



Cultivating Preservice Teachers’ Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Through Case-Based Learning

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Abstract

This quantitative (quasi-experimental design) study examined the effect of case-based learning (CBL) in an online environment on preservice teachers’ culturally responsive classroom management self-efficacy (CRCMSE). The Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy Scale was administered as a pre- and posttest to 42 undergraduate students (experimental group) and 11 master of arts in teaching students (control group), all seeking initial licensure and enrolled in parallel classroom management courses. The experimental group engaged in CBL throughout their course. Pre- and posttest scores were used to conduct statistical analysis. Results from the analysis of covariance show that the CBL intervention statistically significantly increased participants’ CRCMSE. The experimental group reported increased CRCMSE regarding communicating with parents from diverse

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backgrounds, applying culturally responsive strategies to minimize classroom management issues, and managing student interactions confidently.

Introduction

Developing a predominantly White teaching force's cultural responsiveness is a persistent imperative in teacher education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES; 2019a, 2020), 80% of public school teachers in 2018 were White, while the diversity of students in P–12 classrooms continues to rise (NCES, 2022). Caldera et al. (2019) noted that, traditionally, classroom management courses have been presented as “culturally neutral, without recognition that this framing is guided by the norms and expectations of mainstream, middle class, European-American culture” (p. 343). However, many scholars have argued that if preservice teachers fail to develop a culturally responsive lens and recognize their implicit biases, they will enter the field ill equipped to navigate student interactions in a manner that is respectful and culturally affirming to students (Brown, 2003, 2004; Caldera et al., 2019; Evertson et al., 1983; Gay, 2018; Leath et al., 2019; Weinstein et al., 2004). Furthermore, the systemic pervasiveness of White, middle-class behavioral norms in schools has contributed to harsher disciplinary practices for students of color; Black and Latinx students are disproportionately more likely to be retained in a lower grade, suspended, and expelled than their White counterparts (Bryan, 2017; Leath et al., 2019; NCES, 2019b).

These disciplinary consequences often result from misunderstandings stemming from differences between the students' and teachers' cultural backgrounds (Amemiya et al., 2020; Bryan, 2020; Cruz et al., 2021). Here, White, middle-class behavioral norms encompass classroom behaviors that include Whiteness-influenced allegiance to the rules and order of the classroom and communication expectations. But these norms are often in opposition to the social class and cultural influences students bring to the classroom (Stephens et al., 2019). It is vital, then, that teacher educators engage in the work of preparing preservice teachers to examine their own implicit biases, increase their culturally responsive classroom management self-efficacy (CRCMSE), and develop culturally responsive classroom practices. Failure to do so can result in a lack of culturally responsive classroom practices, which can lead to suboptimal learning environments for students from diverse backgrounds. Part of this suboptimal environment would include increases in unintentional or unnecessary disciplinary consequences and an increase in the failure of students from marginalized backgrounds to persist in learning (Green, 2019; Henry et al., 2022; Morgan, 2021).

Simply providing preservice teachers with information on culturally responsive classroom management strategies without authentic, hands-on field experiences that offer opportunities to engage with students and practice is largely inadequate. The scholarship on culturally responsive instructional preparation has focused primarily on better serving students from marginalized populations and less on the development of the teaching staff (Lynch, 2018). Morgan (2021) described a

deficit in teacher preparation and teacher support as the absence of dedicated materials and activities that prepare teacher candidates to interact with students from diverse populations. There is no consistency in the incorporation of or emphasis on culturally relevant teaching and classroom management practices. A lack of exposure to diverse populations can lead to low levels of self-efficacy in teacher candidates, as they may not have the opportunity to develop cultural competence and understanding of the unique needs and perspectives of students from different backgrounds. This can result in a lack of confidence in their ability to effectively teach and support diverse student populations. This inconsistency, then, leads to lower levels of efficacy related to culturally responsive classroom management practices. Because of this discrepancy, it is essential for preservice teacher training to include classroom-embedded field experiences that could support the development of preservice teachers' CRCMSE. Field experiences can build self-efficacy in culturally responsive practices by providing teacher candidates with opportunities to observe and work with experienced teachers who model effective culturally responsive classroom management strategies. Additionally, through field experiences, teacher candidates can gain hands-on experience working with diverse student populations, which can help them develop the necessary skills and confidence to effectively teach and support all students.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about the need for a rapid shift to online instruction in teacher education. This shift necessitated new strategies to encourage preservice teachers to think critically about their classroom practices and apply their learning without access to authentic, place-based field experiences. Converting teacher education components into an online learning experience is complex and demands a unique approach to course development. The course developer must be thoughtful and deliberate about the learning experiences available to students that would adequately substitute the traditional field experiences afforded by in-person learning. As Lynch (2018) noted, culturally responsive teaching often focuses on the students. The space created in the online learning environment can shift the focus back to the teacher candidate for critical reflection and recognition of implicit biases (Stephens et al., 2019) that may hinder the ability to deploy culturally responsive classroom management strategies. According to Karata et al. (2022), teachers must have high levels of both self-efficacy and cultural intelligence to establish competency in culturally responsive teaching. The absence of a field experience, where many preservice teachers gain and improve culturally responsive teaching and classroom management strategies, must be replaced or supplemented by an equally impactful learning experience targeted at improving preservice teachers' CRCMSE.

A plethora of research exists surrounding culturally responsive teaching and classroom management. Over the past 30 years, countless studies have unveiled considerable disparities in disciplinary actions handed out across racially and socioeconomically diverse student groups (Delpit, 1995; Graham, 2018; Miller &

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Harris, 2018; Morris, 2016; Noguera, 2003; Skiba et al., 1997, 2002, 2011). Few studies, however, delve into the development of culturally responsive preservice teachers, especially those candidates who complete teacher education and professional development courses online. Thus this study aimed to answer the following research question: In the absence of traditional, place-based field experiences, does case-based learning (CBL) impact preservice teachers' CRCSME?

Review of Literature

Culturally responsive teaching is not a new phenomenon, as its foundations stretch back almost 30 years (Gay, 2018; Irvine & Armento, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). In essence, culturally responsive teaching relies on the tenets of multicultural education to create an equitable learning environment in which the teacher not only approaches students without prejudice or discrimination but also provides a nurturing space to validate and incorporate the culturally diverse backgrounds and experiences of students into their learning. However, many teacher education initiatives focused on addressing or improving preservice teachers' cultural agility are problematic, with several issues stemming from a lack of diversity in terms of Whiteness perspectives and a lack of leadership diversity of teacher education programs (Chang & Cochran-Smith, 2022). A key component of becoming a culturally responsive teacher is the ability to recognize and suspend one's own prejudices related to cultural differences (Banks, 2015; Slavin, 2019). Without intentional training and practice in authentic learning environments, preservice teachers, especially those who do not represent diverse backgrounds, may struggle with the fidelity and efficacy to implement and support culturally responsive teaching and classroom management practices.

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Successful classroom instruction hinges on the teacher's ability to responsibly and responsively manage the classroom. Effective classroom managers exhibit three critical attributes (Marzano & Marzano, 2003; Marzano et al., 2003; Marzano et al., 2005). Teachers must demonstrate the ability to identify instructional strategies that are appropriate for the classroom. Next, effective classroom managers should be able to design and present the curriculum to the students. Last, teachers should be able to demonstrate successfully the application of classroom management strategies and community building. The continued diversification of the student population across classrooms in the United States demands that teachers acquire and practice cultural agility and responsiveness to meet and support their diverse learners (Bottiani et al., 2018; Fong et al., 2016; Gay, 2018; Siwatu et al., 2017). Teachers often describe the difficulty of tying together curriculum and relationship-building with students who represent culturally, racially, or ethnically different backgrounds. Thus culturally responsive teaching and classroom management strategies are needed to address the

gap between a relatively unchanged teacher demographic and a student population that continues to diversify (Bottiani et al., 2018; Gay, 2018).

Weinstein et al. (2004) created an approach to classroom management that embodies the same tenets as culturally responsive and relevant teaching strategies. This framework promoted order guided by a sense of personal responsibility instead of order derived from punishment or fear. Culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) involves the integration of five pillars that promote multicultural curriculum, culturally agile teaching strategies, and CRCM techniques: (a) the ability to recognize one's implicit and explicit bias; (b) effort to learn about and understand the cultural backgrounds of the learners; (c) recognition, understanding, and integration of the current sociocultural and political climates; (d) demonstration of the flexibility and willingness to integrate CRCM strategies; and (e) commitment to caring.

CRCM establishes healthy boundaries inside the classroom that encourage student engagement while also incorporating the cultural identities and value systems that the learner population represents (Caldera et al., 2019). This intentional management style fosters an environment where the learning process and student behavior–influenced boundaries are respectfully moderated. These strategies help the teacher keep order in the classroom without stifling the academic potential of a diverse student body.

Equally important to implementing CRCM practices is the teacher's self-efficacy as it relates to CRCM (Siwatu et al., 2017). Morettini et al. (2018) asserted that a teacher's self-efficacy related to CRCM might ultimately determine the success of reaching and fulfilling the needs of diverse students. Thus, in an effort to build CRCMSE, preservice teachers must expose themselves to environments in which they can build this multicultural efficacy. Exposure and practice facilitate and improve cultural awareness, sensitivity, and proficiency (Bonner & Noguera, 2019; Taylor & Wendt, 2022). Scholarship on the relationship between self-efficacy and classroom management strategies, particularly those that are culturally responsive, has spoken to the need for ongoing study. Several studies have identified reflective practice as a critical component of building cultural competence and equitable classroom management practices (e.g., Peters et al., 2014; Reinke et al., 2013). Past studies have also highlighted an increased likelihood of misbehavior and other classroom challenges as a result of teacher misperceptions of student conduct barriers or other classroom-related issues (Amemiya et al., 2020; Dell'Angelo, 2014). Another salient theme found in the literature related to teacher self-efficacy as it relates to classroom management is that punishments and other negative consequence–driven disciplinary procedures are often correlated with lower classroom management self-efficacy (Gordon, 2001), while positive behavior reinforcement often results in higher classroom management self-efficacy (Almog & Shechtman, 2007; Shin, 2020).

Studies on classroom management, teacher self-efficacy, and multicultural education are bountiful and have yielded several consistent indicators of successful classroom management. There is a dearth of literature that has explained or

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supported the process through which a preservice teacher acquires this cultural proficiency and CRCMSE. This study seeks to extend the scholarship to include innovative ways to help bolster CRCMSE in the event that traditional in-person instruction and internship experiences are unavailable. The sections that follow overview the emerging themes related to preparing preservice teachers for work in the field and how these programs satisfy traditional needs but may present gaps when instruction and training must be delivered in an online modality.

Preparing Preservice Teachers for CRCM

The demographics of preservice teachers, candidates seeking initial P–12 teacher licensure through an undergraduate or graduate-level degree path, mirror the teaching population: predominantly White, middle-class women, often with little exposure to cultural norms outside of their own (Batchelor et al., 2019). Research has shown that this cultural mismatch between teacher and student backgrounds, viewpoints, and cultural perceptions can impact how teachers approach classroom management and affect their decisions regarding classroom management (Caldera et al., 2019; Weinstein et al., 2004). Teachers set their classroom expectations and determine what behaviors are appropriate. This singular cultural lens can unintentionally perpetuate and reward White, middle-class norms and reprimand students who wander outside the constraints of these expectations. Furthermore, a teacher's lack of knowledge of their implicit and cultural biases can negatively impact how they judge student behavior and influence their decisions to respond to student behavior (Batchelor et al., 2019; Chin et al., 2020; Whitford & Emerson, 2019).

As Martin et al. (2017) argued, preservice teacher education regarding the development of culturally responsive practices should not occur without conversations regarding Whiteness and White privilege. White teacher educators need to model for their White preservice teachers what it looks like to acknowledge their positionality within an education system that privileges White, middle-class norms, as this is an important element of decentering these norms and creating the more inclusive classroom culture that is necessary to sustain CRCM (Scott & Venegas, 2019; Weinstein et al., 2003). Many White preservice teachers enter their programs of study having been educated in culturally neutral environments that espouse the myth of a postracial society (Miller & Harris, 2018; Rudick & Golsan, 2018). In their qualitative study exploring how White undergraduates navigate conversations about race and culture, Rudick and Golsan (2018) argued that “the way that WIC [Whiteness-informed civility] functions to create a good White identity is problematic because it serves to avoid substantial conversations about race while maintaining White students’ feelings of moral security” (p. 7). However, it is imperative that preservice teachers gain confidence in engaging in conversations about race and racism on both systemic and individual levels across their programs of study, including with regard to classroom management.

A classroom management course is sometimes a requirement in teacher preparation programs, or classroom management is integrated throughout the curriculum. However, novice teachers still report low self-efficacy (feeling unprepared or less confident). Additional classroom management training is needed to help teachers feel more confident navigating the diverse behaviors students exhibit in the classroom (O'Neill & Stephenson, 2011). Flower et al.'s (2017) research indicated that most teacher preparation programs teach basic classroom management concepts, such as developing rules and procedures, complimenting positive student behavior, and communicating with parents, but then host limited opportunities to apply these strategies in a diverse classroom setting.

Numerous research studies have highlighted the oppressive structures that disproportionately punish the behaviors of students of color at higher rates than White students (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Bryan, 2017; Leath et al., 2019; McIntosh et al., 2014). Preservice teacher education should include strategies and practices for recognizing candidates' implicit biases and reflecting on how those biases influence their expectations for student behavior, student learning, and their interactions with students (Batchelor et al., 2019; Whitford & Emerson, 2019). This focus on the internal work needed of preservice teachers in classroom management courses could help cultivate multicultural spaces that honor and respect all students' backgrounds. A CRMC pedagogical approach that asks preservice teachers to reflect on their own biases, focus on embracing cultural diversity, apply culturally responsive strategies, and create a welcoming environment (Weinstein et al., 2004) is necessary to ensure that P-12 spaces serve all students, rather than perpetuating systemic inequity in the school environment. Aside from the traditional classroom-embedded field experiences preservice teachers typically receive, delivering opportunities to think critically and react in a culturally agile and considerate way could be achieved using a CBL model.

Case-Based Learning as a Means of Self-Efficacy Development

As preprofessionals, preservice teachers are ideal candidates for the use of CBL. CBL is a specific, problem-based learning pedagogical approach in which learners engage with a narrative that describes a scenario designed to support critical thinking and problem-solving related to a particular issue or target skill (Harn & Meline, 2019). Though CBL first saw widespread use in medical education (Lee, 2012; McLean, 2016; Thistlethwaite et al., 2012), it has been increasingly employed in undergraduate education, specifically in preprofessional fields like teacher education and instructional design (Jonassen & Hernandez-Serrano, 2002; Krain, 2016; Nkhoma et al., 2017). In teacher education, CBL has been used as an intervention to enhance the development of preservice teachers' technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Saltan, 2017); to develop their achievement goals for learning (Gonzalez-DeHass et al., 2020); and to better their understanding of educator ethics (Unal et al., 2018).

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Tawfik and Kolodner (2016) articulated the utility of case-based reasoning in supporting problem-based learning and skill development among undergraduate learners. Reflective practice is a critical step in problem-based learning, and it is a key disposition of an effective educator. The use of CBL allows preservice teachers to

notice failures in reasoning, identify deficiencies in their knowledge or reasoning that led to each failure, move toward fixing those deficiencies, and identify ways of labeling the experience so that they can remember it later to avoid making the same mistake. (Tawfik & Kolodner, 2016, p. 6)

Choi and Lee (2009) also advocated for using CBL in preservice teacher classroom management instruction. They argued that “the techniques-oriented discourse and approach to classroom management oversimplifies the issue by assuming that everything about classroom management is a well-structured problem” (p. 103). In fact, managing a classroom space, engaging with families, and responding to student behavior are clear examples of ill-structured problems with multiple potential outcomes. Providing learners with ill-structured problems to examine in the form of case studies, explicitly describing classroom management scenarios in which teachers must employ a culturally responsive approach, should cultivate learners’ critical thinking skills and support their growth in CRCMSE and, ultimately, in practice.

Ill-structured scenarios often present the learner with opportunities for critical thinking and problem-solving. Tawfik and Jonassen (2013) called a “failure case” a case that “exposes faulty assumptions and latent variables, allowing the learner to better understand the complexity of the problem” (p. 388). In their study, examining the effectiveness of the use of failure and success cases with undergraduate students, they found that students who engaged with failure cases demonstrated greater understanding of the nuances of the case and were better able to construct cohesive arguments regarding the outcomes and consequences of the case scenario.

The present study used CBL activities delivered online to increase preservice teachers’ CRCMSE. CBL provides opportunities for participants to engage in reflection and discussion in alignment with Bandura’s (1977) sources of self-efficacy, particularly vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and psychological responses. Preservice teachers can experience the symbolic modeling of the teachers in each case study, as CBL provides concrete examples to which learners can relate and abstract concepts which they can apply to real-world situations. This approach allows learners to build connections between their existing knowledge and new information, increasing their confidence in their ability to solve problems and make decisions (Nopianti & Hafina, 2017).

CBL aligns with social persuasion in terms of increasing self-efficacy by providing learners with the opportunity to observe and emulate the problem-solving strategies and decision-making processes of experts or successful peers. This approach allows learners to see the range of possible solutions and the reasoning behind them, providing them with models to emulate and increasing their confidence in

their own abilities. Social persuasion provides learners with the chance to receive feedback and support from their peers and instructors, which can help boost their self-efficacy (Gerber et al., 2012). By first reflecting individually and then engaging in critical discussion of each case, students are examining their psychological responses to the scenario and then subjecting their ideas to the differing viewpoints of their peers and the course instructor, further honing their understanding and feelings of confidence that they could handle similar situations effectively.

Decker and Pazez (2017) have employed CBL to increase preservice special education teachers' understanding of special education law regarding disciplinary actions used with students with disabilities. In their study, the use of CBL led to higher scores of proficiency when preservice teachers were asked to analyze novel but similar case scenarios. In addition to CBL being used to enhance teacher education content, implementation of CBL instruction in other clinical settings yields an increase of self-efficacy. Ivey et al. (2018) leveraged CBL to increase the self-efficacy of occupational and physical therapy students' interpersonal interactions. The study results demonstrate that the use of CBL activities that closely mirror clinical scenarios increased occupational therapy and physical therapy student self-efficacy. Study subjects shared that the case provided opportunities to plan, collaborate, and implement treatment plans with interprofessional teams. Similarly, Edmondson and Lei (2014) found that use of CBL in medical education provided students with a "psychologically safe" learning environment that promoted exercise and exploration of their own psychological responses. Learners may also build their own self-efficacy through examining the psychological responses of others as illustrated in case studies and scenarios. Although CBL has been employed in other professional fields and in teacher education more broadly, the existing literature yields few examples of the use of CBL to develop preservice teachers' critical thinking and decision-making, specifically concerning classroom management, with the aim of enhancing preservice teachers' CRCMSE. Therefore this study seeks to address this gap in the literature.

Materials and Methods

This quantitative study employed a quasi-experimental (pretest–posttest, non-equivalent control group) design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants were drawn from a convenience sample of students enrolled in classroom management courses during the fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters in a college of education at a mid-sized public teaching university in the southeastern United States, where two of the authors are faculty members and course instructors. All participants were preservice teachers in initial licensure programs of study. The experimental group (n = 42) consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in a course titled Theory and Practice of Classroom Management. The undergraduate program is a traditional, face-to-face teacher preparation program. Undergraduate students' majors in this

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sample included elementary (K–6; n = 3; 7.1%), middle level (n = 16; 38.1%), secondary (n = 16; 38.1%), and K–12 music (n = 7; 16.7%). The control group (n = 11) consisted of students in an online master of arts in teaching (MAT) program enrolled in an equivalent classroom management course. The MAT program is a fast-track alternative licensure program that prepares mid-career professionals and recent higher education graduates without teaching credentials to become licensed classroom teachers. Although the MAT program is a graduate program that allows students to teach on a provisional license while enrolled, it is considered an initial licensure program because students do not receive a standard license until they complete the program. MAT students’ majors in this sample included elementary (n = 2; 18%), middle level (n = 3; 27%), secondary (n = 4; 37%), K–12 music (n = 1; 9%), and K–12 special education (n = 1; 9%). The master’s-level course is typically delivered online with both synchronous and asynchronous components. Although the undergraduate course would typically be taught in a face-to-face setting, the course was moved online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore both courses were taught online and addressed the same course objectives and course material. However, the experimental group received the CBL intervention, and the control group did not. See Table 1 for a summary of participant demographics.

Table 1
Participant Demographics

	<i>Undergraduate</i>		<i>MAT</i>	
	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Gender				
Male	35.7	15	18	2
Female	64.3	27	73	9
Age				
Traditional student (<25 years)	78.6	33	27	3
Nontraditional student (≥25 years)	21.4	9	73	8
Race/ethnicity				
Asian	2.4	1	0	0
Black/African	4.8	2	36	4
Hispanic/Latinx	4.8	2	0	0
Native American	2.4	1	0	0
Pacific Islander	2.4	1	0	0
Multiracial	2.4	1	0	0
White	78.6	33	64	7
Other	2.4	1	0	0

Note. MAT = master of arts in teaching.

After the research team received institutional review board approval for the study, both the experimental and control groups completed a presurvey, defined as the Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy (CRCMSE) Scale, in Qualtrics during the first 2 weeks of the semester. Students were provided with a link to the presurvey by their course instructors, who encouraged participation in the study by posting the survey as a course assignment in the learning management system (LMS). If students did not want their data included in the study, they could opt out of study participation and still receive course credit for the assignment. The survey consisted of demographic questions (e.g., gender identity, race/ethnicity, and program of study) and the CRCMSE Scale, developed by Siwatu et al. (2015). This scale was used with permission from the researchers.

The CRCMSE Scale asks participants to rate how confident they are in their ability to complete classroom management–related tasks. The Likert-type scale consists of 35 items to which students responded on a sliding 100-point scale, across 10-point gradations, ranging from 0 (*no confidence at all*) to 100 (*completely confident*). The CRCMSE Scale has been validated with a preservice teacher sample that exhibited similar demographics to the present study and exhibited high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .97$; Siwatu et al., 2017). After completing the presurvey, students in the control group proceeded with regular course readings and assignments delivered through the LMS and aligned with course objectives. The experimental group proceeded with similar course readings and assignments and also engaged in CBL reflections and discussions throughout the semester. This intervention is described in more detail in the following pages. Both courses contained five modules of instruction with the following titles: (a) “Beginning the Year and Establishing Expectations and Procedures”; (b) “Cultural Responsiveness and Rapport Building”; (c) “Student Responsibility, Teacher Efficacy, and Family Engagement”; (d) “Proactive Management: Arrangement, Proximity, and Interventions”; and (e) “Classroom Management Plan Project and Final Reflections.”

The experimental group engaged with five case study scenarios developed by Gorski and Pothini (2018). Cases were selected from the text by the researchers and course instructors to align with the five course modules and course objectives. The five cases consisted of scenarios in which classroom teachers navigated complex situations in which they needed to engage in CRCM practices. These cases were open ended, leaving space for preservice teachers to discuss the teacher's intent and mind-set, areas of concern in the teacher's practice, and appropriate next steps to repair the teacher's missteps. The selected cases can be categorized as failure cases. As discussed in the literature review, exposure to failure cases can help the learner recognize faulty lines of reasoning and better identify the complexities within a given scenario (Tawfik & Jonassen, 2013). The cases selected for this study explored various topics related to classroom management, including communicating with families, behavior intervention, and examining educators' implicit biases and assumptions. The cases provided scenarios to which there could be multiple, varied responses.

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Thus the cases provided space for robust personal reflection and discussion among participants. Alignment of modules and case studies is provided in Table 2.

Table 2
Alignment of Course Modules and Case Studies

<i>Course module</i>	<i>Case study</i>	<i>Case study summary</i>
Module 1. Beginning the Year and Establishing Expectations and Procedures	“A Place to Study”	At the start of the year, a teacher provides her students with school supplies and tells parents she expects students to establish a quiet place to study alone at home. As the year progresses, a student turns in “messy” work and admits to sharing supplies with siblings. The teacher remains rigid in her expectations, rather than demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.
Module 2. Cultural Responsiveness and Rapport Building	“The Trouble With Grit”	A teacher notices that one of her students excels with in-class work while rarely turning in homework. After talking with a colleague, she learns that the student takes care of siblings after school. The teacher makes assumptions about the student’s home life, rather than considering how she can change her own practices to better support the student.
Module 3. Student Responsibility, Teacher Efficacy, and Family Engagement	“Family Involvement”	A teacher becomes frustrated when the family of one of his students fails to participate in his preplanned family engagement opportunities. He interprets their decision not to participate in these activities as a lack of care about their student’s academic success, rather than seeking to communicate with them directly about his concerns.
Module 4. Proactive Management: Arrangement, Proximity, and Interventions	“Not Time for Stories”	During a lesson, a teacher misinterprets a student’s story-based response to a question as off-task behavior and brusquely reminds him that it’s “not time for stories.” The young student responds with hurt feelings, and the teacher escalates the situation by interpreting the hurt feelings as defiance.
Module 5. Classroom Management Plan Project and Final Reflections	“Behavior Management Misses the Mark”	A teacher overhears colleagues discussing the ineffectiveness of the current behavior management system in place school-wide, which is centered on punitive consequences like suspension. Later, the teacher, who has shifted to a more positive, relationship-focused classroom management structure in his own classroom, talks with two students about how negative school culture contributes to their behavioral decisions at school.

Each case was provided to students as a one-page written document in the LMS, along with a case study reflection document (see the appendix). Students were expected to read the case and complete the prediscussion portion of the case study reflection document individually before attending online synchronous class sessions to discuss each case in small groups. Small-group discussions were followed by a closing whole-group discussion facilitated by the course instructor. The course instructor asked each small group to share a summary of their conversation with the larger group, highlighted similarities and differences among the small groups, and emphasized how the pillars of CRCM were or were not present in the case study. This individual reflection and group discussion process was designed to align with the case-based learning for classroom management problem solving model developed by Choi and Lee (2009). It also aligned with the recommendations of Siwatu et al. (2017) regarding interventions to be employed alongside the CRCMSE Scale as a means of strengthening preservice teachers' CRCMSE.

Small-group case discussions followed the same process for each case. First, the group reviewed the case facts and objective information without immediately addressing any possible solutions in the scenario. Next, they used the case-specific questions provided by Gorski and Pothini (2018) to guide each case discussion. Then, participants addressed areas of concern in the case, discussed the consequences of the teacher's actions, and brainstormed alternative actions that the teacher could have taken. Finally, the participants reviewed what they learned from the case and what could be applied to their future teaching practice. Following each case discussion, participants also received individual feedback on their written reflections from the course instructor.

After the experimental group had examined their final case study, both the experimental and control groups completed a postsurvey (i.e., the CRCMSE Scale), identical to the presurvey, by accessing a Qualtrics link via their course LMS. Course instructors provided the Qualtrics postsurvey to participants in both groups as a course assignment in the final week of the course. Participants were again given the option to remove their data from the study on the survey consent page, allowing all students to earn course points while still having control over the use of their survey data. The survey links were closed at the conclusion of the semester.

Data for the pre- and postsurveys for both groups were downloaded from Qualtrics. Incomplete survey responses were removed from the data set, and pre- and postsurvey responses for each participant were matched using university identification numbers. Data were then imported to SPSS 27 for statistical analysis.

Results

We employed the CRCMSE Scale, which is a 35-item, unidimensional scale. The scale demonstrated a high level of internal consistency, as determined by a Cronbach's alpha of .987. Descriptive statistics for the experimental and control

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groups are presented in Table 3. Unadjusted means are presented in the results, unless otherwise stated.

Next, mean scores were calculated for each participant on the CRCMSE Scale to provide a strength index score for each individual in the study (Siwatu et al., 2017). The strength index scores on the pre- and postsurveys for participants in both the experimental and control groups were then used for analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to determine whether the use of CBL had a statistically significant effect on preservice teachers' CRCMSE.

An ANCOVA test was selected due to small, uneven sample sizes between groups and to control for nonrandomization of groups (Cohen, 1988; Urdan, 2017). There was a linear relationship between the pre- and posttest, as assessed by visual inspection of a scatter plot. There was homogeneity of regression slopes, as the interaction term was not statistically significant, $F(1, 49) = 1.325, p = .255$. Standardized residuals for the intervention observed a normal distribution, as assessed by Shapiro–Wilk's test, $p > .05$. There was homoscedasticity and homogeneity of variances, as assessed by visual inspection of the standardized residuals plotted against the predicted values and Levene's test of homogeneity of variance, $p = .167$. There were no outliers in the data, as assessed by no cases with standardized residuals greater than ± 3 standard deviations. There was a statistically significant difference between the pre- and posttest means, $F(1, 50) = 4.368, p = .042$, partial $\eta^2 = .080$. Post hoc analysis was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment. Post mean comparison indicated that the experimental group had a statistically significantly higher mean than the control group (mean difference of 7.034, 95% CI 0.274–13.794), $p = .042$. ANCOVA results are provided in Table 4.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics for Experimental and Control Groups

	<i>Pretest</i>		<i>Posttest</i>		
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Undergraduate (experimental)	42	64.97	21.79	87.28	8.84
MAT (control)	11	71.96	20.84	81.19	14.42

Note. MAT = master of arts in teaching.

Table 4
ANCOVA Results for Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy

	SS	<i>df</i>	MS	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Group	423.688	1	423.688	4.368	0.042	0.080
Error	4850.441	50	97.009			

Note. $R^2 = 0.135$. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.100$.

MAT students (control group) indicated higher CRCMSE in the pretest ($M = 71.96$) compared to undergraduate (experimental group) students' pretest ($M = 64.97$). MAT students who did not receive the CBL intervention showed minimal change in unadjusted means from pre- to posttest ($M = 9.23$) compared to the undergraduate students ($M = 22.31$) who received the intervention.

Reviewing changes in mean scores on individual survey items from pre- to postsurvey for the experimental group indicated the most growth (i.e., more than 30 points of change in the mean) in communicating with parents from diverse backgrounds, applying culturally responsive strategies to minimize classroom management issues, and managing student interactions confidently. The change in means from pre- to postsurvey for the items related to these topics are provided in Table 5.

Participants in the experimental group reported growth in CRCMSE in all areas, as demonstrated by higher postsurvey means on each survey item. No survey items showed a negative change in mean from the presurvey to the postsurvey. However, the area that demonstrated the lowest change (i.e., less than 15 points of change in

Table 5
Items With Highest Positive Change in Mean

<i>CRCM topic</i>	<i>CRCMSE Scale items</i>	<i>Mean change score</i>
Communicating with parents from diverse backgrounds	27. Establish two-way communication with non-English speaking parents.	31.05
	28. Use culturally appropriate methods to relate to parents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	30.59
Applying culturally responsive strategies to minimize classroom	2. Use culturally responsive discipline management issues practices to alter the behavior of a student who is being defiant.	31.89
	32. Implement an intervention that minimizes a conflict that occurs when a student's culturally based behavior is not consistent with school norms.	33.58
Managing student interactions confidently	34. Managing situations in which students are defiant.	30.06
	35. Prevent disruptions by recognizing potential causes for misbehavior.	36.71

Note. CRCM = culturally responsive classroom management.
CRCMSE = Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy.

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the mean) was managing student groups. The change in mean scores for the survey items related to these topics are provided in Table 6.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that CBL is an effective intervention for increasing preservice teachers' CRCMSE. Both the control group and the experimental group noted an increase in their feelings of confidence in applying and incorporating CRCM strategies. According to the results of the CRCMSE Scale, the control group experienced a significantly smaller increase in CRCMSE. As MAT students, control group participants may have already encountered experiences in the field that led to initially higher confidence related to CRCM. The experimental group, however, demonstrated a statistically significant increase in their CRCMSE. Increasing preservice teachers' self-efficacy through vicarious experiences inherent in the CBL process, by extension, can lead to changes in their actual teaching practices (Bandura, 1977; Tawfik & Jonassen, 2013). Vicarious experiences can provide teachers with a sense of what is possible in their teaching practice (Baykara & Kizil, 2019; Kizil & Sirin, 2019; Liu et al., 2018). The CBL intervention provided the experimental group with opportunities to observe and reflect on the practices of experienced teachers in culturally diverse settings. By observing and analyzing these cases, the experimental group was able to identify effective strategies and develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of teaching in diverse classrooms. They were then able to internalize and practice applying these strategies in a "psychologically safe" space, leading to the increase in their CRCMSE. This psychologically safe practice environment promotes exploration and immediate reflection (Edmondson & Lei, 2014), which can contribute to the statistically significant difference in the increase of CRCMSE between the two groups.

It is also important to note the high variability of standard deviations in these results. The standard deviations of both the experimental and control group results decreased from pre- to postsurvey, indicating that there was less variability among

Table 6
Items With Lowest Positive Change in Mean

<i>CRCM topic</i>	<i>CRCMSE Scale items</i>	<i>Mean change score</i>
Managing student groups	9. Encourage students to work together on classroom tasks, when appropriate.	11.41
	22. Teach students how to work together.	12.00

Note. CRCM = culturally responsive classroom management.
CRCMSE = Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy.

participants' responses in both groups. Having completed the classroom management course, both groups appear to have reported more similar answers to each survey item. However, there is a larger difference between the experimental group's presurvey standard deviation ($SD = 21.79$) and postsurvey standard deviation ($SD = 8.84$) than is found for the control group, indicating far fewer outliers within the group that received the CBL intervention.

The highest changes in mean scores in the experimental group fell into three categories: communicating with parents from diverse backgrounds, applying culturally responsive strategies to minimize classroom management issues, and managing student interactions confidently. These three topics are directly related to the case scenarios examined by the experimental group. The incorporation of these case studies provided an opportunity for students to grapple with classroom scenarios that are influenced by culturally connected factors. Because the teaching force, and this participant group, comprises mostly White native English speakers, it is possible that these preservice teachers may not have had an opportunity to interact with students from diverse backgrounds.

The placement of these case studies as an integral part of the experimental group's instruction was pivotal in their transformation. Tawfik and Jonassen's (2013) findings align with the findings in this study that failure cases allow preservice teachers to learn from the mistakes of others and avoid the pitfalls that are inherent in bringing a single, personal set of norms into the classroom space. The use of failure cases to support preservice teachers' development of CRCMSE is of particular importance because it creates an opportunity for preservice teachers to build a mental model for self-awareness, implicit bias checking, and culturally responsive practice before they are placed in a classroom environment in which they could make these mistakes themselves and negatively impact the P-12 learners in their care. CBL also aligns with the idea of cognitive apprenticeships (Brown et al., 1989). These cognitive apprenticeships situate the preservice teachers in a context of learning where they can visualize or model the information being shared in the cases, so that they can then successfully and responsively apply that information and the CRCM strategies in a classroom setting.

Leath et al. (2019) found that Black boys and girls in both predominantly Black and predominantly White school districts who reported experiencing racial discrimination from their teachers also reported lower academic curiosity and persistence. They argued that educating teachers in the "development and execution of culturally relevant pedagogical practices that recognize and affirm students' identities" (p. 1346) could help to mitigate the negative interactions that lead to negative outcomes for Black students. This development and execution of culturally agile classroom management strategies aligns with the strategies presented in this study, where preservice teachers have the opportunity, through CBL, to receive coaching and scaffolding through modeling, discussion, and critical reflection.

Although the results of the study provide support for the use of CBL to en-

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hance preservice teachers' CRCMSE, the study is not without limitations. First, the study employed a small sample size, particularly in the control group, and that sample lacked diversity. Though the sample was reflective of the persistent and problematic lack of diversity and representation in the teaching workforce (NCES, 2019a), the results of this study should be confirmed by replicating the study design with a larger, more diverse sample of preservice teachers. The instrument used to measure participants' CRCMSE employed self-report items, so self-report bias may have been present. Because preservice teachers could perceive the development of CRCMSE as a desirable mind-set, they may have overreported their confidence on some postsurvey items, based on what they perceived researchers would hope to hear at the end of the study (Brenner & DeLamater, 2016).

Given those limitations, CBL, and particularly the use of failure cases, appears to be a viable instructional strategy to use in online learning environments to increase preservice teachers' CRCMSE. In this study, the CBL intervention was effective as an alternative when embedded field experiences were not available. CBL can be used to increase CRCMSE among preservice teachers in online learning environments. However, as noted, CBL can and should also be used alongside embedded field experiences, such as classroom observations, to strengthen students' examination of their implicit biases in a setting where they are at less risk of perpetuating classroom norms that are harmful to P-12 students (Bryan, 2017; Leath et al., 2019).

Whereas this study focused on quantitative data specifically related to changes in preservice teachers' CRCMSE after engaging in CBL, future studies could employ qualitative methods to further explore the ways in which CBL could be used as a strategy to build preservice teachers' confidence engaging in conversations related to race and equity in the classroom. In the present study, participants' increased CRCMSE is a result of engaged participation in failure case discussions throughout the course. Further qualitative studies observing and analyzing the content of case reflections and discussions should be pursued to extend this research and provide a rich description of how preservice teachers' CRCMSE is enhanced by their engagement in CBL.

Conclusion

This study sought to examine whether the use of CBL in an online learning environment could support the development of preservice teachers' CRCMSE. The experimental group read, reflected on, and discussed five case studies in the context of a classroom management course. By the end of the course, they demonstrated statistically significantly larger increases in CRCMSE than a control group that completed a classroom management course that did not employ CBL. While the study employed a small sample size, the findings indicate that CBL can be an effective intervention for increasing preservice teachers' CRCMSE.

In closing, we acknowledge that this study outlines one small step that can be

taken toward creating more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments for P–12 students. Integrating CBL into a broader CRCM course framework, such as the one developed by Caldera et al. (2019), is one element of a much larger set of systemic changes that are necessary in the fields of P–12 education and teacher education if we are to shift the focus of classroom spaces from control and compliance to safe, inclusive spaces that celebrate all students’ rich cultures, stories, and heritages (Bryan, 2017; Martin et al., 2017).

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Appendix

Case Study Reflection Guide

BEFORE THE CASE DISCUSSION

1. Review this text first. The ideas here are key to framing the case: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mgx5DW_QI045PbFJUZXUjMiSvHTwN0jn/view
2. Read the case: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bfD79oqy1F0snfoUm3hw8622GNI8L2pqv15jqjIISUo/edit>

Case Analysis

After reading all texts linked above, prepare for our case discussion activity by reflecting on the questions at the end of the case. At least one “A” topic AND one “B” topic.

A1. Connect the case to a course reading that applies. (Cite the reading in the text of your reflection using APA style.)

A2. Cite a specific classroom management concept and/or strategy that applies to the case. Explain the application. (Cite the source of the concept or strategy using APA style.)

B1. Make a personal connection: What resonated with you or challenged you as you read the case? Why? Explain.

B2. Apply the case: What have you learned about teaching/management having read the case? Explain.

A Notes (100 word minimum)

B Notes (100 word minimum)

AFTER THE CASE DISCUSSION

(If you do not attend, watch the Zoom recording first.)

Reflection

After the case discussion activity in class, reflect on what you’ve learned. Identify and explain TWO (2) major take-aways after having read and discussed the case with classmates. Cite any sources appropriately using APA style.

Reflect (150 word minimum)