025; Shoaib, Ahmed, & Usmani, 2025a, 2025b; Shoaib, Rasool, Zaman, & Ahmed, 2025; Abdullah et al., 2024). Both male and female students are encouraged to communicate with each other for better feedback from the students. Similarly, in Global South the situation is quite contrasting to the Global North.

Classroom activities are limited only to the conduction of regular lectures or assignment of home tasks to the students (Cook-Sather, 2018; Lam & Zou, 2018; Robinson, 2018; Abdullah, Nisar, & Malik, 2024). Students have low confidence to be active participant in classroom especially with low level of academic achievements (Shoaib, Ali, Iqbal, & Abdullah, 2025; Shoaib, Ali, & Kausar, 2025; Shoaib, Rasool, Kalsoom, & Ali, 2025; Shoaib, Waris, & Iqbal, 2025c; Abdullah, Nisar, & Ahmed, 2025). Female students are more grades oriented than male students although female students do not have significant contribution in later life stages (Ahmed, Shoaib, & Zaman, 2025; Shoaib, Ahmed, Zaman, & Abdullah, 2025; Shoaib, Kausar, Ali, & Abdullah, 2025; Shoaib, Waris, & Iqbal, 2025a).

Gender leads to the specific type of behavior in classroom. Male students are less obedient and submissive than female students. Female students practice preferred

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behavior in classroom engagement than male students (Jaidev, 2014; Tillapaugh & Haber-Curran, 2013; Zhang, Torney-Purta, & Barber, 2012). Pedagogical skills in Global South are not polished as students are expected to behave and learn somehow in the way their teachers used to be in their time (Alqahtani, 2025; Fraver, 2025; Geletu, 2022; Rosen & Meuwissen, 2025). Students in classroom try to meet the unified criteria for every student despite the existing differences among students (Azevedo et al., 2025; Hochman & Segev, 2025; Abdullah, Sultana, & Nisar, 2025). However, in Pakistan, it has been affected by the physical environment and organization of the classroom. Sitting in a strict and conservative environment creates a feeling of boredom for both male and female students. For instance, Positive classroom environment enables the students to engage in class activities efficiently (Shoaib, Waris, & Iqbal, 2025b; Shoaib, Waris, & Iqbal, 2025a, 2025b). Moreover, sitting beside same gender builds confidence among students and makes them feel supportive for each other.

Gender and learning in classroom goes side by side (Shoaib, 2025a, 2025b; Shoaib & Bashir, 2025; Muhammad Shoaib, Amina Shamsher, & Shamraiz Iqbal, 2025). The level of learning among male and female students depends upon multiple factors (Shoaib, 2025a, 2025b; Shoaib & Bashir, 2025; Muhammad Shoaib, Amina Shamsher, et al., 2025; Shoaib, Tariq, & Iqbal, 2025a, 2025b; Shoaib, Tariq, Rasool, & Iqbal, 2025). Male students are more interested in subjects like engineering, mathematics, physics, chemistry and economics (Shoaib, Iqbal, & Iftikhar, 2025; Shoaib, Shamsher, & Iqbal, 2025; Shoaib & Zaman, 2025; Abdullah, Nisar, Ahmed, & Sultana, 2025). Contrary to it, females have interest in subjects including Arts, English, Literature and Psychology etc. (Ali, Zaman, & Shoaib, 2024; Shoaib, 2024e; Shoaib & Ullah, 2021; Shoaib, Zaman, & Abbas, 2024). Prior knowledge and mode of communication in the class also provides the base for students to get engaged in group discussion and class debates (Shoaib, 2023b, 2024a, 2024b, 2024c, 2024d). Students with good communication skills and talkative personalities are more responsive in classroom (Shoaib, 2021, 2023a). These students have huge social network and exposure. Thus, their pedagogical skills are more refined than the rest of the students (Shoaib, Ali, Anwar, Rasool, et al., 2021; Shoaib, Ali, Anwar, & Shaukat, 2021; Shoaib, Ali, & Akbar, 2021; Shoaib, Fatima, & Jamil, 2021; Shoaib, Tariq, Shahzadi, & Ali, 2022). Formal environment of the class results in better learning among students specifically in female students.

Study Context

Pedagogical skills and classroom environment has attracted policy makers, academicians and research scholars in Global North and Global South (Amuah, Agormedah, Akyeampong, & Ampiah, 2025; Buldu & Buldu, 2025; Kelly & Cuccolo, 2024). Pedagogical skills have been considered very important in Global South. However, the notion has not been recognized well in Global North (Avcı, 2024; Kearney & Tangney, 2023; Nalaila & Elia, 2024; Rafi & Morgan, 2024). Several studies have been conducted by several scholars in number of countries such as United States, France, Germany, United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden and Denmark (Budirahayu & Saud, 2023; Luby, 2021; Okolie et al., 2022; Philip & Gavrilova Aguilar, 2022; Abdullah, Shoukat, Malik, Akhtar, 2025). However, only few quality

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researches have also been conducted in Global South including Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, Soudan, Ghana, Brazil, Cuba, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri-Lanka and Pakistan has no Exemption (Lam & Zou, 2018; Nalaila, Wawire, & Gathara, 2022; Okolie et al., 2022). Hence this study has been designed to examine pedagogical skills and classroom environment of students in Higher Education.

The Data and Methods

This study adopts a qualitative research approach and is based on secondary qualitative data derived from already published research documents. The selected studies were systematically retrieved from well-reputed academic databases, including Google Scholar, Taylor & Francis, SAGE, Emerald Insight, JSTOR, Springer Nature, and Wiley. A total of 157 published research documents were purposively selected to achieve data saturation. The inclusion criteria were defined on the basis of the relevance of the study titles and their alignment with the core research area. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, employing qualitative techniques to present the findings and draw meaningful conclusions.

Results and Discussion

The study findings indicated that classroom environment asserted a potential difference on of the students especially in Australian and British secondary schools (Dorman & Adams, 2004). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that improvement of pedagogical skills among students had been possible by promoting innovative pedagogical practices in classroom in Global South region (Okolie et al., 2022). Likewise, the analysis of the study revealed that academic achievements of students and critical thinking had been affected by the classroom learning environment among Hong Kong secondary school students (Wan & Cheng, 2019). In the same way, the conclusion of the study clinched that traditional type of classroom environment had created pedagogical challenges for students at higher education in Global North (Lam & Zou, 2018). Further, the study findings outlined that educating the students with competitive intelligence skills improved the pedagogical effectiveness in North America and overseas audience (Blenkhorn & Fleisher, 2010). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that university students graduated from the rural background faced more learning challenges in Global South including Nigeria and South Africa (Uleanya, 2022).

The study findings indicated that the pedagogical memes had significant potential as a study tool to support STEM education and to improve student engagement (Sidekerskienė & Damaševičius, 2025). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that digital literacy gap among students at higher education institutions had been effecting the promotion of 21st century skills in Sub Saharan Africa (Ndibalema, 2025). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the pedagogical challenges and activities in culturally diverse classroom had been affective to the secondary classroom students in Nepal (Koirala, 2025). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that early literacy development among children had been supported by the combination comics, graded readers and pedagogical translations (Khan, 2025).Further, the study findings outlined that the competency of the professional teachers is especially linked with the development of pedagogical content based

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knowledge (Hartmuth et al., 2025).Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the specific classroom practices and conditions for pedagogical listening among literary students had been considered vital for the teaching and learning the literature (Fraver, 2025).

The study findings indicated that the development and understanding of pedagogical skills among Indonesian students had been considered very important specifically in the field of science (Evitasari, Wilujeng, Tohani, Trisnani, & Hermansyah, 2025). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that redefining the learning spaces and new pedagogical approaches had been considered essential for holistic learning and sustainable education outside the classroom (Azevedo et al., 2025). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that digital affordance had been considered very supportive to provide supportive learning environment for students with disabilities in Saudi Arabia (Alqahtani, 2025). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that pedagogic practices among students had been very influential in learning experiences of new language at college level especially in southeast China (Xu, 2024). Further, the study findings outlined that conducive environment and digital creative skills created opportunities to improve the pedagogical skills and learning experiences among students (Wang & Li, 2024). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the humanizing pedagogical skills and personal experiences of the students had been considered very important in class engagement and maintenance of inclusive classroom environment at college level (Vimbelo & Bayaga, 2024).

The study findings indicated that the language had been considered very important to reflect a positive behavior in learning especially in a classroom with diversities of culture a language in Bangladesh (Rafi & Morgan, 2024). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that active learning pedagogies had been very crucial in enhancement of the students' perception and class engagement and produced better learning outcomes especially at university level (Kerrigan & Kwaik, 2024). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that student-centered classes had been creating a dynamic learning space along with pedagogic interventions and promotion of trans-language approach in classrooms of public universities of Bangladesh (Rafi & Morgan, 2023). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that adopting advance pedagogical models had been positively impacting in building confidence and improved engagement of English students in Ireland (Kearney & Tangney, 2023). Further, the study findings outlined that academic achievements are correlated with the pedagogical competence (Fabelico & Afalla, 2023). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulates that the tendency of the student learning had been positively affected by the better student-teacher interaction and collaboration in classroom (Budirahayu & Saud, 2023). The study findings indicated that the active learning pedagogy along with efficient technology and maximization of classroom design productively fostered the student collaboration (Powers, Barcelona, Trauntvein, & McLaughlin, 2022). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that the critical thinking skills of the students had been refining and improved with improved and better pedagogical skills in Global South (Okolie et al., 2022). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the acquisition of digital literacy skills among students had been dependent upon the classroom support in the universities of

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Tanzania (Nalaila et al., 2022).

Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the interest of the students' self-regulation as well as the learning environment in classes had been affecting the learning outcomes especially in online classes in China (Ma & Luo, 2022). Further, the study findings outlined that a strong pedagogical model had been supportive to build the digital multimodal composing in classrooms especially in English language (Liang & Lim, 2021). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the pedagogical skills of students based on blended learning had been affecting the level of motivation among students positively in the classroom (Wong, Hwang, Choo Goh, & Arrif, 2020).

The study findings indicated that the perception of pedagogical skills and perceived effectiveness of these skills vary from student to student in higher education (Trinidad, Ngo, Nevada, & Morales, 2020). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that the perception of the students associated with the emotional and behavioral management of the student in the class. Moreover the female students had shown strong behavioral engagement in a classroom than the male students (Havik & Westergård, 2020).In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the learning of the students had been improved and their epistemic uncertainty had been considered a strong pedagogical tool to develop knowledge in form of argumentation among students at school level(Chen & Qiao, 2020).Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the flipped classroom environment and self-regulation had been observed more productive than the traditional learning environment in classrooms at school level (Al-Abdullatif, 2020).Further, the study findings outlined that the pedagogical practices in flipped classroom had been observed significant in enhancing the interaction of the students in classroom as well as their learning (Abdul Kader, 2020). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the learning outcomes, peer interaction and improved pedagogical skills had shown the strong relation with flipped classroom environment than the non-flipped classrooms (Zainuddin & Perera, 2019).

The study findings indicated that the learning environment, critical thinking and pedagogical skills had been very important in academic achievements among interdisciplinary subjects specifically in secondary school of Hong Kong (Wan & Cheng, 2019). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that computational thinking among students had been improved through the adoption of inquiry based pedagogies to improve critical thinking and better learning among them (Ugwunwoti et al., 2024). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that critical thinking among students had been enhanced through increased engagement of pedagogical practices at higher education level in Global South (Okolie et al., 2022). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the students faced academic stress caused by the incompetent pedagogical skills as well as traditional grading system at university level (Martincová & Bílá, 2023). Further, the study findings outlined that the student learning had been supported through the improved pedagogical innovation and collaboration among students and teacher within the classroom environment in Indonesia (Budirahayu & Saud, 2023). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the student centered classes along with revised and advanced pedagogical skills had been considered significantly important in better learning

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outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa specifically in Uganda (Altinyelken, 2010).

The study findings indicated that the pedagogical skills and pedagogical training had been playing a vital role to improve generic skills in higher education level (Tuononen, Hyytinen, Kleemola, Hailikari, & Toom, 2025). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that the motivation of learning among students had been dependent of multiple factors including nature or curriculum and pedagogical practices at higher education especially in Vietnam (Nghia, 2019). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the physical activity of female students had been negatively affected by the gender, development of curriculum and pedagogical problems in South Korea (Kim & Hodge, 2024). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the lack of pedagogical skills and other factors had been contributing in poor reading skills and low graded comics especially in younger students of developing countries including India (Khan, 2025). Further, the study findings outlined that the pedagogical skills and competencies of students and teachers had shown positive results in better learning and engagement of science student (Geletu, 2022). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the acquisition of better linguistic skills had been improved by using the pedagogical skills in global North countries including Basque (Gaspar, 2025).

The study findings indicated that the pedagogical skills and competencies had shown a positive correlation with the emotional intelligence in learning at primary level in Tanzania (Shaffy & Ndijuye, 2025). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that the implementation of student-centered learning environment and pedagogical skills had been facing many challenges in present age especially in Global South (Sakata, 2021). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the use of soccer as a pedagogical tool had resulted in better learning and improved skill development especially among children at global level (Busey & Waring, 2012). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the engagement and experiences of female students in intercultural classrooms had been improved using various pedagogical tools in Arabia Gulf states (Bromfield & Capous-Desyllas, 2017). Further, the study findings outlined that the development of pedagogical competency had been resulted in advancement of communication among students in higher education at university level (Hertzberg, Clark, & Brogan, 2000). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the incorporation of technological gadgets such as laptop into the marketing classes had been facilitating the pedagogical learning at university level students (Elliott & Hall, 2002).

The study findings indicated that the pedagogical listening of the students in an interactive classroom session had ensured the maximum participation of the students in classroom discussion and communication (Fraver, 2025). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that pedagogical understanding of the teachers had been observed very important within classroom environment especially in science classes in Indonesia (Evitasari et al., 2025). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the acquisition of multi-lingual skills had been better observed in a student-centered classroom through the advanced interaction patterns among students in Nigeria (Deji-Afuye & Zhou, 2025). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the sustainability of education had been ensured using different pedagogical approaches to redefine the learning spaces in place of traditional classroom

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environment (Azevedo et al., 2025).

Further, the study findings outlined that the changed learning environment of classroom had a significant influence over the perception of the students about their learning especially in online classes of mathematics (Amuah et al., 2025). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the linguistic and communication skills of the teachers had a significant impact on understanding of the students about the content and language of the subject especially in integrated classroom environment (Hu & Gao, 2021).

The study findings indicated that the active learning interventions in biology classes had been resulted in increased level of motivation and academic achievements at college level (Corkin, Horn, & Pattison, 2017). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that the engagement level of the students in classroom learning and classroom environment had been positively affected by the quality related variable in Swedish classroom (Castro, Granlund, & Almqvist, 2017). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that co-curricular activities such as picturing had been used as a pedagogical tool to assess the perceptions and ideas of the students about preferred classroom environment at primary level (Farmer, Leonard, Spearman, Qian, & Rosenblith, 2016). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the more playful and functional environment along with technological tools and learning materials in the classroom resulted in better engagement and learning of the school students (Buldu & Buldu, 2025). Further, the study findings outlined that the classroom simulation strategies had been positively resulting in affirming and reshaping the pedagogical skills among students (Burgard, Boucher, & Ellsworth, 2024). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the seating arrangements within a classroom had been used as a pedagogical tool and had created conducive environment for learning in the classroom (Zhang, 2022).

The study findings indicated that the academic achievement and satisfaction of the students had been linked with the interest in subjects (Leatherman & Cleveland, 2020). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that inquiry based classrooms had resulted in the innovative pedagogical skills and improvement in the classrooms specifically in the fields of Arts and Humanities (Costes-Onishi, Baildon, & Aghazadeh, 2020). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed that the pedagogical practices fostered the positive behavior in classroom through the explicit learning behavior or students and teachers (O'Brien & Blue, 2018). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that the student pedagogical teams accelerated and supported the process of active learning among the students in classroom environment (Hayward, Ventura, Schuldt, & Donlan, 2018). Further, the study findings outlined that the learning of the students in rural areas had been improved by incorporating the technology into pedagogical practices of the students (Felix, Condy, & Chigona, 2018). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that critical discussions in classrooms based on pedagogical expertise had significant importance to expand the experiences and learning of the students (Yannuzzi & Martin, 2014).

The study findings indicated that building pedagogical communities considered very important in classroom to maximize the learning of the students and prepared the students for future expected roles (Wong et al., 2013). Similarly, the arguments of the research asserted that the students showed more preference towards equitable and

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interactive classroom environment at university level (Evans, Harvey, Buckley, & Yan, 2009). In the same way, the analysis of the study revealed a significant relationship between classroom environment and students' learning and development (Guerrero, 2010). Likewise, the conclusion of the study clinched that sports interventions had shown a strong relation with the better engagement and learning of students particularly among male students (Mala et al., 2022). Further, the study findings outlined that the implementation of critical pedagogy as a tool resulted in better completion of studies particularly among male students (Halx, 2014). Moreover, the conclusion of the study articulated that the learning through flipped classrooms had shown better and efficient learning than the traditional environment more prominently among male students (Sezer & Elcin, 2022).

Theoretical Insights

This study is theoretically anchored in the sociology of education, drawing on key sociological perspectives to explain the relationship between pedagogical skills and the classroom environment. From a Bourdieuian perspective, pedagogical practices are not value-neutral; rather, they reflect and reproduce cultural capital and symbolic power within the classroom. Teachers' pedagogical skills shape students' access to legitimate knowledge, participation, and recognition, thereby influencing inclusion, exclusion, and academic outcomes (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Classrooms thus operate as social fields where power relations and habitus mediate teaching–learning interactions. Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse further illuminates how pedagogical skills regulate the transmission of knowledge through classification and framing. Strong or weak framing affects teacher control, student autonomy, and classroom interaction patterns, shaping the overall classroom environment and learning climate (Bernstein, 2000). Effective pedagogical skills enable educators to balance control and flexibility, fostering environments conducive to meaningful engagement and knowledge construction.

From a symbolic interactionist perspective, the classroom environment is continuously produced through everyday interactions between teachers and students. Pedagogical skills such as communication, feedback, and responsiveness influence role expectations, identity formation, and students' sense of belonging. These micro-level interactions significantly affect motivation, participation, and learning experiences (Blumer, 1969). Additionally, critical pedagogy, particularly Freire's notion of dialogical education, highlights the emancipatory potential of pedagogical skills in transforming hierarchical classroom environments into participatory and reflective spaces. When pedagogy encourages dialogue, critical thinking, and reflexivity, classrooms become sites of empowerment rather than mere knowledge transmission (Freire, 1970). Collectively, these theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive sociological framework for understanding how pedagogical skills shape classroom environments as socially constructed spaces influenced by power, interaction, and institutional structures. They also underscore the importance of reflective and inclusive pedagogical practices in fostering equitable and supportive learning environments.

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Conclusion

This study concludes that pedagogical skills play a central role in shaping the classroom environment as a socially constructed space influenced by interaction, power relations, and institutional contexts. Drawing on qualitative evidence from published research, the findings demonstrate that effective pedagogical practices such as responsive communication, inclusive instructional strategies, and balanced classroom management foster participatory, supportive, and equitable learning environments. From a sociological perspective, classrooms are not merely sites of knowledge transmission but dynamic social arenas where cultural capital, identities, and relationships are continuously produced and negotiated. The study underscores the importance of reflective and context-sensitive pedagogy in enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes, whereas also highlighting the need for teacher education and professional development programs to integrate sociological insights into pedagogical training to improve classroom practices and educational equity.

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