

**An Investigation Into The Perceptions
And Practices Of Teachers With Regard
To Classroom Discipline**

By

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Supervisor: Mr. Crispin Hemson

DECLARATION

I, Anuradha Venkataramani declare that this dissertation is my own work. All sources that I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of references.

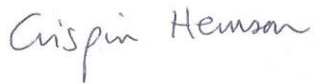
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A. Venkataramani

May 2012

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with my approval.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Crispin Hemson".

Mr. Crispin Hemson

May 2012

Dedication

**I offer my sincere gratitude to SU GOD,
Sukunushisama, Seishusama and Oshienushisama for
permitting me to pursue with the research work day and
night with spiritual energy.**

**Honourable Su God, I am grateful to you for giving me
the knowledge that life is purposeful and that delays,
sufferings, challenges and obstacles that I face in life are
to be welcomed since they are the means through which I
erase my spiritual impurities.**

**Honourable Su God, I thank you for nudging me, to
continue without giving up and helping me to put each
building block together and making it a whole.**

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to the Lotus Feet of Bhagwan Shri Sathya Sai.

To my Dad, who spent his life in the pursuit of knowledge and believed as John Dewey did that “education was not preparation for life but life itself.”

To my Mom, who displayed total confidence in me throughout her life time.

To my brother Kumar, who took the road less travelled.

To my father-in-law, Prof. Banumoorthy who dedicated 35 years of his life in spreading the word of Shakespeare.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to understand the dynamics of power experienced by teachers with multiple stakeholders namely the learners, parents, the school management team and the Department of Education in the management of learner discipline. The study also investigated teachers' knowledge of legislation and policy regarding discipline and the perceptions of their authority and power in relationship to learner discipline.

The study on teachers' experience and perceptions of learner (in)discipline was conducted in an hitherto overlooked setting, namely the primary school. Media reports and international surveys on discipline, violence and school safety pinpoint the need for further research on this burning issue that is affecting our society.

In this study, all ten senior primary teachers participated. A qualitative approach was used. Data was collected through classroom observation, interviews, written accounts and document analysis. The participants were chosen by purposive sampling. The collection, presentation and analysis of data were guided by the research questions, and by the following concepts: French and Raven's five bases of power (legitimate, coercive, expert, reward and referent), structural power and the concepts of *power over*, *power with*, *power to* and *power from within*, all through the lens of education for social justice. The process of social justice requires an outlook of *power with* rather than *power over*. *Power with* is a jointly developed power, that is, the power we achieve by working cooperatively with all concerned.

The findings indicate that teachers' knowledge of legislation on discipline covers the banning of corporal punishment but is vague and divided about the corrective measures and the alternatives to corporal punishment. Teachers' perceptions of their power to control misbehaviour is one of powerlessness. This is caused by, among other factors, the demands of macro structural forces and external factors beyond their control. Teachers resort to negotiation and bargaining with learners to engage them in learning. In

this struggle to manage indiscipline, teachers stand alone deprived of support from parents, school administration and the Department of Education. Hence the dynamics of power experienced by teachers with other stakeholders in the management of discipline is not a transformational form of power or a social justice version of *power with*.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / TERMINOLOGY

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 1. DoE | Department of Education |
| 2. Ex HOA | Ex House of Assembly |
| 3. Ex HOD | Ex House of Delegates |
| 4. ELRC | Education Labour Relations Council |
| 5. GAA | Group Areas Act |
| 6. OBE | Outcomes Based Education |
| 7. SACE | South African Council for Educators |
| 8. SASA | South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 |
| 9. SGB | School Governing Body |
| 10.SMT | School Management Team |
| 11.SEM | Superintendent of Education Management |
| 12.WHO | World Health Organisation |

TERMINOLOGY

1. Teacher / Educator: The current South African terminology refers to 'educator'. I decided to use the traditional term 'teacher'.

2. Pupil / Learner : The current South African terminology refers to 'learner'. Hence the use of the term 'learner'.

...power cannot be a commodity. It is 'neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and ...only exists in action. (Foucault, 1980)

CHAPTER 1 – BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers and parents as citizens of this developing democracy are concerned about the disorder and indiscipline in schools. South African classrooms are frequently plagued by minor and major infringements of behaviour that disrupt the flow of classroom work and learning. Pupils are unable to learn and teachers cannot teach effectively in an obstreperous classroom.

The focus of the study is teachers and their perceptions of the plethora of disciplinary problems that teachers face, the disciplinary actions that they take and the nature of power in the interaction with the learners and the other stakeholders in managing indiscipline. In order to explain the focus, the study aims to investigate teachers' knowledge of legislation on discipline, the perceptions about their authority and power in handling ill discipline and the dynamics of power, in relation to discipline, experienced by them with the other stakeholders – learners, parents, the school management team and the Department of Education. It is a qualitative study undertaken in a senior primary school which consists of both intermediate and senior phases.

Discipline problems are responsible for the loss of valuable instructional time. There are many expressions of this concern. The North West University in its Potchefstroom campus hosted an international conference on perspectives on 'learner discipline' in April 2007 to highlight the problem of indiscipline in South African schools. Media frequently report the deterioration of discipline in South African schools.

A recent editorial article in Sunday Times titled, 'Teachers under too much stress' (Sep 9, 2007, p.24) reported that, "*the biggest dilemma facing teachers today is how to deal with*

unruly charges while simultaneously maintaining their sanity, professionalism and dignity. Once very powerful authority figures in the classroom, teachers now find their powers being systematically eroded. Disruptive behaviour, back chatting and insolence towards staff members is never ending. Empirical evidence suggests that no effective teaching or learning can take place in schools where order and discipline is lacking.”

The shift from apartheid to the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 led to sweeping changes in the education system. Apartheid education had compartmentalised individuals along racial and cultural lines and enhanced the divisions in society (Msila, 2007, p.146). In contrast, in the new dispensation, the education system is based on the foundations of democracy, non-racialism, non-sexism, justice and equality. Corporal punishment was abolished and teachers who use corporal punishment are liable for criminal prosecution (section 10 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996). An awareness of learners’ rights is also promoted through the Life Orientation curriculum.

1.2. MEDIA REPORT ON THE GROWING LACK OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline in schools is of global concern. Learner discipline in public schools is ranked as one of the major concerns expressed by all stakeholders in the education process in South Africa (Van Wyk, 2000, p.196, Mabeba & Prinsloo, 2000, cited in Mestry, Moloi & Mahomed, 2007, p.179). South Africa is faced with the dilemma of increasing school disciplinary problems with serious issues regarding school discipline raised lately (De Waal, 2004, cited in De Waal & Kung, 2007, p.101). The print and the visual media are full of news regarding learner to learner and learner on teacher violent incidents. While the research was being done four incidents took place in KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape within two months:

- A Grade 8 pupil at Hlengisa Intermediate School stabbed a teacher. The Western Cape teacher had been writing on the blackboard at the time and was stabbed in front of the class.(Daily News, 1 June 2007)

- Moegmat Kannemeyer (19) a Grade 9 pupil at a school in Eerste River, in the Western Cape was fatally stabbed in the chest by a fellow pupil with a scissor .(Daily News, 01 June, 2007 and Mail & Guardian online, 31 May 2007)
- An eight year old Wilfred Kriel was hacked to death by two Nieuwoudt Primary school classmates aged seven and twelve in Klawer, 280 km from Cape Town. (Mail & Guardian online, 31 May 2007)
- On March 28th, 2007 a teacher was stabbed several times in the abdomen by a pupil (18) at Thornwood Secondary school in Pinetown, Durban. The teacher died at the scene. (Rising Sun, Chatsworth, 3-9 April 2007)

South African primary and secondary schools are experiencing disciplinary problems that have necessitated national media attention. The above mentioned incidents are just a few of the many that occur on a regular basis. According to Malan (cited in De Waal, 2007, p.105), South African schools are no longer safe havens but rather breeding grounds of violence. President Jacob Zuma met with 1500 principals at the Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre in Durban on 7 August, 2009 and stated,

“Discipline is a problem at the schools. I totally agree. We have to bring discipline back to schools. Safety in schools is a critical issue that needs to be addressed. No child should be coming to school with guns and knives.” (Sunday Tribune, 9 August, 2009, p.1)

1.3. DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT

The notion of discipline in ancient times had to meet the expectations of the dominant power groups of the time. Castle (cited in Docking, 1980, p.16) has commented that in Sparta, discipline was construed in terms of obedience to immediate superiors. In the English elementary schools of the 19th century, discipline was seen as a process of obedience training for society at large. The French sociologist Emile Durkheim emphasized that education, the values and need of society should be in harmony and thus saw school discipline as a preparation of the child for the ‘discipline of society’ and

believed in the 'spirit of discipline' of children (Docking, 1980, p.19). According to Durkheim (1973, p.148), "*Discipline is not a simple device for securing artificial peace in the classroom; it is the morality of the classroom as a small society*" cited in De Klerk-Luttig and Heystek (2007, p.1).

The conception of discipline has changed over time from obedience to character building to the exercise of control and to discipline as being educative. Docking summarized the concept of discipline in three ways.

- (a) an important element in the process of socialization and in the formation of character,
- (b) as a system of controls which enables teaching to take place or,
- (c) as conceptually related to the process of education itself. (Docking, 1980, p. 15).

Discipline and punishment has been debated for many years and still is a contentious issue. What is discipline? The online Oxford dictionary (www.Oxforddictionaries.com), defines the word 'discipline' as the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour using punishment to correct disobedience and also as a system of rules of conduct. The word 'discipline' is derived from the Latin word *disciplina* (teaching) which in turn is derived from *discipulus* (follower).

There are several perspectives on discipline and punishment. Joubert, De Waal and Rossouw (2004) in their research on discipline indicate that 'discipline' and 'punishment' have different meanings but are sometimes used interchangeably. Discipline is about positive behaviour management whereas punishment involves actions taken in response to inappropriate behaviour. Wilson (cited in Parker Jenkins, 1999, p. 82) postulates that discipline should be seen as a recognition of a need for order and working together.

In the context of school, discipline refers to learning, regulated scholarship, guidance and orderliness (Mabeba & Prinsloo, 2000, p.34). The manual *Alternatives to corporal punishment: The learning experience* (DOE, 2001, p.24) explains that "*the purpose of discipline and punishment should be constructive and not destructive; educative rather*

than punitive. The aim of discipline should be to educate and nurture values of tolerance, respect and self discipline in the learner”

1.4. PREVALENCE OF DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS

Robertson (1989, cited in Maphosa & Mammen, 2011, p.185) has identified three types of misbehaviour displayed by learners as those that affect the pupil concerned (for example, copying in tests by having the answers in the palm of their hand or answers from a note book kept open inside their desks), those that violate the interests of other pupils (for example, bullying, tarnishing class mate’s image through false stories), and those which violate the interests of the school or the community (being disrespectful and callous on a much advertised and organised event like school sports day). The categorisation of the misbehaviour, according to Maphosa and Mammen (2011, p.185), is a clear evidence, that misbehaviour can be targeted differently from one concerned individual to others and targeted to the institution (the school in this case) itself. Indiscipline is multifaceted and could be viewed from many varying angles. The misbehaviour displayed by learners in a primary school challenges the teacher’s legitimate authority, disrupts and delays teaching, mocks the disciplinary measures used, nullifies the regular advice given on the need for good behaviour and ruins the pace of teaching.

Teachers complain about increasing disciplinary problems in schools. In my experience, the classroom which is supposed to be a calm and disciplined environment where teaching and learning should take place, has been transformed by learners into a loud, noisy zone to show their resistance to the teacher’ legitimate authority. Seen in this light, discipline problems refer to the manifestation of behaviour which interferes with the teaching and learning process and or seriously upsets the normal running of the school (Lawrence, Steed & Young, cited in Van Wyk, 2001, p.196).

Indiscipline is an age old problem. It is also a persistent one. In my view, poor discipline in primary schools takes the form of misdemeanours and offences such as impudent

behaviour, being noisy, not doing homework, projects or assignments, chewing the gum, swearing, punching and kicking, uttering lies, stealing money and stationery, sneaking out of class, arriving late, disrupting others, lack of respect for one's own and others' belongings, the use of sharp objects, to name a few. Litter is another evil that has become unstoppable. Recycling as an option to litter is promoted in all learning areas. Yet littering has become a national concern since it is a demonstration of irresponsibility, lack of discipline and resistance to authority. Aardweg, E. (1987, p.174) attributed the decline of discipline to the upswing in school violence using the rationale that "*violence is the final stage of disruptive behaviour when all vestiges of communication and rationality are absent.*"

Bullying is also a manifestation of poor discipline. It involves the exercise of power or force over another person. According to a survey conducted by Leach in 1997 (cited in Du Plessis & Conley, 2007, p.44) on bullying, it was found that 63% of learners indicated that they have been bullied sometimes, 10% bullied weekly and 27% at least once a month. The survey was conducted in the ex Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg (the former 'Model C' schools originated in the early 1990s. Mr. Piet Clase, Minister of Education, at the time gave House of Assembly (HOA) schools a choice of three models of schooling that would shape the characteristics and nature for the future. 'Model A' would make the schools fully private. 'Model B' would see them remain state schools and 'Model C' would make the schools semi-private, that is, partly funded by the government (Cronje, 2010)). The perpetration of physical, verbal and psychological bullying between learners affects learner to learner relationship. Bullies lack discipline and terrorise their victims both inside and outside classrooms thus affecting the classroom learning and teaching environment. Bullies are generally defiant or oppositional towards adults, anti social and apt to break school rules (Du Plessis & Conley, 2007, p.46). Indiscipline among teachers needs mention here. Van Wyk's research (2001, p.198) on discipline and punishment in Black urban schools after the banning of corporal punishment explains the prevalence of misconduct among certain teachers. The misconduct took the forms of ill preparation, absenteeism, abuse of alcohol and sexual misconduct. Poor teacher conduct is also mentioned in studies done by Chisholm and

Vally (1996) and Maja (1993, cited in Van Wyk, 2001, p.198). In my view, misconduct deprives teachers of being worthy role models, breaches learners' trust and faith, derails from the path of honesty and decency and closes the door on responsibility.

Teachers' regard good discipline as vital for teaching and learning to take place. Cameron and Sheppard (2006, cited in Masitsa, 2007, p.170) agree that when discipline is not effective, unwanted behaviours are not discouraged nor are new behaviours encouraged or taught, so no meaningful corrective experience takes place and behavioural patterns will not be modified.

Poor discipline also affects teacher morale. Teachers feel discouraged, dissatisfied and leave the profession. Learner misconduct also affects the health of teachers. The conducive environment for learning is damaged by the disruption, chaos and misbehaviour of some learners and all the other learners take advantage of the confusion and become noisy and disruptive themselves.

Good discipline is a *sine qua non* for learning and teaching in every classroom. Without discipline, it is impossible to reach learners especially those who are slow in understanding and who need time and reinforcing. Discipline is important to enjoy schooling, acquire knowledge and skills, to find where one's strengths lie and to form healthy friendships.

1.5. EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

After 1994, education in South Africa underwent major changes. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the White Paper 6 and the Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (2001) placed emphasis on human rights, social justice and inclusivity. Corporal punishment was banned (Sec.10 of the South African Schools Act) and a new curriculum called Curriculum 2005 was introduced. Schools were desegregated and learners of all races could attend the same school. Matriculants from all public schools now write the same exams throughout the country. Learners with special educational

needs were allowed to enrol in mainstream schools. All learners enjoy equal treatment before the law and receive equal protection. Attending school is compulsory for all children between the ages of 7 and 14. Children's rights and responsibilities were given a loud voice in post-apartheid South Africa. A special section on the rights of the child was included in the Bill of Rights (Sec. 28 of the Bill of Rights) which was an important development for children of South Africa.

Sub section (1) of Sec. 16 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 (hereafter referred to as SASA) vests the governance of a public school in its governing body. The school governing body (SGB) is responsible for developing a mission statement for the school, adopting a code of conduct for learners in consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school, and preparing a budget every year with the estimated income and expenditure. The code of conduct prescribes behaviour that respects the rights of learners as guaranteed in the Constitution. The code of conduct has to be reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis. Regulations for safety measures at public schools, age requirements for admission and prohibition of initiation practices are other notable features of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996.

The intention behind these initiatives is laudable. The intention was to bring about a change from the segregation and suppression of apartheid times to a situation of political, social and economic freedom, equality, peace, stability and recognition from the world powers. In fact one could say that the major historical and political change from apartheid to democracy is the rebirth (renaissance) of South Africa.

Some of the changes that were implemented in the field of education, as mentioned above, show that much importance was given to children who are the future of our country. Children's rights are included in the Bill of Rights and also made a part and parcel of the curriculum and reinforced through a subject called Life Orientation which is compulsory up to matric level (school finals). The ban on corporal punishment in schools, a painful reminder of the past, is an indication of the value and hope placed on children. Education was the vehicle used for implementing transformation and change.

1.6. VIOLENCE AND VIOLENT THOUGHTS OF LEARNERS

Violence is clearly prevalent in many South African schools. The lack of discipline in a school results in an unsafe and violent environment. This in turn leads to more violence and discipline problems. The World Health Organisation (as cited in De Wet, 2003, p.190) defines violence as “...*the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death and psychological harm.*”

In the first year of my teaching career, I taught English and Social Sciences to Grade 7 learners. During one of the Social Sciences lesson, I happened to narrate the life of Mahatma Gandhi and his death at the hands of Nathuram Godse. The learners were very silent and suddenly one of the learner in a loud voice asked, “Did they use an AK47 or a pistol to shoot Gandhi?” This was my first encounter with a learner’s violent thoughts. As a temporary teacher, I had the opportunity of working in eight different primary schools over the last fifteen years. In one of the primary schools, I was attacked by learners with sharp objects on two separate occasions. The learners hid a sharpened edge of a blade within their palm and pricked my arm as they came rushing towards me during the lunch break. On a separate occasion, when learners were missing after break, I went to check. I found them hiding behind the tuck shop and when they saw me they ran all around the school. When I gave chase, I sprained my ankle. When these incidents were reported to the head of the institution, the learners were merely reprimanded. The other teachers reported similar incidents and expressed their powerlessness to handle such misdemeanours.

On another occasion, I gave detention forms to two learners for serving detention on a particular day of the week which was to be signed by their parents. This is to inform the parents about the misdemeanour committed by the concerned learner and also to make transport arrangements. The replies from these parents were derogatory and included threats against me. As teachers try to implement discipline using the limited measures available, they face opposition and defeat.

Singh (2006, pp.8-9) refers to the insidious forms of violence experienced by teachers. *“Violence in schools can be seen in the form of wearing many faces. It can range from insidious incidents that include insults, name calling, rude and obscene gestures to directly threatening behaviour and physical violence. It seems to be an unspoken rule that these incidents are inconsequential or not noteworthy.”*

1.7. IMPORTANCE OF DISCIPLINE IN A STUDENT’S LIFE

Henry Giroux (1988) presents a compelling argument that students should become agents in the learning process. This agency provides the basis for collective learning, civic action and ethical responsibility. In my view, for learners to achieve agency and to use this agency for the benefit of society, they should be disciplined. Discipline among learners is an essential aspect of teaching for social justice. It establishes a positive classroom and school climate which is conducive to good instruction and learning. It ensures and safeguards the dignity of both learners and teachers. Discipline empowers learners by making them good decision makers, critical thinkers and dynamic human beings, the kind of learners envisioned by the new curriculum.

Quinn (cited in Hines and Reed, 2007) indicates that education for social justice is predicated upon three transformations. They are a transformation of the self, transformation of people and transformation of culture. Hines and Reed explain this transformation as follows:

“During the transformation of self phase, the learners examine their personal and professional views and feelings about situations. During the transformation of people, the learners use their views and thoughts to affect other people. During the transformation of culture, the learners begin to empower other people to effect social change in their communities.”

In my opinion, for learners to achieve this transformation, it is important that they are disciplined in mind, body and soul. Just as excellence should not be an act but a habit, according to Aristotle, so should be discipline.

Education for social justice places great emphasis on democratic citizenship. According to Iris Marion Young (1990, p.191), social justice entails democracy. To Dewey, “*only those with discipline are candidates for citizenship in a democracy, for only they can participate in an orderly society in pursuit of long term common goals without coercion or force*” (cited in Covalleskie, 1994).

According to Dewey (cited in Connell, 1994), discipline is developed through practice and it provides for the possibility of successful agency. Dewey associates discipline with self control. Students must become self-directed or self-disciplined by framing the purposes of inquiry themselves rather than being directed by authority or by fear or punishment. This shift from teacher controlled discipline to the idea of self discipline is envisioned as creating a classroom more favourable to learning.

1.8. DISCIPLINE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Literature abounds in pointing to the authority inherent in the position of teachers and in arguing that power exists in every interaction between the teacher and the student. This power does not have to be one of domination and coercion. It can be empowering, nurturing, giving as well as receiving (Kreisberg, 1992, p.66). Jean Baker Miller (cited in Kreisberg, 1992, p.64) offers a meaningful definition of power as the ‘capacity to implement’. Power is not a win-lose situation. Power can be an expanding renewable resource available through shared endeavour, dialogue and co-operation.

Education for social justice is both a process and a goal. The process of social justice requires an outlook of *power with* rather than *power over* (Kreisberg, 1992). The process of social justice involves democracy, participation, human agency, inclusiveness and collaboration to create change. The goal of social justice education visualises a just ideal society. It is my contention that the just use of power in such a society would be *power with, power to and power within*. In a primary school context, this could be interpreted as teachers and learners working co operatively wherein teachers should be able to discharge their duties effectively. *Power over* would indicate an unequal dynamic where

either the teacher or the learners or the members of the management exercise undue *power over* the rest. *Power to* and *power within* are forms of power referred to as agency, that is the ability to act and change the world (Veneklasen & Miller, 2002, p.45). *Power with* is a jointly developed power where people fulfil their desires and develop their capacities by acting together (Follett, 1924 cited in Kreisberg, 1992,p.71). *Power to* is the power to inspire and boost the morale of others (Rowlands, 2006, p.2) and *power within* or internal power is the basis for self esteem. It is based on the belief that each individual has the power to make a difference (Veneklasen & Miller, 2006, p.6). Ill discipline has led to the escalation of crime, disregard to life, poor work ethics, a ‘don’t care’ attitude about the problems around us and a decline in the standard of education.

1.9.THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The community around the primary school situated in a suburb of Chatsworth is a mixture of middle and working class people. The majority of the community have a poor socio-economic background. The area is also notable for drugs, unemployment and crime. One of the social ills caused by the Group Areas Act is the breaking down of joint families into nuclear family units. Due to this, both the parents have to work. The children are left in the care of neighbours, friends or on their own. There is lack of control and no quality supervision.

There is also another scenario where many families are headed by single parents, either the father or mother, wherein a role model is always missing, resulting in poor emotional stability of the children. Many of the learners come from this background of poverty, negligence, broken families and from neighbourhoods rife with drugs and alcohol. The seriousness of schooling as an essential aspect of growing up is lacking. In contrast, learners from middle class families also attend this school since they live in the same area.

1.10. RATIONALE

In the face of the changed educational context, a new impetus has been given to the rights of the learners. It seems that with this comes lack of respect towards teachers, defiance of authority and a change in attitude towards learning. According to the government publication, *Manifesto on values, education and democracy* (DoE, 2001, p.19), the two values that are most lacking in schools are respect and dialogue. Respect is a precondition for communication. Schools cannot function and learning cannot happen without mutual respect between the stakeholders.

Daniel Hammett conducted a study on the social standing of teachers in Cape Town in the years 2004 and 2005. He interviewed several teachers. The participants in Hammett's study (2008) described the respect that teachers had during the years before 1994. In this period, teachers were highly respected. The teacher's word was law, inside and very often outside of the classroom. Teachers were the crown jewels of the society (2008, p.343). According to Adhikari (1981), the approval of teachers by the apartheid government was a further source of respect (cited in Hammett, 2008, p.343). Hammett (2008, p. 344) explains that the government approval of teachers did not stop them from offering resistance to segregated education policies. Teachers' participation in the freedom struggle increased their respect and standing and also provided political inspiration to prospective teachers.

The respect given to teachers continued to decline in the post apartheid period and the general attitude within schools has not been respectful towards teachers. Changes in the political sphere and shifts in social attitudes have demoralised the profession in a rights based culture (Hammett, 2008, p. 345).

The primary school with the three phases by which it is organised in South Africa- foundation phase, intermediate phase and senior phase is an important stage in every learner's life. It is from here that learners move on to high school. Both boys and girls join Grade one around the age of seven and are normally out of the primary school by the

age of thirteen. When, in these seven years, learners violate school rules, disrupt teaching, treat adults with disrespect and get addicted to destructive habits, the fear arises, ‘what kind of citizens are they going to become?’

Sixteen years after the writing of a new Constitution (1996) and a new Act about governance of schools (South African Schools Act 84 of 1996), questions arise such as what are the rights of teachers in this context, are teachers aware of their legitimate authority? What are the chances of teachers’ teaching a disciplined classroom with respect for teachers’ authority and power? And what do teachers know about the contents of these policy documents regarding discipline etc?

The aim of this study is to investigate teachers’ perceptions around the concept of discipline with a focus on their authority and power. The qualitative approach was chosen for the study.

The research questions that framed this study are as follows:

1. What is teachers’ knowledge of legislation and policy regarding learner discipline?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers of their authority and power in relationship to discipline in a South African suburban school?
3. What are the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in the management of learner discipline?

1.11. OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 provides the background and rationale for the study.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature reviewed on learner ill discipline, the legal framework for discipline and the existence of power in teacher learner relationship.

Chapter 3 explains the conceptual framework used in this study.

Chapter 4 addresses the research methodology used in this study.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of data collected through qualitative methods and the analysis of the external and internal documents with the concepts of French and Raven's (1959) sources of power and structural power.

Chapter 6, the final chapter, presents the analysis of the dynamics of power experienced by teachers, the recommendations of the study and my reflections on power.

1.12. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is three fold. Firstly, the use of an often overlooked setting, that is, the primary school. Secondly, the application of the concepts of power to understand the power inherent in school documents. Thirdly, this study has used an approach to understand learner discipline that draws on diverse concepts of power. The study sheds light on the power exercised by parents, learners, the management team and the Department of Education over teachers regarding the management of discipline.

It is difficult to come across research studies using these concepts of power to explain teachers' handling of discipline in a primary school setting in South Africa.

1.13. CONCLUSION

The perennial problem of poor discipline faced by teachers has been outlined in this chapter. I chose concepts of power to understand and explain to how teachers handle indiscipline. French and Raven's five sources or bases of power (1959), namely

legitimate, coercive, expert, referent and reward are powers that all teachers use at different times depending upon the situation. The teachers use more, or less, of each of these powers. Collaboration or combined effort, working on one's own based on one's capabilities and working by relying or drawing on the power from within are called positive concepts of power. This study aims to explore these difficult issues of discipline and indiscipline in a primary school with the hope that it enables stakeholders to address the issues in informed and constructive work.

Power is a structure of relationships - a structure in which teachers and students can build or participate. Power is not an object and cannot be owned by anyone. The structure of relationships is called power because it, rather than the individuals who create it, is what shapes people's actions. (Mary Phillips Manke, 1997)

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Discipline and schooling go hand in hand from time immemorial. With the advocacy of human rights, equality and freedom, the traditional methods of discipline such as corporal punishment, threat and sarcasm have become outdated and are potentially punishable by law. The literature on the legal framework covering learner discipline and their rights has been presented as well as an analysis of national, provincial and international legislation. This study focuses on teacher knowledge and perceptions from the perspective of power. This review aims to enable a more informed understanding of what has been learnt from research on discipline and how studies such as this one can be approached.

2.2. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT

Corporal punishment was an integral part of schooling for most teachers and students in twentieth century South African schools. The ending of apartheid and the establishment of a human rights culture in the 1990s laid the foundation for the ending of corporal punishment (Morrell, 2001, p.292). It is important to understand how discipline was maintained in schools during apartheid times before the banning of corporal punishment. The manual, *Alternatives to corporal punishment* (DoE, 2001, p.5) mentions that Christian National Education (CNE) was designed to support the apartheid system by schooling children to become passive citizens who would accept authority unquestioningly.

In that period, teachers maintained control in the classroom with the help of the cane. Beating children to discipline them was an accepted and allowed practice. “*Corporal*

punishment was sanctioned by law, encouraged by teacher training institutions and deemed a 'scientifically irrefutable' way to educate children" (DoE, 2001, p.5). As part of the exercise of corporal punishment during apartheid, Naong (2007, p.286) describes the use of canes and merciless beatings on Thursdays (known as *'Donderdag'* in the Afrikaans language) in township schools. Thursday was set aside for recitations, revisions and solving of mathematical problems. The learners who failed to recite poems correctly or who forgot a few lines of the poem were given a number of lashes and hence the day was dreaded by most of the learners and was marked by a high level of absenteeism.

The use of corporal punishment resulted in humiliation and submission of pupils to the teachers' authority. This was an expression of domination by principals and teachers over learners. It is an example of teachers' *power over* the pupils. Corporal punishment was used all over the world and was justified to be in the best interests of the pupil.

The following quote is a self description of a teacher who took pride in using corporal punishment.

"I am that legendary creature who descends each morning at eight-fifteen from some Olympian height to inflict despair, anguish and torment and frustration upon mere mortals; that ghoul whose sole delight is draining the lifeblood from those defenseless innocents you send us each morning; that ogre whose rod and whose staff comfort none; that demi-god who is the ultimate test of mental, physical and spiritual endurance. I am he with the fist of iron, the eyes of steel and the heart of stone. In short, I am an English teacher, the most unreasonable, the most unsympathetic to students everywhere – the most unnecessary of God's creations" (Kreisberg, 1992, p.5).

Pupils who experience corporal punishment and became teachers perpetuated it by using it on others later on in life. Corporal punishment was found to be quick, easy and effective in maintaining discipline in the classroom. It brought about the desired behaviour of obedience and compliance. To quote Vally, *"In the name of discipline, teacher and parental duty, character formation and religious precept many educators were expected to administer corporal punishment"* (Vally, 1998, p.4). Thus the use of

power (corporal punishment) to discipline a learner was accepted and approved by education authorities during apartheid times.

In the words of Amin, an apartheid classroom was a place where:

“The chalkboard was the domain of the teacher and that entry into the classroom was through the teachers’ permission. There were also the symbols of power: the red pen, the ruler in the hand, the pointing finger and the stick in the corner. There was also the structures supporting power: the mark book, report cards, the detention room, school uniforms, school regulations, the head teacher, other teachers, punitive measures, home work and the “Black Book” (Amin, 2001, p.41).

2.3. AUTHORITY IN TRADITIONAL CLASSROOMS

Teachers relied on their traditional authority. The pupils were passive and accepted the teacher’s authority as absolute. Classrooms were teacher-centred. The teachers taught and the learners took notes quietly. Teachers exercised power through silence, cold stare or a touch on the shoulder. According to Lefstein (2002, p.1630), *“teachers’ authority as dispensers of knowledge coincided with their authority as controllers of student activity. The instructional techniques of frontal instruction, uniform pace and periodic examination intersected with disciplinary technologies”*. Although Lefstein wrote about traditional teaching techniques in a different context, the same applies to the pre-apartheid classrooms. It seems that ‘children must be seen and not heard’ was the dictum. The authority and power of the teachers came from various sources such as the parent, the community, the popularity of the profession and the importance of education in the life of every individual. Teachers were respected and revered by members of the community and the parents. This in turn led to the students accepting teachers’ traditional authority. Teachers were regarded as knowledgeable who were needed to impart this knowledge to students. Moreover teaching was considered to be a noble and respectable profession in society which gave it the stamp of approval. Education was considered indispensable which in turn enhanced the importance of the teaching profession. The teachers were allowed to punish the students to instil discipline. This was not questioned

by the parents. The parents and the students cooperated by completing the tasks set by the teachers since the teachers' words were accepted as dictum and the students were obedient and respectful. Collectively the respect, regard and cooperation from the community and the parents gave teachers the traditional and moral authority and power and dignity to the teaching profession.

2.4. AUTHORITY AND POWER IN PRESENT DAY CLASSROOMS

After 1994, educational system in the Republic of South Africa underwent major changes. Firstly, the hitherto teacher-centred classrooms became learner-centred and the teacher's role changed to that of a facilitator of learning. Learners' progress in education was related to the achievement of outcomes and were permitted to work at their own pace backed by policy called outcomes based education (OBE).

To quote Jansen, *"Teachers became re-imaged to become soft facilitators of a new pedagogy. Teachers move back from centre stage into an invisible position on the margins of the classroom; facilitating a learning process in which young minds took charge of their own learning, designed their own materials, invented their own learning opportunities and occupied the centre of what was to become a 'learner-centred' classroom"* (2001, p. 243). Jansen further explains that, *"...first the new facilitator had to give up the symbolic and physical space, which he/she occupied at the centre of the classroom as 'presenter'. Second, the facilitator had to give up that other instrument of control: corporal punishment. And third, since learners generate knowledge out of environmental experience, the one source of authority for teachers, the textbook took a back seat."*

Secondly, corporal punishment was prohibited in schools and teachers had to give up this instrument of control. In the words of Salim Vally, *"Many teachers see the abolition of corporal punishment as contributing to their loss of authority, particularly as they have not been introduced to effective methods of maintaining discipline"* (Vally, 1998, p.5). The banning of corporal punishment has resulted in a narrowing of the range of acceptable methods of disciplining. Teachers' actions are subjected to scrutiny while the

administrative edicts watch over the rights of pupils. As a result, according to the public hearing report on school-based violence (2006, p.22), conducted by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), teachers are reluctant to take disciplinary action due to the fear of infringing the learners' rights. The report added that such hesitation resulted in a general reluctance in the education system to act decisively against learners who are perpetrators of violence.

Thirdly, in the present system of education, learners' rights have been given impetus and prominence. Teachers feel that the emphasis given to the rights of learners has caused and continues to cause poor discipline in schools and society. A newspaper survey conducted among thousand teachers on educator morale in South Africa indicated that teachers hold the view that learners misbehave intentionally because they believe that they are protected against punishment by their constitutional rights (Star, 2003, p.1 cited in Masitsa, 2007).

According to Rossouw (2007, p.213), a few decades ago, children's rights did not receive the recognition they deserved. The pendulum has, however, according to Rossouw swung to such a position where the perception has developed in many schools that learners' rights are more important than teachers' rights leading to enormous frustration, anger and stress among teachers.

Fourthly, in present times, it is a fact that teachers have to manage large classrooms. Student power is also due to the overcrowding or 'numerical dominance' (Delamont, 1983 cited in Manke, 1997) of pupils in the classroom. This gives learners collective power to offer collective resistance.

Teachers are under pressure to handle their own discipline problems. They struggle to establish a strict yet working relationship with pupils in the management of discipline. In a primary school, the teacher learner relationship may involve verbal and emotional outbursts. There is always bargaining and negotiation to avoid open confrontation.

The overcrowded, learner-centred classrooms, ban on corporal punishment, lack of effective disciplinary measures and proclamation of rights without responsibilities by learners imply a diminution in the power of teachers and a shift of power in favour of the pupils.

2.5. POWER RELATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

The concept of power has been largely in relation to the disadvantaging of certain groups by virtue of their gender, ethnicity, class, disability or sexual orientation (hooks, 1989, cited in Adams, Bell & Griffin, 1997, p.36). Power has rarely been discussed at length in the context of learning and teaching and especially in the intermediate and senior phase of a primary school.

Very few studies about authority and power relations between teachers and students in the management of discipline problems have been undertaken. This is an unexplored area of research in primary schools in this country. There are a few studies that have been done in high schools and universities in the United States about power and pedagogy.

According to Smith (1977, p.205), the basic pattern of adult-child relationships has changed over the years. Society deems that the child no longer possesses obligation to understand the adult world but rather the adult must understand the child's world. The educational literature is filled with injunctions to parents and teachers to understand and know each child as an individual. There is a breakdown in the solidarity of the adult world. If a child was disciplined by a teacher, the parental reaction supported the teacher rather than the child. Today, parents no longer allow teachers the benefit of the doubt. The pupils are aware of this division and have used it to play one adult off against another (Smith, 1977, p. 205).

There are several other reasons suggested by researchers for the weakening of traditional power relations. Grades which were essential and important to the traditional basis of the behaviour for reward exchange system may be seen as meaningless by economically backward students with very little job opportunities. The multicultural composition in schools has altered the traditional belief system upon which a teacher's power was often built which as explained in Cothran and Ennis (1997) meant that students from different cultures

have different beliefs about the nature of authority. Some believe that authority comes with the role that a person fills while others believe that authority is earned. The role of the teacher is no more viewed as having a “built in” authority. Students are distanced and alienated from academic work (Cothran & Ennis, 1997, p.542).

The loss of parental support to teachers’ authority, lack of importance to grades, cultural diversity with different views of respect and loyalty and the shift to non academic interests have all contributed to the weakening of traditional power relationships.

To the question who has power in the classrooms, most people would point to the teacher. Willard Waller, a sociologist of education wrote as early as 1932 that “*children are certainly defenseless against the machinery with which the adult world is able to enforce its decisions, the result of the battle (between teachers and students) is foreordained*” (cited in Manke, 1997, p.1).

Manke (1997, p.2) addressed classroom power relations and student teacher interaction in a primary school. Willard Waller’s statement, according to Manke implies, certain beliefs such as that the ‘teacher’ must have the power in the classroom; the teacher is the only one who ‘has’ power and that power cannot be shared. Manke refutes these beliefs. According to her, power is not an object and cannot be owned by anyone. If the teacher is the only person who has power, it would be a crushing burden of responsibility to be accountable for the action of every student and all aspects of classroom activity. The belief that power cannot be shared would require teachers to focus on keeping ownership of classroom power to the detriment of focusing on teaching and meeting learners needs. Manke’s book makes the claim that teachers and students are jointly responsible for constructing power in the classroom. Relationship cannot be built by one individual. It requires the participation of both teachers and students.

Boaduo and Gumbi (2010, p. 419) concur with this view that students are capable of exercising power in the classroom. In other words, they are co-constructors of classroom practice. They conducted a study in sixty schools (30 primary and 30 secondary) in Lesotho. The aim was to identify how teachers and students exercise power in the classroom. Their

analysis revealed that the teacher is not equipped with absolute power which is wielded willy-nilly over students. The teacher's encounter with students generates relations of power in which both the teacher and students are caught. To support this finding they quote Foucault (1977), "*this machine [i.e. the classroom] is one in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power as well as those who are subjected to it*" (2010, p.421).

There are similar views of joint construction of power expressed in a different way. Pauly (cited in Cothran, 1997, p.543) talks about reciprocal power: "*Reciprocal power exists in a group when each member achieves a degree of control over the others and is simultaneously subject to control by them*" (An understanding of reciprocal power and negotiations and bargaining is crucial for understanding classroom practices. Cothran and Ennis (1997) conducted research on students' and teachers' perceptions of conflict and power. The study included four teachers and their students from three high schools in a larger urban district in the United States.

Reciprocal power applies when teachers and pupils hold power and use it to influence the nature of the class. In Cothran and Ennis's study (1997) the daily interactions served as a negotiation process. Teachers wanted the students to participate, co-operate and submit work on time. If they fulfilled these requirements, teachers rewarded them with access to favoured activities and time to spend with friends. In our current classrooms, this sort of negotiation and bargaining takes place in return for good behaviour and a quiet environment for learning to take place.

Winograd (2001, p.360) conducted a study about the "negotiative dimension" of teaching. He reiterates that student resistance and the negotiative demands on teacher are inevitable even in the best of teaching situations. He further states that there are many micro and macro political factors that influence the negotiation such as the personality of the teacher and students, the teachers' understanding of students, the teachers' and students' willingness or ability to see each other's point of view. External factors also impact on the nature of negotiations in teacher student interaction.

According to Manke, "*...it is important to acknowledge what is much harder to observe, the effects of the larger society on what occurs within the classroom. The interactive*

construction of power relationships and indeed of all aspects of life in the classroom takes place within that society. The school, the community and the nation that surround the classroom and limit as well as influence what takes place within it” (1997, p.9).

The above review reveals the existence of power in the interaction between the teacher and the learner in the classroom and the nature of that power as reciprocal, negotiative and jointly constructed. My study investigates teachers’ perceptions of power and authority and the nature of the power that exists in the interaction between the teacher and the learner as well as the teacher and the other stakeholders such as the parents, the school management team and the Department of Education in managing ill discipline. In this attempt, I have used those concepts of power, viz., *power over, power with, power to and power within*, that have not been used so far to study the teacher learner stakeholders power relationship in the management of discipline in a primary school in South Africa. As this study’s findings are added to the existing findings of Manke 1997) Winograd (2001) and Cothran and Ennis (1997), it would contribute in a minuscule way to the understanding of power in a teaching learning institution, a primary school.

2.6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR DISCIPLINE

This study includes an assessment of teachers’ knowledge of legislation and policy. South African law has created a new legal context and it is important for principals and teachers to know the law relating to school discipline and punishment and to be familiar with legal concepts, principles and procedures so that they can continue building and maintaining effective schools (Joubert, De Waal & Rossouw, 2004, p.79).

2.6.1. NATIONAL LEGISLATION

2.6.1.1. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ACT 108 OF 1996 AND BILL OF RIGHTS

After 1994, South Africa adopted a new democratic constitution which guaranteed the right to dignity, equality, freedom and security for all its citizens. The supreme Constitution of the

Republic of South Africa forms the foundation for all legislation and policy. The sections dealing with various rights are outlined here.

Section 10: “*the right to have dignity respected and protected...*”. According to Kung & de Waal (2007, p.110), just as teachers are warned to treat learners with respect and concern according to Section 10, learners also have the duty to treat teachers with the same respect and concern.

Section 12: “*the right to freedom and security...*”

Section 16: “*the right to freedom of expression...*”. Although teachers and learners have the right to express their views and receive information, these views may not disrupt or affect education detrimentally. According to Malherbe and Venter (cited in De Waal, 2007, p.110), learners need to be aware that freedom of speech does not allow them to interrupt the teacher or to back chat when reprimanded on the presumption that they are demanding their right to freedom of speech.

Section 29: “*the right to basic education and further education...*”

Mention is made of *in loco parentis* and the conditions for suspension and expulsion of pupils. Teachers have the legal duty in terms of *in loco parentis* to ensure the safety of learners (Oosthuizen, 1998, cited in Prinsloo, 2005, p.9) in their care. According to Maithufi (1997, cited in Prinsloo, 2005, p.9), there are two co-extensive pillars to the *in loco parentis* role, namely the duty of care and the duty to maintain order at school.

2.6.1.2. SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT 84 OF 1996

The South African Schools Act has made provisions dealing with learner discipline and safety through the following sections.

- a) Section 8 (1-9) Code of conduct
- b) Section 9 (1-5) Suspension and expulsion from schools
- c) Section 10 (1-2) Prohibition of corporal punishment

The code of conduct must explain the various sanctions for disciplining learners, the levels of misconduct and the communication process to be followed when disciplining learners.

2.6.1.2.1. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LEARNERS

In 1996 the South African Schools Act 84 banned the use of corporal punishment in all South African schools. The future of South Africa is dependent on the disciplined behaviour of its current generation. Section 8 (1) of SASA empowers a governing body to maintain discipline in a school and also provides that the governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school.

Parents have been given a formal role in school governance through the formation of a school governing body (Morrell, 2001, p.294). According to Wolhuter and Van Staden (2007, p.394) a disciplined school environment is the cradle of tomorrow's society. This notion is emphasized in section 8(2) of the SASA (SA,1996(a) where the functions of a school's code of conduct are clarified. The code of conduct should be aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.

Drawing up the code of conduct is an important part of the democratisation of education in South Africa. The essential features of the code of conduct include setting out the disciplinary procedures to be followed, putting the code of conduct on display, familiarising learners with the content of the code of conduct, listing things that learners may not do, promoting positive discipline, self discipline and exemplary conduct, drawing up the channels for grievance procedures and due process in conducting a fair hearing, and emphasising that an educator has the same rights as a parent to control and discipline the learner during the time the learner is in attendance at the school and school related activities. The power communicated by the code of conduct is explained in chapter 5.

2.6.1.2.2. SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Section 9 of the South African Schools Act containing the stipulations regarding suspension and expulsion of a learner from a public school has been amended in KZN Circular No. 33 of 2007. The important additions made in the latest circular is that, a school's code of conduct

must clearly spell out offences that are regarded as serious misconduct that may lead to suspension or expulsion of a learner. The amendment referred to in circular 33 issued in 2007 states that a governing body must conduct disciplinary hearings in the manner contemplated in Sec. 8(1A) of SASA against the learner within seven school days after the suspension of such a learner. The Head of Department (HOD) must consider within 14 days whether or not to expel a learner after receiving the recommendation of the school governing body. The HOD and the Ward Manager must make arrangements for the expelled learner's placement at another public school which is considered as part of the learner's "rehabilitation programme".

A learner can be suspended for a period not longer than 14 days. The amendment also lists the kinds of misconduct under 5 levels and suggests measures such as verbal warnings or written reprimand by an educator and supervised school work that will contribute to the learner's progress at school, demerits, performing tasks that would assist the offender, replacement of damaged property, detention in which learners use their time constructively but within the confines of the classroom and suspension from school activities, for example, sport and cultural activities.

2.6.1.2.3. PROHIBITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

In terms of Section 10 of SASA (SA, 1996a) corporal punishment is prohibited in schools. Section 10 on corporal punishment reads:

- 1. No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner.*
- 2. Any person who contravenes sub section (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault.*

According to Morrell (2001, p.292), the government has attempted to fill the vacuum created by the abolishment of corporal punishment in two ways. It has introduced school level codes of conduct and parents have been given an unprecedented involvement in school affairs via representation on the school governing body.

2.6.1.2.4. THE NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL POLICY ACT OF 1996

This Act also makes reference to corporal punishment:

No person shall administer corporal punishment or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution.

2.6.2. PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

2.6.2.1. KZN SCHOOLS ACT NO.3 OF 1996

The KwaZulu-Natal regulations also makes it an offence to administer corporal punishment upon learners at any public school or independent school (Section 63(1)). The penalty for imposing corporal punishment is fine as stipulated by regulations or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or both fine and imprisonment.

2.6.2.2. PROVINCIAL CIRCULARS ON DISCIPLINE SAFETY & SECURITY

KZN circular No.55 of 2001 explains the establishment of a Discipline, Safety and Security committee (DSS) at different levels of the Department of Education and the duties and functions of these committees. The Superintendent of Education (Management) is responsible for the establishment of the above unit in all the schools in his/her circuit whereas the KZN Circular No. 90 of 2001 provides policy guidelines on Discipline, Safety and Security committees in public schools. It also mentions possible problems and key consequences and suggests corrective measures.

2.6.2.3. UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL GOVERNANCE / MANUAL 6

This manual was published by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and culture on learner conduct and discipline. It explains in detail about drafting a code of conduct for schools through fifty seven pages. It provides case studies and a multiple choice test paper on the material explained in the manual. The year of publication is not mentioned in the document.

2.7. ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The manual *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment: The Learning Experience: A practical guide for educators* was published in 2000 and the second manual namely, *Alternatives to corporal punishment: Growing discipline and respect in our classrooms* was published in 2001. The former edition was published by the national Department of Education and the latter one was compiled by Wits Education Policy unit (Porteus, Vally & Ruth). These manuals contained guidelines to help teachers maintain discipline in the classroom and the school. Teachers are required to adopt a non-violent constructive approach to discipline. Learners' misconduct is classified under five levels, namely, misconduct inside the classroom, breaking school rules, violation of school codes, very serious misconduct and committing criminal acts which breach the law.

Verbal warnings, community service, demerits (losing credits which have been gained), additional work which is constructive that relates to the misconduct, detention in which learners use their time constructively and small menial tasks like tidying up the classroom are some of the disciplinary actions suggested. The manual suggests five steps in formulating a disciplinary policy namely, developing a disciplinary code, formulating a school vision and mission, developing support structures and procedures, building up physical resources and implementation and regular evaluation of the policy .

2.8. CO-OPERATIVE DISCIPLINE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Cooperative discipline has been defined as democratically created rules of expected behaviour, corrective measures to maintain learner's dignity, respects and rights and a shared responsibility to uphold the expected behaviour (Masite & Vawda, 2003, p.16). The manual recommends the development of skills such as communication ('I' statements), anger management, conflict resolution, decision making and assertiveness training. The three crucial elements to an effective disciplinary programme, according to the manual, are: consistency, setting boundaries and promoting building of relationships.

2.9. INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION

2.9.1. CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The Convention of the Rights of the Child came into force in September 1990 and South Africa is a signatory to it. Article 19(1) pledges that,

Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2.9.2. THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE RIGHTS & WELFARE OF THE CHILD

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child came into force in November 1999. Article 1 of the 'rights and welfare of the child' deals with the obligation of states parties or signatory countries (Porteus et al, 2001, p.7). Article 1(1) reads:

Member states of the Organisation of African Unity Parties to the present charter shall recognize the rights, freedoms and duties enshrined in this charter and shall undertake the necessary steps, in accordance with their constitutional processes and with the provision of the present charter to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect to the provisions of this charter.

2.10. CURRENT STATE OF DISCIPLINE IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

The general lack of discipline in the broader context of the South African society is reflected in the school situation where the absence of self discipline and the rejection of discipline sabotage a positive culture of teaching and learning (Luttig & Heystek, 2007, p.1).

Learner disciplinary problems in South African schools range from physical violence, threats, theft, graffiti and vandalism, verbal abuse, lack of concentration, boisterousness and disrespect for authority, the problem of truancy, criminality, gangsterism, substance abuse in and around school (Van Wyk, 2001, p.196; Mabeba & Prinsloo, 2000, p.34 cited in Mestry et al, 2007, p.180).

Marais and Meier (2010) undertook a research project to identify the types and causes of disruptive behaviour occurring in the foundation phase (Gr. R to Gr. 3) of schooling. Disrupting classroom activities, fighting, disrespect, bullying, stealing, using bad language and vandalism were identified as the frequently occurring types of disruptive behaviour. The learners' behaviour is attributed by the authors to a lack of discipline and rules at home, a lack of respect for authority and rules, overcrowded class rooms, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Media is another factor that exposes learners to violence and bad manners, leading to poor anger management skills. The researchers conclude that the key to address disruptive behaviour is to use the system theory approach which involves a shift of focus from the individual to the community. Masitsa (2007, p.136) conducted a study on substance use/abuse by secondary school learners. This leads to disciplinary problems such as coming to schools under the influence of the substance, getting involved in drug running and displays of antisocial behaviour and the neglect of studies. It was found that substance abuse among students is on the increase. A study on the moral degeneration in South African society conducted by Louw in 2009 concludes that the moral crisis in schools manifests itself in the form of vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse, the absence of a work ethic among learners and educators and crimes committed by learners' at school. In this context, Louw cites the importance of values by quoting De Klerk and Rens (2003, p.353, cited in Louw, 2009, p.175) that values and education are inseparable and morality has always been and will always be part of education. The breakdown of discipline among learners in South African schools is alarming and the above examples are a proof that more studies have to be conducted to find a workable solution to this problem.

2.11. CONCLUSION

A review of the literature on the national and provincial legislation on learner discipline reveals that both the national government and the provincial governments have issued and published acts, circulars and manuals relating to discipline. The National government and the Wits policy unit in collaboration with the South African Human Rights commission along with the British Council have published a guide and manual on the

alternatives to corporal punishment to assist teachers. The South African Schools Act gives guidelines and rules about the procedures to be followed. The provincial government in KwaZulu-Natal has also published manuals on school governance and Manual Six on discipline and codes of conduct for learners. The policies, acts, circulars and manuals are guidelines and the schools are required to abide by these guidelines such as drafting and adopting a code of conduct by the school governing body with the support of the concerned stakeholders and the school community which has to be in line with the principles of the constitution of the country and the Schools Act. However, since the requisites of every school differ, the code of conduct that is adopted must cater to the respective school's needs and corrective measures need to be employed without offending members of the community.

Secondly, the general conception among parents and the community that the teacher is the sole source of power in the classroom is disproved by review of the literature on teacher learner power relationship. Research studies divulge the presence of reciprocal, jointly constructed and negotiated power in the classroom.

Thirdly, the rights of children have been given importance in accordance with international conventions by being included in the Bill of Rights. The rights of children are thus legally protected.

Fourthly, the use of corporal punishment has been banned (Sec.10 of SASA). The manuals published by the DoE and WITS policy unit suggest certain alternatives to corporal punishment. While learner power may be communicated through resistance and miseducative behaviour and the management of the miseducative behaviour, according to the manuals require the use of measures that are not coercive and punitive, as in the past, but are corrective in nature.

Fifthly, teachers are strictly warned by the South African Council of Educators (SACE) of the consequences for the infringement of learners' rights by using corporal punishment and for the impairing of human dignity through sexual misconduct.

A good working knowledge of legislation will enhance the legitimate authority of teachers and help them to use corrective measures to discipline learners.

The respect for teachers' traditional power has diminished and the traditional role of parents taking full responsibility for the behaviour of their children at school has retrograded.

The research studies conducted so far on discipline have covered topics such as the use of corporal punishment after the official ban, bullying, human rights, parental corporal punishment etc. I have not come across studies relating to learner discipline from the perspective of the teacher and learner power relationship. This study would fill the gap created by lack of research on power in teacher and learner interactions in South African primary schools. The general impression given by the lack of literature on primary schools is that discipline among learners deteriorates only in high schools whereas in primary schools, the children are still malleable and governable. This study is a step in the right direction since it is conducted in a primary school where the learning starts, develops, progresses and is further sustained in the secondary schools. As the learning begins, the problem of poor discipline also crops up like a weed.

The implication of the legislative framework presented in this chapter is to transform schools plagued by indiscipline and the self destructive behaviour of learners into places distinguished by dialogue, respect, knowledge, participation, empowerment, in short, embodying the positive concepts of power with, power to and power within. However, evidence from the literature is also that this has not yet been achieved in South African schools.

...Power is connected with oppression and rule. Power is productive and makes development possible. Power is an evil, a good, diabolical, and routine. (Lukes, in Clegg, 1989, p.239).

CHAPTER 3 – CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. INTRODUCTON

The study addresses the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in a primary school. This chapter explores the concepts of authority and power, the different types of authority and power and the construction of power in the teacher student relationship. The lens of education for social justice is used to view the positive forms of power such as *power with*, *power to* and *power from within*.

3.2.CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY

The term ‘authority’ refers to a source, an originator, an interpreter or enforcer of rules. It originates from the Latin word ‘*auctoritas*’ which means the originating and inventing of opinions, counsel and command. In institutions it implies a rule governed form of life, some normative order that has to be promulgated, maintained and perpetuated. It is the use of speech, symbolic gestures and rituals by means of which verdicts, commands and pronouncements which lay down what is correct are formally stated and vested with significance. Persons in authority get their right to decide, proclaim, judge, order and pronounce from the procedural rules which they lay down (Peters, 1966 cited in Mlondo, 1990, p.71). Authority, since Weber, has been thought of as the legitimate cousin of power (Weber, 1978, cited in Burbules, 1986, p.107). He defines authority as the probability of a person gaining voluntary obedience from others when he or she has a legitimate right to give commands.

At home, parents have the natural authority to discipline their children, to guide them to differentiate between right and wrong and good and bad. Authority is part of the

leadership that comes with the job of parenting, directing parts of the child's life, enforcing adherence to those directions, and gradually turning over more power of authority as he or she grows older and learns to direct himself or herself responsibly (Pickhardt, 2010). Teachers have similar responsibilities in the school and their authority is derived from the rational basis of their employment. Authority is a fundamental feature of classroom life. Authority is the relationship between the teachers and students in terms of obedience to classroom rules and behavioural expectations. It does not preclude a friendly relationship between teachers and students (Fried, 2003; Seeman, 1994 cited in Pellegrino, 2010, p.2). In fact, effective classroom authority necessitates a friendly and mutually respectful relationship.

Weber identified three types of authority namely traditional authority, legal/rational authority and charismatic authority. Traditional authority grants legitimacy to authority figures. The authority figures serve tradition through their commands and obedience and loyalty is given to them in return. Teachers acting as 'in loco parentis' (in the place of the parent) are an example of the exercise of traditional authority (Weber, 1947, cited in Pace & Hemmings, 2007, p.6). Legal or rational authority is based on established rules including the right to due process and airing of grievances. The legal/rational authority establishes democratic principles that are helpful to learners. These include the importance of obedience to a rationally developed rule rather than to the person, the principle that prior training is required to gain a leadership position and the right to redress of grievances (Weber, 1947, cited in Pellegrino, 2010, p.4). The exercise of charismatic authority is not based on official rules or conventions. Charismatic teachers inspire their students by their commitment and passion for the subject.

Effective teaching can only take place with student co-operation. Traditionally, the expectation was that this co-operation was automatically received by teachers due to the respect for the moral authority of the teachers. Dworkin (1987 cited in Cothran & Ennis, 1997) used the term 'role authority'. This authority was important to a teacher's power because the position of a teacher, regardless of the personal characteristics of the individual filling the position, received automatic respect from students (Cothran &

Ennis, 1997, p.541). Burbules (1994, cited in Ennis, 1995, p.453) argues that teachers' authority has declined in recent years as their public status has diminished.

The concept of power in social justice pedagogy and the issue of authority in feminist pedagogy together contribute to the literature on power and authority. The issue of authority is central to the discourse of feminist pedagogy. The authority sought is 'authority with' and not 'authority over' the students. Authority with is based on caring and reciprocal relationships (Perumal, 2007, p.46).

During apartheid times, the notion of authority was that the pupil had to obey the teacher without much questioning. This led to the introduction of authoritarian practices. With the introduction of the South African Schools Act in 1996, teachers had to undergo a paradigm shift in terms of their understanding of authority and power (Gladwell, 1999, p.26). When corporal punishment was abolished, teachers felt a loss of their authority and power. Teachers are still grappling to find methods and strategies that will suit modern day discipline problems which will not violate the pupils' rights. Jones and Jones (1981) as well as Hlatshwayo (1992, cited in Gladwell, 1999, p.28) point out that some pupils abuse their rights by deliberately disobeying assigned tasks and instructions, thereby contributing to the erosion of the authority of the teacher.

In the case of authority, compliance is induced not by the content of communication but by its source (Mlondo, 1990, p.73). It may be supported by power. The concept of power differs from authority in the sense that authority pertains to an impersonal normative order or to a value system which regulates behaviour.

Authority is derived from the position an individual holds and also through established procedures. Authority gives the right to give commands. Parents have legitimate and natural authority over their children at home and teachers have traditional authority over the learners by virtue of the position they hold. Traditional, charismatic and moral authority bestow respect on the individual who holds the position whereas legal / rational authority and role authority bestow respect for the position held by the individual

irrespective of their characteristics. Teachers try to use their authority (by virtue of their teaching position) in the classroom when the situation gets out of control, that is, when learners become chaotic and unruly. Teachers also use their authority (of knowledge and skills) to give tasks, to give home work, to choose learners for participating in plays, to allocate duties etc.

3.3. CONCEPT OF POWER

We use the term “power” in our everyday lives. We also use terms such as ‘powerful’, ‘powerless’, ‘power trip’, ‘empowerment’ etc., to describe people and situations. The literature review on the meaning of power is marked with conflicting views. Some theorists define power as getting someone to do what you want them to do (power over). Power is also defined as an ability or a capacity to act (power to). Pitkin (1972, cited in Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy) notes that power is related to the French word *pouvoir* and the Latin word *potere*, both of which mean ‘to be able. “Power is capacity, potential, ability or wherewithal”.

According to Burbules (1986, p.104), power is not simply a matter of getting people to do things or not to do things but a relation of human attitudes and activities against a background of conflicting interests. Foucault’s analysis of power is instructive. His view is that: “...power cannot be a commodity. It is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered but rather exercised and only exists in action. Power comes into existence only when people interact in relationships.” About the relational concept of power, Foucault explains, “...one doesn’t have here a power which is wholly in the hands of one person who can exercise it alone and totally over others. It’s a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise power just as much as those over whom it is exercised”(Foucault, 1980, cited in Boaduo & Gumbi, p.417).

Social and economic changes have altered the traditional view of the teacher as the primary power holder in the classrooms, making way for an understanding of a reciprocal power relationship in which students and teachers share control of the learning

environment (Cothran & Ennis, 1997, p.541). The study by Boaduo and Gumbi (1996, p. 418) on classroom dynamics has contributed to the view that students are co-constructors of classroom power. In their study, students constructed classroom practice through ‘silence’, that is, through refusal to participate in classroom activity. Some may consider this as idiosyncratic student behaviour or a sign of laziness. On another level it may be interpreted as students’ ‘lack of voice’ or ‘powerlessness’. Boaduo and Gumbi (1996) explain that such an interpretation is weak because it is based on a monarchical conception of power which positions students as ‘pawns’ in classroom practices. The view of power as relational yields a radically different interpretation of students’ silence. From this view it is the active exercise of power and construction of classroom practice. This view is further supported by a quotation by Hurtado (1996, p. 382 cited in Boaduo & Gumbi, p.415): *“Silence is a powerful weapon when it can be controlled. It is akin to camouflaging oneself when at war in an open field: playing possum at strategic times causes the power of the silent one to be underestimated.”*

Winograd (2002, p. 344) argues that teacher-student relations are about power relations and the negotiation that goes on between the teacher, students and parents. He also states that although teachers have more power due to their adult status and teacher status, students do engage in resistance and struggle to maintain their dignity and pursue their own interests. He makes an important point that it is a misconception to view the teacher-student relationship as primarily a collaborative endeavour which is an off-cited romantic view of teacher-student relations, in which the two parties unproblematically work together for the purpose of constructing goals to meet each others’ needs. The above views establish that teachers are not the sole sources of power in the classroom.

Teachers and learners have different interests or goals for teaching and learning in the classroom. Holt (cited in Winograd, 2002, p.345) described it as competing ‘definitions of the situation’. Cothran calls this conflict of interest as educational and non-educational goals (1997, p.544). Manke (1997, p.10) termed it as teacher agenda of co-operation and courtesy and the student agenda of non-compliance.

To quote Holt on learners' indifference (cited in Winograd, 2002, p.345):

It has become clear ...that these children see school almost entirely in terms of the day-to-day and hour-to-hour tasks that we impose on them. This is not at all the way the teachers think of it. The conscientious teacher thinks of himself as taking his students on a journey to some glorious destination, well worth the pains of the trip.

For children, the central business of school is not learning, whatever this vague word means; it is getting these daily tasks done, or at least out of the way with a minimum of effort and unpleasantness. If experience has taught them that this does not work very well, they will turn to other means, illegitimate means that wholly defeat whatever purpose the task giver may have had in mind.

In Lefstein's study (2002, p.1640) on classroom control in Israeli progressivist schools, he describes the tactics employed by teachers to handle classroom disturbances. He has identified and labelled four common teacher coping tactics in a classroom. They are *self restraint, corrective interjections, angry explosions and immediate consequences*.

a) Self restraint:

During the course of a lesson there are constant disturbances. Often teachers ignore the initial disturbances hoping that they would dissipate once the lesson gets going and students become interested. Here teachers are faced with a dilemma: stopping the lesson to deal with disciplinary problems may make the lesson boring, leading to further disturbances. Ignoring the problems signifies acceptance or defeat.

b) Corrective Interjections:

An alternative to ignoring the disturbances is interjecting short corrective remarks into the lesson. A teacher employing this technique tries to multitask. The lesson has to continue in spite of the disruptions that take place.

c) Angry explosion:

Some teachers will continue teaching this way for the entire lesson. As disruptions get out of control some teachers eventually explode. The outburst is almost always

accompanied by a demonstration of anger and raised voice, if not shouting. In this way a teacher will offer signal to the students that his or her 'patience is almost through' as a warning that the explosion is approaching.

d) Immediate consequences:

After the explosion, classes usually settle down for a few minutes and then either revert to periodic disturbances or proceed to the final mode of coping: immediate consequences. The teacher continues the angry tone of the explosion but also returns to a matter-of-fact calm. The teacher metes out immediate sanctions to every student caught disturbing the class. The description of the above mentioned coping strategies provides a well-founded characterisation of teacher reaction to learner indiscipline in everyday interaction.

Teachers are interested in maintaining an orderly classroom and learning whereas students are interested in peer group membership and mental stimulation. According to Winograd (2002, p.346), when students get bored they may seek mental stimulation in ways that subvert the teacher's intention. The teachers' response is a negotiating manoeuvre to get the students to do what they would not have done naturally without teacher action. There is always a conflict between teachers and learners over several issues including what is being taught. In the past, such conflicts were dealt by teachers using their traditional authority. In present times, a process of bargaining occurs to allow for the release of tensions created by conflicting interests (Sedlak et al., 1986, cited in Cothran & Ennis, 1997, p.543).

Every class has both well behaved and unruly learners. Learners do not have formal power or authority. They can still wield power. In my experience, in present day primary schools, learners threaten the teachers with their knowledge on rights and abuse. Such verbal threats cannot be imagined in the past. They also wield power when they encounter a new teacher; a teacher who does not use corporal punishment; a teacher who does not enjoy the support of parents; a teacher who they think is unfair and also a teacher who treats them with kindness and forgiveness. Learners have power as individuals and as collectives (Winograd, 2002, p.347). As a collective, they can easily

disrupt and cause chaos. Apart from the individual resistance, learners from different classes contribute to the noise level, disruption and chaos in the senior primary. This is one example where collective power of the learners is used to show defiance and resistance towards authority. This collective power is used during normal school days as well as special days such as sports day, cultural day, Arbor day and so on. Teachers will not use brute power and learners are fully aware of it. Such learners are not afraid of detention or verbal reprimand. In Cothran's study (1997, p.546), learners used strategies such as non-participation, personality power to convince their friends to present a united front to the teacher, intentional disruption, slow down tactics and verbal interruptions. In present times, learners resort to these strategies due to the low value they assign to educational outcomes. As a result in today's schools, a complex relationship exists between teachers and students wherein both hold and share power resources (Cothran, 1997, p.545).

Social relations reside on a continuum that extends from consent to domination (Burbules, 1986, p.101). For example, classroom rules are drawn up with learners' consent and participation. Yet they do not necessarily comply with it. They resist following the classroom rules that they themselves helped to formulate. Student compliance is important so that learning can take place in an orderly classroom. Compliance includes co-operation of the learners. Instead of complying they can offer resistance. According to Foucault (1978, cited in Winograd, 2002, p.345), power and resistance are inextricably linked. With power always comes resistance. This complex interplay between compliance and resistance was described by Burbules (1986, p.101) thus:

Resistance is often expressed as part of a relationship in which conflict, compromise and eventual compliance ebb and flow. The tension between compliance and resistance is the form of most human interaction.

French and Raven postulated five basic forms of social power as early as 1959 (cited in McCroskey and Richmond, 1982) that have been in use ever since. The five powers are coercive, reward, legitimate, referent and expert power.

Each power base does not depend on what a power wielder possesses but, instead, on the perceptions of the person upon whom the power is being wielded. In other words, a teacher power over a student does so only because of the perceptions of the student, not because of something the teacher possesses (Tauber, 1985, p.135).

1. **Coercive Power:** A teacher's coercive power is based on the learners' expectation that they will be punished if they do not conform. Coercive power could include the exercise of physical, verbal and emotional abuse or just a threat or suspension of privileges.

2. **Reward Power:** In order to appreciate the efforts of the learners in the classroom or sow the seed of interest in learning or to improve the teacher-learner relationship in the classroom, reward power is used in the form of motivation, praise, stars and other forms of recognition.

3. **Legitimate Power:** Legitimate power is "assigned power". It stems from the assigned role of the teacher. This power is based on the learners' perception that the teacher has the right to make certain demands and requests as a function of the position of 'teacher' (McCroskey & Richmond, 1982).

4. **Referent Power:** The foundation of referent power is the learners' identification with the teacher. Learners try to do well in certain subjects because of the respect and regard for the teachers they like.

5. **Expert Power:** When the learner realises that the teacher possesses knowledge or command of a subject, the expert power of the teacher is recognized and this could result in the awakening of interest in a particular subject. Teachers feel disheartened and disappointed when learners do not share their enthusiasm. It is a common sight in the primary school classrooms to see the teacher standing in front of the classroom trying to do her best to involve learners in what is being taught.

Reward and coercive power are classified as overt power because they are observable, while legitimate, referent and expert power are classified as implicit or inherent power. Structural power is less explicit than overt and implicit power. Structural power can be seen as the limited power that one might have under the structure of an organisation (Clegg, 1989, cited in Jirathun, 2010, p.3). To explain further, the teacher does not need to exercise overt power to influence the learner to behave. Rather the structural power limits the learner's ability to act against the teacher's power. This power enables the teacher to gain compliance. Structural power is also defined as "indirect institutional power" (Guzzini, 1993, p.443). Another concept of structural power is the legitimate basis of power proposed by French and Raven (1959). Legitimate power is 'assigned power'. It stems from the assigned role of the teacher.

Pastoral power (Forrester, 1994, p.18, cited in Wickam, 1997, p.368) is described as power that is, nurturing and caring and that has the welfare of individuals as its initial and final goal. The role of pastoral power is to "constantly ensure, sustain and improve the lives of each and every one" (Foucault in Gordon, 1988, p. 67 cited in Wickam, 1997, p.368).

Wilson and Coolican (1996 cited in Pan & Wang, 2000, pp. 425-426) point out that the concept of teacher empowerment has two categories. One is extrinsic power and the other is intrinsic power. They elaborate that the exercise of extrinsic power is an approach to improve the professional status of teachers whereas intrinsic power refers to teachers' personal attitudes rather than the ability to control others. Such teachers believe that the best source of authority comes from within. They are also confident that their thoughts and feelings are valuable. Intrinsic power is self motivated and depends on an individual's determination and ability to make decisions. It involves drawing the '*power from within*' and utilizing the capacity to act (*power to*) to challenge non workable practices and mobilizing others to join in their effort (*power with*).

Theorists writing about power highlight four types of power: *power over*, *power with*, *power to* and *power within*. The metaphor *power with* exemplifies poststructuralist views

of power. Blasé and Anderson (1995, p.14 cited in Fennel, 2002, p.99) used the metaphor to describe power as being “inherently relational in context” and a means to develop positive, collaborative working relationships.

Kreisberg (1992, p.61) described *power with* as being “grounded in different sensitivities, experiences and frameworks of critique and analysis”. Surrey (cited in Kreisberg, 1992, p.64) links *power with* and empowerment arguing that empowerment is nurtured through *power with* relationships. Surrey suggests that *power with* transcends the dichotomy of actor and acted upon that exists in *power over*.

The earliest reference to *power with* was made by Mary Parker Follett in 1924. She was one of the pioneers who wrote about administrative management. According to Kreisberg, she has made a clear distinction between *power over* and *power with*. Follett (cited in Kreisberg, 1992, p.71) describes *power over* as ‘coercive’ and *power with* as ‘co-active’. *Power over* is associated with domination and *power with* as jointly developed power where people fulfil their desires and develop their capacities through acting together. Kreisberg (1992, p.67) explains the fundamental distinction between *power over* and *power with* as ‘gaining access to others through the use of mechanisms of human encounter that activate in others the openness to fellow humans than can never be closed off’.

Jim Cummins describes *power with* as collaborative relations of power. The concept of collaborative relations of power assume that power is infinite. It grows and generates during collaborative interactions (Wink, 2005, p.115).

Starhawk, a peace activist and a prominent figure in the feminist spirituality movement made the analysis of power a central component in her development of a ‘psychology of liberation’ (Kreisberg, 1992, p.67). Starhawk distinguishes between *power over*, *power-from-within* and *power with*. *Power from within* is linked to a sense of competence and joy at one’s unfolding capacities and sense of connection to the world. *Power within* is the capacity to imagine and have hope. It affirms the common human search for dignity

and fulfilment. *Power to* refers to the unique potential of every person to shape his or her life and world. It is based on the belief that each individual has the power to make a difference. It also opens up possibilities for joint action (Veneklasen & Miller, 2006, p.6).

Power implies the capacity to act. Kincheloe (1997) summarises the argument thus:

If power is not a unitary force within unitary effects or unidirectional hierarchy, then we can be alert to different ways oppressed people elude control. If we are all empowered by our particular capacities and skills and we are all un-empowered by our inability either to satisfy our wants and needs or express our living spirit, we begin to understand that power is exercised by both dominant and subordinate forces.

School principals have legislated, administrative power of their offices that entrusts them the responsibility to oversee and maintain a safe learning and teaching environment of the school. Principals have to work with teachers, learners, departmental officials, governing body members and parents in establishing and maintaining positive learning environment and to work in co-operation, mutual respect and trust for each other. Principals, being on top of the local hierarchy have enormous power. If this power is used to dominate and control others, i.e., used negatively, it would be exercise of *power over* teachers and other stakeholders. This would prevent them from building a positive, workable, trusting and empowering relationship. On the other hand, if principals could collaborate, involve everyone in decision making process, be consistent and fair, it would be sharing *power with* teachers and the rest of the community.

Depending on the structure and organisation of education, the teachers are also dependent on department officials for instructions on the implementation of new curricula, for being conferred 'permanency', for salary, for regulations regarding the numerical strength in the classroom, for promotions, for pensions etc.

In the classroom, the teacher exercises power over the student. While one may not deny that there exists a power hierarchy in the classroom between teacher and students, one must not be tempted to believe that total domination is possible. Oppression elicits

resistance and this may be manifest or latent. Far from being an imposition by the teacher, classroom reality is negotiated (Delamont, 1976) and as such, it is a dynamic process in that it is constantly defined and redefined. In as much as teachers employ certain strategies to influence students' learning, the latter also devise consciously or subconsciously strategies to influence the teachers' classroom behaviour.

3.4. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND POWER

Education for social justice is both a process and a goal (Bell, 1997, p.3). The process of social justice requires an outlook of *power with* rather than *power over*. The goal of social justice education visualizes a just, ideal society. In my opinion, the just use of power by teachers in such a society would be *power with, power to and power within*.

According to Kreisberg (1992, p.188) *power with* appears to have the potential for offering a dimension of power that is more compatible with notions of empowering human relationships and empowering settings. In order to explore the nature of *power with*, we should listen to the voices of teachers and students.

Power with equals collective action and the ability to act together. As this study aims to explore the authority and power of teachers in managing discipline, the use of *power with* might bring the stakeholders together to engage in dialogue and decision making.

Power to relates to the individual ability to act (Veneklasen & Miller, 2006). It is also based on the belief that every individual has the power to make a difference. Teachers are faced with the reality of teaching large classes. Large classes pressure teachers to standardise the curriculum, reduce teacher reflection and problematise cultural and individual expression by learners and teachers (Winograd, 2002, p.361).

Teachers need to accept the reality and acquire the skills and mentality needed to address the situation. They can join forces with other teachers and attend motivation seminars and discussions and self generate *power from within*.

The research data in this study are analysed using these concepts of *power* – *power with*, *power over*, *power to* and *power within*. Where required, Weber’s three types of authority-namely traditional, legal/rational and charismatic are also used.

3.5. CONCLUSION

The concepts of authority, and the concept of power which includes the positive powers of *power with*, *power to* and *power within*, have been discussed in detail. Power and authority in the classroom are co-constructed by both teachers and learners and the presence of negotiated power is a reality in teacher-learner interactions. Social justice though requires that relationships are built not on *power over* but on such concepts as *power with*, *power to* and *power within*. These concepts as explored here have informed the data collection and analysis of this study.

The word qualitative implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are rigorously examined, but not measured in terms of quantity, amount or frequency. Qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases. Qualitative data provide depth and detail through direct quotation and careful

description of situations, events, interactions and observed behaviours. (Labuschagne, 2003)

CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to explore the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in a primary school classroom in managing discipline. This chapter sheds light on the research design, the methodology and the data collection methods used in the study.

My dream to do a Masters degree started taking shape when the topic of discipline in a primary school was accepted. I undertook to do research on this topic since I was brought up with strict discipline at home. I was shocked to witness the lack of respect for teachers when I began teaching in a primary school in KwaZulu-Natal. This prompted me to undertake this project. However the research was a long journey and I did not have the slightest hint of the time that the research was to swallow. I started first in 2007 with a focus on the perceptions and practices of teachers regarding discipline and discipline policy. All the teachers teaching senior primary in the primary school were participants in the study. The data collection methods included observation, semi structured interviews, written accounts and analysis of school documents. The lens of education for social justice was used to analyse the findings. The definition of social justice as process and goal (Bell, 1997, p.3) was used to interpret the findings.

A revision of this study had to be done. Due to the conflicting opinions of the two examiners, the co-ordinator's report proposed a revision of the study. The subsequent study drew in part on the data already collected, but shifted focus to give greater prominence to the issues of power and authority embedded in the teacher student relationship in the management of learner discipline. As a result additional questions to

derive data were formulated. Due to personal reasons, I, the researcher had to take time off from proceeding with the study.

As the research continued, after the break, the time available to conduct fresh interviews and do classroom observation was limited. Apart from this, teachers explained that they were short of time due to the varied duties that they were responsible for (in charge) and opted doing written accounts. The teachers agreed wholeheartedly however to give written accounts in response to the additional questions. The participants remained as teachers from the senior primary. Four teachers who took part in the first study on discipline have left the school. They have been replaced by new teachers who participated in the second study by giving the written accounts. To enable this additional data to be considered, I have taken care to identify those comments which come from the first sample and those which come from the second study. The issue of whether or not there is consistency across the two studies will be engaged with in the analysis. I had conversations with all the participants and explained my use of the concepts of authority and power of the teacher for the second study and hence the need for a new set of questions. These issues were fully discussed with the second group of respondents (membership of this group of course overlapped with those in the first group).

4.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The three key questions that guided this study are as follows:

1. What is teachers' knowledge of legislation and policy regarding learner discipline?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers of their authority and power in relationship to discipline and discipline policy in a South African suburban school?
3. What are the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in the management of learner discipline?

4.3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach was chosen for this study. Hatch (2002, p. 7) describes five characteristics as defining features of qualitative research. These are drawn on as indicated for the study.

The first is that the lived experiences of real people in real settings are the objects of a study. The study seeks to understand teachers' experiences of authority and power in the handling of ill-discipline.

Secondly, qualitative research seeks to understand the perspectives of participants. In the study, these are the perspectives of senior primary teachers teaching from Grades 4 to 7 regarding the authority and power to manage the major and minor discipline problems in the classroom, their perceptions of the access to legislation and the actual knowledge and familiarity with policy about the various disciplinary measures and the assistance from other stakeholders. The voices of teachers are given prominence.

Thirdly, the qualitative researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Unlike in quantitative research where the data is typically collected through questionnaires, in qualitative research the data emerges from interviews (conducted by the researcher) and written accounts. For this study, I resorted to qualitative methods of data collection such as classroom observation, interviews, written accounts and document analysis to gather data. These are explained in greater depth below.

Fourthly, researchers reflexively apply their own subjectivities to understand participants. Goodall mentioned in Hatch (2002, p.11) defines reflexivity as, *'the process of personally and academically reflecting on lived experiences in ways that reveal deep connections between the writer and his or her subject'*. I was part of the school staff and was thus known to the participants. Familiarity with the participants and their concerns could have led to bias towards their perspective because I am in a similar position as the other participants. I have attempted to examine critically my personal

beliefs, assumptions and reactions as a way of understanding more fully the behaviour of learners with whom I may at times be in conflict.

Fifthly, according to Hatch, in a qualitative research study, research questions and methods may be altered as studies unfold (2002, p.11). For example, I had to change the research questions on the perspectives of teachers regarding discipline and discipline policy to perspectives and experience of authority and power as a result of the changed understanding that resulted from my further reading.

For these reasons, the qualitative approach was applied to the data collection and analysis. Qualitative research rejects the viewpoint of a detached, objective answer and is based on the belief that the researcher must understand the participants' frame of reference. Again this is addressed fully below.

This qualitative investigation took the form of a case study. According to Cohen and Manion (2001, p.183), case studies follow the interpretive tradition of research – seeing the situation through the eyes of the participants. Given the interest and purpose of this study, it was clear that the case study approach was best suited to obtain first-hand information on whether teachers understood the authority and power vested in their teacher status and whether they utilised these concepts to control the classroom or became controlled by learners.

Interpretivist research is concerned with how individuals give meaning to certain aspects of life and how this meaning impacts on their practices and behaviour. Since this research is concerned with the perceptions of teacher authority and power and the impact of these perceptions on classroom practices, it is located within the interpretivist paradigm.

Interpretivist researchers begin with individuals and set out to understand their interpretation of the world around them (Cohen et al, 2001, p.23).

The interpretivist paradigm shares several characteristics with the qualitative approach such as the understanding of the phenomena and the situation through the participants' perspectives, a thick description, the complete involvement of the researcher with the

phenomenon under study, the importance of the context and the aim of research to develop understanding of individual cases rather than universal laws or predictive generalisations. Thus the interpretivist paradigm is consistent with the use of qualitative research methodology in this study.

Feminist research draws attention to the power researchers wield over participants. Measor and Sikes (1992, as cited in Perumal, 2007, p.21) maintain the fact that research participants are not pathologically powerless. Perumal (2007, p.21) notes that the symbolic interactionist research perspective explains that research participants wield power over what they choose to disclose about themselves, their experiences and about how much time they care to invest in the study.

4.4. THE RESEARCH SITE

The primary school in which the study was undertaken is situated in one of Durban's biggest inner city suburbs, that of Chatsworth. This area is occupied predominantly by people of Indian descent ("Indians"). The school has Indian and African learners coming from both affluent and disadvantaged backgrounds. Chatsworth is situated in the south of Durban.

The 'Pegging Act' and the 'Ghetto Act' were passed in the 1940s. These acts gave the government the right to remove shacks and small self made shelters. This led to the Group Areas Act of 1950 ('GAA') which designated certain areas for the whites and other areas for Indians, Coloureds and Africans. Indians were removed from Mayville, Cato Manor, Clairwood and the Bluff and placed in areas like Riverside, Sea Cow Lake and so on. The GAA led to the creation of Chatsworth in 1964 specifically for the Indian population. However Chatsworth now has a mix of different race groups. The present day Chatsworth has 64 suburbs.

The school rose from humble beginnings from a prefab building sharing a common driveway with a neighbouring school to a brick complex housing a separate junior primary and senior primary block. The school is in close proximity to taxi and bus ranks. Learners have easy access to taxis and buses. The African learners travel a long distance to attend this school. Some of the African learners leave home early to catch a taxi to come to school and reach home late in the afternoon because there is only one taxi that goes to the area where they live. When parents came to the school from far away areas for enrolling their child, I asked them as to why they put their children through this transport trauma and not send them to schools nearer home. The parents mentioned that they did not mind spending the money on transport or letting the children spend time waiting for transport. They do not want to send the children to an African school nearer home because of the exceedingly large number of learners in those classrooms and they also believe that they would receive a higher quality education and proficiency in English language in an Indian school.

The school is what is often referred to as an ex House of Delegates school. Prior to 1994, South Africa had a political system with a tri-cameral parliamentary system. This system consisted of three “houses”, namely House of Delegates (HOD), House of Assembly (HOA) and House of Representatives (HOR). These three houses were based along racial lines. The affairs of Indians were administered by the HOD in parliament. The HOA was the most powerful, followed by HOR and then by HOD in parliament. The reason why “Ex” is prefixed to each of these houses is that they were still formally referred to in this way for a few years after the 1994 democratic elections (Govender, 2006, p.2).

The school is headed by a female principal (Indian) who provides direction to a deputy principal (female), two heads of department (both female, one Indian and one African), sixteen teachers, two admin clerks and three caretakers. The teaching staff is composed of two male teachers (Indian) and sixteen female teachers of which two teachers are African. Apart from the regular staff, there are three female and two male eastern language teachers who do part time teaching. There are eight junior primary teachers and ten senior primary teachers including the two heads of department.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the school was largely Indian in composition. The long serving teachers, some of whom have been serving for nearly two and half decades in the school have been acquainted with some of the families the learners come from and regularly find brothers, sisters and cousins in their classes in successive years. This familiarity helps them to call the parents when the need arises and also keeps them informed of the family background, socio economic conditions, educational performance and behaviour.

A typical workday for a teacher in this primary school consists of eleven periods of thirty minutes each with one lunch break of thirty minutes around the middle of the day. The teacher spends twenty three and a half hours a week on teaching and has seven non-teaching periods a week. The average class size is about 40 learners. The teachers are required to be at school for about seven hours per day. In addition, they spend another twenty hours per term after school, and weekends on school related activities such as coaching a sport code, on duty for a sport code, tutoring for external exams such as Amesa, Conquesta and Science Olympiads, attending meetings etc.

4.5. SAMPLING / SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

“Sampling in field research involves the selection of a research site, time, people and events” (Burgess, 1982, cited in Youssef, 2003, p.17). The technique of purposive sampling was used in the selection of participants. According to Henning (2004, p.71), purposive sampling looks towards the people who fit the criteria of desirable participants. The participants included eight level one teachers, two heads of department as well as four eastern language teachers all teaching in the senior primary. The teachers who teach Tamil, Telugu, Hindi and Urdu are classified as eastern language teachers. They attend the school twice a week. I am part of the school staff and this helped in accessing the participants and in gaining permission to conduct the study.

The research study is about understanding teachers’ perceptions of power in relationship to discipline among the learners in the senior primary, i.e., intermediate and senior phase.

The discipline among the senior primary learners is depressing, distressing and shocking. Hence I chose the senior primary teachers (Intermediate and Senior phase) as participants of the study.

4.6. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The qualitative research methods of data collection employed in the first study were observation, semi structured interviews, written description by eastern language teachers and document analysis. In the subsequent study, the respondents were given thirteen questions relating to their perceptions on authority and power and data was collected from written accounts and conversations.

Observation can lead to deeper understandings because it provides knowledge of the context in which events occur, and may enable the researcher to see things that participants themselves are not aware of, or that they are unwilling to discuss. A skilled observer is one who is trained in the process of monitoring both verbal and nonverbal cues, and in the use of concrete, unambiguous, descriptive language (Patton, 1990, cited in Hoepfl, 1997). An interview enables participants to discuss and express their perceptions and interpretations of particular situations (Cohen et al, 2000, p.267). The internal documents such as the school's code of conduct, defaulters' record book and the staff minutes were useful to understand the priority given to discipline.

Teachers were briefed about the topic of research, the methods of data collection and voluntary participation in the study. In the subsequent study, written accounts and conversation with participants were utilised. Notes from observation, transcription of interviews, notes from documents and the written accounts made up the data. In this study, the question of validity was addressed through the use of various methods of data collection namely observation, semi structured interviews, written accounts and document analysis. This enables what is known as triangulation.

Triangulation is generally considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research. (Babbie & Mouton, 2003, p.275).

This approach also enabled me to check if there was consistency not just across the different means of data collection but also across the two overlapping groups of respondents. In this study the spotlight is on teachers, their perceptions, their knowledge, their experience of authority and power in the classroom. The table given below gives an idea of the information that will be used from my first study and the subsequent study.

| Data Collection Method | Relevance of data to the study |
|--|--|
| 1. Class observation | Explores whether there was any implementation of disciplinary measures and if so, what are they? |
| | Time spent on disciplining; response of learners to teachers and response of teachers towards learners; coping tactics used; conflict of teacher learner interests; power struggles; The purpose of this information is to provide a background to the data collection directly related to the research questions. |
| 2. Interviews | Perception of discipline; disciplinary measures used; Whether teachers are cognisant of legislation and policy on discipline; role of stakeholders in assisting the teacher. |
| 3. Code of Conduct | Used as discipline policy; lists offences and punishments and enables a judgement to be made as to the use by teachers of the code. |
| 4. Defaulters' record | Necessary to check the nature of misdemeanours; the sanction or punishment given and the response of parents. |
| 5. Staff minutes | Role played by management, suggestions and measures used in the classroom by the teachers. No to corporal punishment in accordance with the Schools Act ; importance of referring to the school's code of conduct. |
| Additional processes of data collection | |
| 6. Written accounts | Exploring the perception of teacher power; knowledge of legislation and use of authority in the classroom; problems faced; learner power; what are the measures used? |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 7. Conversation | Generates information on the discipline problems; |
| | repetition of offences ; profile of learners who are |
| | responsible for disruption and confusion; tactics |
| | tried; decision to raise the issue in phase meetings |
| | future course of action; infringement of teachers' authority by the SMT. |

4.6.1. OBSERVATION

“The goal of observation is to understand the culture, setting or social phenomenon being studied from the perspectives of the participants” (Hatch, 2002, p.72).

Hatch mentions several strengths of observational data for qualitative study such as:

- Direct observation permits better understanding of the context.
- It allows the researcher to be open to discovering inductively of participants' understanding of the setting.
- The researcher may learn sensitive information that informants may be reluctant to discuss in interviews and also
- This allows the researcher to add her own experience in the setting to analyse what is happening (Hatch, 2002, p.72).

The observation does not in itself provide data in response to any of the research questions. Rather it forms a guide to the use of the interview, enabling the researcher to probe for issues that suggest themselves in the observation. The reason is that we cannot directly infer perceptions from the observation. The observation was done during my non-teaching period / free period as much as possible. When there was a clash in the time table, I was immensely assisted by the heads of department in the senior primary who sacrificed their free periods to serve relief in the classes where I was due. While away from class carrying out observation, I had to prepare revision worksheets for learners, to lessen the load of the teacher serving relief. The idea behind the observation was to make a careful record of what I, the researcher saw and heard. The class room visits included

both formal observation as well as participation (to a lesser degree) which enabled me to take notes of classroom proceedings.

I observed how the classroom space was organized. The physical arrangement of the classroom space, the arrangement of desks and teacher space say a great deal about power relations. I also looked for classroom activities planned by the teachers. Since this study is about classroom discipline and teacher power, the implementation of sanctions, the time spent on disciplining, engagement of learners by teachers, and the degree to which these were teacher-centred, learner-centred classrooms all formed part of the observation. The classrooms were observed over a time frame of two terms. Each teacher was observed for two hours (two double periods). Given the time limitation for teachers, I had to plan the classroom visits and interviews. The schedule was also drawn to assuage the fears of the principal and the heads of department by proving that I would miss very few teaching periods and also to clarify that I had secured the participants' consent to enter their classrooms at the agreed upon time.

4.6.2. INTERVIEWS

“An interview is an interaction involving the interviewer and the interviewee, the purpose of which is to obtain valid and reliable information and the participants' perspective on the social phenomenon of interest as the participant views it” (Marshall & Rossman, 1990, p.82). Individual interviews were held after the classroom observations were done. The interview sessions lasted for about 30 to 40 minutes although there was no time limit set for the interviews. The interviews were conducted in the afternoons after the school day ended. As a prelude, the participants were informed about the purpose of the interview, and the need for taping interviews. They were also reassured that there are no right or wrong answers. All the interviews were audio taped with the permission of the participants and later transcribed verbatim. The hand written transcriptions were typed by me.

4.6.3. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Documents, as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.277, cited in Youssef, 2003, p.22) refer to *“any written or recorded material other than a record that was not prepared specifically in response to a request from the inquirer.”* The internal documents such as the defaulters’ record, the code of conduct of the school and the staff minutes were looked into. The defaulters’ record forms an important part of the school record. Every year, starting from Grade 4, the learner defaulter record sheet was given to all the teachers. The names of all the learners in a class were entered on individual sheets. These sheets were compiled together as a file.

As the years progressed, when the defaulter record sheets were being thrown away at the end of the year, all the teachers indicated that these sheets had provided important evidence about the learners’ performance, behaviour, attitude towards peers and teachers, misdemeanours in the classroom and detention if any. They felt that this should be passed on to the next grade teacher. As a result, from then onwards, all the teachers were given a ten sleeve file to keep the birth certificate, re-registration form, the learner’s balance of fees, copies of detention letters and all written communication between the teacher and the parent in the file and to send it at the end of the school year to the next grade teacher. The same sheet (placed in the file) is now used to record the incidents that take place during the course of the year. The names that occur very frequently of those who have badly misbehaved and have been badly behaved consistently will not be included in the temporary prefect list. This exclusion from the prefect list announced at the end of Grade 6 is supposed to be a ‘wake up call’. When the learners come back the next year, their behaviour will be observed by the prefect committee.

The recommendations and the elimination process will take place accordingly. So the defaulters’ record is just one source of information amidst others whose contents are of value. The defaulter’s file should be on the teacher’s table. The teachers who go to the different classes fill in the information regarding the offence committed during their teaching time in that file. In other words, the defaulters’ record should consist of the

writing of other teachers. Based on the offence, a detention letter may be given. The detention usually is during break time and 15 minutes after school. The detention letter will consist of the school stamp and the principal's signature. The school stamp and the signature of the principal can demonstrate structural power. As learners of this school they have limited power to refuse or resist it at least in theory.

The second important source was the code of conduct. The school in which the study took place does not have a separate, sanctioned discipline policy. The code of conduct is being used to assist with discipline. The code of conduct itemises misdemeanours into levels, indicates the measures to be taken and the personnel in charge of managing discipline.

The staff minutes were looked into to find out about the focus on discipline, code of conduct, mention, if any, of training workshops on discipline and other relevant information to do with discipline.

4.6.4. WRITTEN ACCOUNTS

In the study about the perceptions of teachers of their power in relationship to discipline and discipline policy, the senior primary teachers were given thirteen questions. Due to the limited time available to complete this research study, I was under time pressure while the teachers were also constrained by their heavy work load. So they preferred to give written accounts. The teachers gave an account of their teaching experience which included the changes in learner behaviour over the years, the factors responsible for the changes, the manuals and documents regarding discipline that they have heard about and the impact of such policies on classroom discipline. They explained their understanding of teacher authority and power, the constraints experienced in exercising power and the contribution of parents, learners and members of management towards maintenance of good discipline. The accounts also help us to understand the impact, if any, of teachers' gender in maintaining discipline in the class.

4.6.5. CONVERSATION

Apart from the written accounts, I had conversations with the teachers in the staff room after school about their perceptions, the discipline problems they faced every day, the names of learners who are responsible for disruption on an on-going basis, the tactics teachers used to handle these learners, the effectiveness of advice and the decision to raise the issue in phase meetings to keep the management personnel aware of the recurrent problems and to seek advice for future course of action. These conversations also helped me to understand the obstacles posed by management when they infringed on the authority of the teachers.

4.7. PROBLEMS FACED DURING DATA COLLECTION

Time is of essence in all research and is in short supply. Teachers are loaded with administrative duties and paper work. Handling the register, compiling progress reports, updating school fees record, filling various departmental forms that are needed urgently, updating funds received for various charities, completing IQMS forms, compiling staff minutes on a rotational basis, typing and printing question papers, marking the project tasks, updating the mark book, making lesson plans, gathering books and information to conduct lessons, preparing learners for Amesa and Conquesta, training learners for sports, assembly programmes, preparing for the Readathon, Arbour day and so on all form the regular administrative work. There are also tuck shop duties, ground and gate duty, litter pick up duty, relief duty, keeping learners for detention, conducting extra classes for literacy and numeracy after school for weak learners etc.

We live in an unsafe violent society. Sometimes participants had go on leave for an extended period because either they or their family members have become victims of hijacking, kidnapping, robbery or murder. This affected the classroom observation and the interviews scheduled for certain dates. As a novice researcher, the delays in collecting data created a sense of panic in me.

Temporary teachers come and go. Three participants from the first study were temporary teachers. They left because they were offered permanent posts elsewhere. Another teacher relocated after her wedding to join her husband and found a teacher to have a mutual swap.

The transcription of the interviews took several days. The recording also taped background noise such as taxi hooting, doors banging and children screaming. The learners wait for transport after school and use that time to run around.

4.8. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Marshall and Rossman (1995, p.111) explain data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. To analyse the data, I read the transcriptions and the notes repeatedly. This helped me to familiarise myself with the data and to identify recurrent patterns and themes, some of which led to further questions needing attention. The collection, interpretation and presentation were guided by the research questions. The analysis of the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in the management of discipline was guided by the concepts of power: power over, power with, power to and power within.

4.9. CONCLUSION

This chapter has explained the research design, the methodology and the methods of data collection used in this study. I chose a qualitative approach and collected data through observation, interviews, written accounts and document analysis. The justification for these methods and for the changes brought about in the study has been addressed in this chapter.

Power base does not depend on what a power wielder possesses but, instead, on the perceptions of the person upon whom the power is being wielded. In other words, a teacher successfully exerting power over a student does so only because of the perceptions of the student, not because of something the teacher possesses. The ramifications of this situation are that students, as well as others who supposedly have power exercised over them, are in a position to resist this power by altering their perceptions. (Tauber, 1985)

CHAPTER 5 – PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings following analysis of the data collected through observation, interviews, written accounts and document analysis (staff minutes, Code of Conduct, defaulters' record). The documents have been analysed with the concepts of structural power (Jirathun, 2010, p.3), the five types of power enunciated by French and Raven (1959) namely reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, referent power and expert power and the concepts of power over, power with, power to and power within, known as the positive concepts of power (Kriesberg, 1992, p. 67). The findings presented below were guided by the following research questions. As will be demonstrated in the following pages, some of the key issues include conflict between teacher interests and learner interests, and learner power and resistance.

5.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter will address the findings relating to each of these questions in the same order:

1. What is teachers' knowledge of legislation and policy on discipline?
2. What are the perceptions of teachers of their power and authority in relationship to discipline in a South African suburban school?
3. What are the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in the management of discipline?

5.3. TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF LEGISLATION ON DISCIPLINE

The first research question seeks to find out about senior primary teachers' knowledge of legislation and policy regarding discipline. In an attempt to answer the above research question, the national and provincial legislation on discipline, the document used at the research site, which is the Code of Conduct, teachers' knowledge of policies and the implications of teachers' knowledge and ignorance of policy for discipline will be discussed.

5.3.1. THE NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION ON SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

To begin with, the South African legislation regarding discipline is briefly enumerated here. These are the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the KZN Schools Act No. 3 of 1996, KZN Circular No. 55 of 2001, KZN Circular No. 90 of 2001 and KZN Circular No. 33 of 2007. The relevant sections from the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 as amended include:

Section 8 : Code of conduct for learners

Section 9 : Suspension and expulsion

Section 10: Prohibition of corporal punishment

In the year 2001, the Department of Education published two manuals to assist teachers with alternatives to corporal punishment titled,

(1) *Alternatives to corporal punishment: The Learning Experience – A practical guide for educators* (Department of Education, 2001) and

(2) *Alternatives to corporal punishment: Growing discipline and respect in our classrooms* (Porteus, Vally & Ruth, 2001).

Later in 2003, the Department of Education also published a document towards exploring co-operative discipline as an alternative to corporal punishment (Gallinetti, 2006, p.5). There are no copies of the manuals *Alternatives to corporal punishment* and *Co-operative discipline* at the school. I managed to secure a copy of the report of the

Education Management and Governance Development (EMGD) from Pietermaritzburg after months of calling the Department of Education. According to the report of the EMGD on Cooperative Discipline workshops between January 2004 and July 2005, the target groups were principals, school governing body members of nodal areas, superintendents of education and management (SEMs) and circuit and district managers. This shows that level one teachers were not part of the target group who were trained. The challenges mentioned in the report include: the feasibility of the strategies, the insecurities over the proposed alternatives, inadequate training of school management teams especially educators, consequences for violations, cultural intervention, ignorance of legislation and poor attendance at workshops.

The relevant legislation and policies that protect learners against corporal punishment are the South African Constitution, the National Education Policy Act (1996), the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, the KZN Education Act no. 3 of 1996, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Code of Conduct for learners (Porteus et al, 2001, pp.6-7).

The manuals *Alternatives to corporal punishment* (Department of Education, 2001) and *Co-operative discipline* (Department of Education, 2003) have been explained in the literature review. The knowledge of subject content as well as policy content enhances the expert power of teachers. The merit system mentioned in the manual suggests the inclusion of recognition, acknowledgement, consequences and reward. The manuals recommend a non-violent approach to manage ill-discipline in place of a punitive approach. The manuals help teachers with several examples of the use of rewards so that they can understand the importance of reward power to reinforce positive behaviour.

Some of the corrective measures set out in section 10 of the Schools act of 1996 (B-39 ELRC handbook) are written reprimands, written warnings, supervised school work, performing tasks that would assist the offended person, agreed affordable compensation, replacement of damaged property, demerits, and a daily report signed by all the teachers and suspension from school activities, for example from sport and cultural activities.

In the words of Beckman and Prinsloo (2009, p.173), the power of a school governing body “refers to its legal capacity to perform its functions and obligations in terms of section 16 of the South African Schools Act (SASA). The power of a governing body is not delegated power but original power... to act as the duly appointed agent of a public school.” They explain that since the public school is an “organ of state”, the governing body acts as its functionary to perform its functions in terms of SASA. “Thus although the governing body has no original power to act on its own outside the provisions in SASA, it has original power to perform its functions in terms of SASA.”

They further elaborate that since the SGB is functioning in terms of section 16 of SASA and also constituted in terms of that Act, its functions are exercised in terms of the decentralisation of power to school communities (Beckman & Prinsloo, 2009, p.173).

The acts and circulars are also channels of communication of power from the Ministry of Education at national and provincial level to the school governing body, the principal and the head of department (HoD). SASA requires the school governing body (SGB) to formulate a code of conduct for the school. The SGB in turn shares this power with the school management team (SMT).

The South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, section 8(1) empowers a governing body of a school to maintain discipline in a school. In formulating a code of conduct, the governing body must involve the parents, learners and educators and may involve non-educators at that school. After the adoption of the code of conduct, each stakeholder must receive a copy thereof (*Alternatives to corporal punishment*, 2001, p.99). The involvement of parents as an important stakeholder in helping the school adopt a code of conduct as envisaged by SASA implies the important responsibilities of parents in inculcating discipline in their children. The fact that parents make up the majority of the school governing body according to section 23(9) of SASA indicates the importance of parental involvement (Beckman & Prinsloo, 2009, p.172). SASA empowers the SGB to conduct disciplinary hearings in accordance with section 8(1A). SASA also empowers the head of the provincial Department of Education (HoD) to expel a learner on the recommendation of the school governing body as well as the responsibility to find an

alternative school for the expelled learner. SASA emphasises learner self discipline in Section 7.1.

5.3.2. DOCUMENTS RELATING TO DISCIPLINE USED AT THE RESEARCH SITE

In order to unearth teachers' knowledge of national and provincial legislation and policy on discipline, it is necessary to know about the documents used in the school where the study was done. The only document relating to discipline used by the teachers is the school's Code of Conduct. It is a departmental requirement that every school must adopt its own code of conduct and develop a mission statement and a school motto. The school's commitment towards learners is reflected in the mission statement which promises to provide equal opportunities and access to purposeful experiences and provide a supportive environment. The school's motto itself emphasises the potential of learners.

According to Elmene Bray, adopting a code of conduct for learners is one of the most important functions performed by the school governing body. This legal document empowers the governing body to regulate school discipline and promote a disciplined and purposeful environment for quality teaching and learning. The act of adopting a code of conduct is regarded as a rulemaking action. It creates general (abstract) legal relationships because it applies to all learners of the school impersonally and unspecifically (2005, p.137).

The school plans to draw up a discipline policy in the immediate future. Past attempts in drafting the policy had to be shelved due to lack of manpower. The available teachers were slotted into committees to formulate other policies such as the excursion policy, financial policy and so on. The school's Code of Conduct is the discipline policy for the time being.

5.3.2.1. ANALYSIS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

The code of conduct is a legitimate, legal requirement and explains the disciplinary measures for various offences. It is a guiding document based on the principles stipulated by SASA. The code of conduct is based on legal/rational authority, that is, it is based on established rules. This school's Code of Conduct is a neatly bound booklet of four pages with writing on both sides. This document features regulations to be followed regarding cleanliness, personal appearance, dress code, school timing, home work, absenteeism, learner movement and text books. It presents a flow diagram of the personnel in charge of dealing with misdemeanours. Reprimands, verbal warnings, noting down of the default and detention are some of the recommended measures. Noting down misdemeanours in the defaulters' record is a procedure highly recommended in the school's Code of Conduct and supported by the school management. The teachers also have to maintain a record about the dates on which detention was given, the names of learners who stayed and those who absconded, the phone calls made to parents and parental visits to the school.

The Code of Conduct lists the misdemeanours and their consequences under four levels. Level one to three offences occur on a regular basis. Littering, chewing gum/eating in class and disruptive behaviour are a few examples of level one offences. Swearing, minor damages to school property, cheating in class test and graffiti are few of the level two offences. Cheating in exams, forging a parent's signature, initiation of subordinates are examples of level three misdemeanours. The offences listed under level four such as carrying firearms, bomb threats and murder etc., warrant disciplinary hearing, suspension and expulsion. There is no mention of the importance of self discipline either briefly or in detail.

The school's Code of Conduct is another channel of communication through which the SMT (on behalf of the whole school) that is, both teaching and non teaching personnel, communicates with the learner. The rhetoric in the Code of Conduct clearly conveys the legitimate, coercive and the structural power of the management. An overt level of

power, that is, coercive power, is exercised as indicated by the stipulated measures (punishment) that the recalcitrant learners will receive when they infringe school rules. Since the learners know that the school rules are specified by the school management, they might conform because of the inherent legitimate and structural power. The structural power that one has under the structure of an organisation permits the SMT to grade the misdemeanours under four levels. The four levels grade the misdemeanours from minor to major infractions outlined as guidelines in section 3 titled 'Dealing with misconduct' (KZN Department of Education & Culture, Manual 6, p.19). This grading is in line with the national and provincial departmental regulations.

One of the participant teacher commented that they were not consulted when the Code of Conduct was drawn up a few years ago. The learners violate the school rules frequently, especially those concerning cleanliness, the dress code, home work and learner movement. Firstly, the learners are reprimanded followed by a verbal warning. When the offence is repeated, it is noted down in the defaulters' book. Detention is given during lunch break. It is a common complaint by teachers that these sanctions do not deter the learners from violating the school rules and repeat them throughout the year. Although the measures suggested by the Code of Conduct are applied, they are not effective since these recur.

5.3.3. TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF LEGISLATION ON DISCIPLINE

The teachers' knowledge of legislation on discipline covers the acts, circulars, a school's code of conduct and the manuals *Alternatives to corporal punishment* (DoE, 2001) and *Co-operative Discipline* (DoE, 2003).

The first question relates to teachers' knowledge of the contents of the policy. The knowledge of the contents of policy documents is important to teachers. The policy documents, in this case, mention the guidelines to keep to and the dos and don'ts about discipline that has to be followed by the teachers. To put the don'ts in a nutshell, SASA states that corporal punishment has been abolished and teachers who use corporal

punishment are liable for criminal prosecution. Corporal punishment has been included in the definition of torture by the United Nations in 1982. The National Education Policy Act (1996, Sec.3 (4) (g); Sec.3 (4) (h)) forbids subjecting learners to psychological or physical abuse.

Analysis of the data reveals that respondents have a patchy and shallow understanding of policies and legislation. Seven out of the nine participants pleaded ignorance of national and provincial legislation. They disclosed that they do not have a working knowledge of the alternative disciplinary measures mentioned in those documents. Two of the respondents were aware of the manual *Alternatives to corporal punishment* (DOE, 2001) although it has been long since they remember reading it. All the participants are completely unaware of the guide on *Co-operative Discipline – an Alternative to corporal punishment* (DOE, 2003). However, all teachers are *au fait* with the abolition of corporal punishment in South Africa.

In the past the exercise of corporal punishment in schools was the use of teachers' *power over* the learners, which was an allowed practice. The majority of the participants believed that corporal punishment is not the way to discipline the learners. They agreed that the use of corporal punishment results in the learner becoming withdrawn and afraid of participation. Two of the participants mentioned that their school experience has convinced them against the use of corporal punishment. A few felt that corporal punishment could be used in a very limited way such as a gentle tap on the shoulder as a wakeup call, a reminder and as a deterrent to misbehaviour. Most of these teachers were not in favour of corporal punishment, that is, they do not want to use coercive power. Coercion in their view might also result in physical harm.

Regarding access to policies, the teachers stressed that copies of the national and provincial acts and circulars should have been made available to them and a discussion on the usage, applicability to the school and merits should have been engaged in with them, possibly through a workshop.

According to one of the participants, teachers have the individual freedom to discard or implement policy based on their understanding, “... *my perception of discipline, Code of Conduct and handling a child is totally different from what is stated in that document. I will become a subservient person. You can't go by the book...*”

One of the teachers explained her expectation on the content of the policy: “... *should have guidelines on how to deal with discipline problems, how we should use the Code of Conduct and how we can get the remedial measures done with regard to inappropriate behaviour...*”

Four of the nine participants said that they referred to the school's Code of Conduct. Three other participants merely mentioned that they refer to the Code of Conduct but did not commit about the usefulness or otherwise of the document. One participant explained that the classroom rules are displayed on the wall. However, learners disregard it and have to be constantly reminded about it. Another participant said that the Code of Conduct was never mentioned since there was no teacher orientation done after appointment. Yet another participant felt that the school's Code of Conduct is inadequate and out of date to handle ill-discipline.

The same participant declared that “... *there is no proper guidance from the department or the SMT. If there is a policy, it is not made available. The teachers were not consulted when drawing up the school's Code of Conduct...*”

Teacher participants complained that when detention forms are given, the reply slips from the detention forms are not acknowledged by parents. Detention after school poses problems. Learners are kept during lunch break for 15 minutes. The learners who are supposed to be in detention do not stay back on several occasions. They abscond and do not apologise the following day and continue to boycott the detention. Learners' *power over the teachers* is manifested here in the form of manipulation and non compliance. “*Non compliance is demonstrated in a persistent unwillingness to participate in managerial and educational tasks. Students may choose not to comply by simply ignoring*

teacher direction, school rules and policies. They may refuse to engage in educational activities” (Ennis, 1995, p.446).

Teachers’ legitimate power to give detention form and implement it is made null and void by these defiant learners who are the most in need of these sanctions. All the sanctions recommended by the Code of Conduct exercised through the legitimate and coercive power of the teachers are in vain.

Teachers’ lack of knowledge of recommended measures and strategies can also be revealed by going through the information recorded in the defaulters’ record. Maintaining the defaulters’ record is a requirement of the school. The defaulters’ record is about keeping a record of misdemeanours of a particular learner. The frequency of recording, the information recorded, the follow up measures and the number of entries will reveal whether the teacher has used measures recommended in the documents. Some of the disciplinary and corrective measures used by the teacher participants is restricted to verbal reprimand, entries in defaulters’ book, short detention of 15 minutes during lunch break, letters to parents, disciplinary talk and withdrawal of privileges for defaulted learners from collecting and passing out marked books, text books and worksheets to the rest of the class.

To understand about the importance of knowledge, I turn to Foucault. According to Foucault, knowledge is always a form of power. Knowledge is forever connected to power and Foucault often wrote it as power/knowledge (Mason, 2010). If that is correct, a lack of a working knowledge of the policies deprives the teachers of the knowledge of power inherent in the documents. A working knowledge of the contents of the documents will enhance the authority of the teachers who can implement the disciplinary measures with confidence. As Rowlands (2006, p.2) puts it, *“Power is related to knowledge. Due to this, legitimacy and authority are achieved”*.

Knowledge gives *power to* the teachers, that is, the ability to act. Exercising *power to* leads to empowerment. When teachers have the working knowledge of policy, it opens up the possibilities of joint action or *power with* other teachers to act collectively.

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of legislation pertaining to the use of alternate measures in place of corporal punishment is not thorough and comprehensive. It is limited to an understanding of the abolition of corporal punishment and the prohibition of all forms of abuse. Their knowledge of the sections on discipline and the corrective measures referred to in the South African School's Act 84 of 1996 and the measures and strategies suggested in the manual, *Alternatives to corporal punishment* is vague and divided. Majority of the teachers have mentioned that they do not rely on policy but on their own teaching experience to discipline learners. The lack of working knowledge of legislation disempowers teachers and prevents them from using the recommended corrective measures. Instead teachers rely on conventional or traditional methods such as shouting, giving impositions, sending learners out of the class and also utilising non verbal silent communication which includes giving cold stares, tapping on the shoulder, ignoring behaviour and continuing with work etc. This is a form of teacher *power over* the learners without the use of physical punishment.

5.3.4. IMPLICATIONS OF LIMITED UNDERSTANDING OF POLICY FOR DISCIPLINE

The evidence from teachers is that they are not well informed. Their lack of knowledge has negative implications for discipline in the school. It is important to understand that a school cannot function without good discipline. Firstly, due to lack of working knowledge of corrective measures and strategies, teachers are incapacitated in handling unruly and frivolous behaviour. Traditional methods of discipline are ineffective in curbing the recurrent misbehaviour.

Secondly, in a six hour day with each period of 25 minutes duration, teachers have to ensure that all learners understood the lesson, cater to weak and intelligent learners,

revise the work done through verbal questioning and written test, supervise orals such as recitation of poems and speech, check homework and do administrative work (fees collection etc). Amidst this mountain of work, precious time is wasted in disciplining unruly behaviour, thus depriving the others who are eager to learn. Attention time towards learners who are slow or weak in reading, writing and numeracy skills gets reduced, leading to a feeling of neglect. Less work is covered and due to the shortage of catch up time, work accrues for both the teacher and the learner.

Thirdly, the repetition of unruly and unscrupulous behaviour affects teachers physically and psychologically and makes teaching a stressful profession. To address the problems, teachers exert themselves excessively through lecturing or appealing or using methods known to them resulting in exhaustion and burnout. What was once considered a calling (respect and dignity) has now become an occupation.

Fourthly, limited understanding leads to shortage of measures available to discipline disruptive learners. Learners use their collective power to disrupt lessons, to delay submission of homework and projects and to escalate noise levels.

5.4. TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS OF POWER AND AUTHORITY

The second research question regards the perceptions of teachers of their power in relationship to discipline. Before revealing the perceptions of teachers on power and authority, the data obtained from the school's internal documents such as the defaulters' record and the school staff minutes is presented. This has been analysed through the concepts of structural power, the five bases of power and the positive concepts of power where applicable. These documents are also considered as the channels of communication between the learner and the school.

5.4.1. ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNAL DOCUMENTS FROM A POWER PERSPECTIVE

A. Defaulters' Record of learners

Jirathun (2010, p.2) quotes Cartwright's argument that there is an intense relationship between power and communication. This is explained as, "*without communication there would be no group norms, group goals or organised group action*". McCroskey and Richmond (1983, p. 176, cited in Jirathun, 2010, p.3) describe the nature of power as,

...an individual's potential to have an effect on another person's or group of persons behaviour... the capacity to influence another person to do something he/she could not have done had he/she not been influenced...an individual exhibits some type of change in his/her behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, etc., as a result of influence from someone else...

In the words of Jirathun (2010, p.3), "*...Communication then is a pool of sources of power. Some power may be easily observed such as participation rules and grading criteria. Levels of power range from the clearly observable to the implicitly sensible power...*"

Jirathun has used structural power and the five bases of power popularised by French and Raven (reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert power) to analyse the power residing in two course syllabi drawn from one of the mid-west universities in the U.S.A. The five bases of power identified by French and Raven laid the ground work for most discussions of power and authority in the later half of the 20th century (Victor, 2010, p.1).

The documents such as the defaulters' record, the school Code of Conduct and the minutes of the staff meeting can be described as channels of communication of different types of power. These communication channels can be used by teachers to exercise their power over the learners. The rhetoric/wording used in the documents communicates the nature of power. Of the five types of power proposed by French and Raven (1959), reward and coercive power are classified as overt power because they are observable and

legitimate, while referent and expert power are classified as implicit or inherent power. The power or influence that an individual has over his/her interactants can come from any of the five bases of the power (Jirathun, 2010, p.3).

According to Clegg (1989, cited in Jirathun, p.3), structural power can be seen as the limited power that one might have under a structure of an organisation. Guzzini (1993, p.450) has used the term “indirect institutional power” to describe structural power. To explain structural power, the teacher does not need to exercise overt power to influence the learner to behave. Rather the structural power limits the learner’s ability to act against the teacher’s power. The structural power enables the teacher to gain learner compliance. As the teacher records the misdemeanour and the consequence (detention) and issues a detention form to the learner with the school stamp, she has exercised power. Like the mark book which contains the learners’ marks in all the subjects for the entire year, the defaulters’ record should contain the list of learners’ misdemeanours for that year. Both these records are property of the school and are channels of communicating structural power.

Another concept of structural power is the legitimate basis of power proposed by French and Raven (1959). Legitimate power is the power that is ‘assigned’ to the teacher (McCroskey & Richmond, 1983 cited in Jirathun, 2010, p.3). The signature of the teachers in the defaulters’ record grants the teacher legitimate power over the students. Also only the misbehaviour of the learners is recorded by the teacher. This is an exercise of coercive power of the teacher over the learners. Generally this coercive power is regarded as negative. Coercive power is described as the exercise of *power over* to control someone or something. The response to *power over* is either compliance or resistance or manipulation. While this is coercive power, with its negative connotations, it is not necessarily against the interests of the learner. Recording in the defaulters’ record which is a school document is necessary because the information might be requested for either by the principal or the parent, a social worker or even the SEM. Recorded information may be considered more valid than verbal utterances. The information sought

might not be for punishing the learner but to understand the possible problems and recommendation for therapy or intervention.

On scrutiny, the defaulters' record revealed a lack of consistency in recording the misdemeanours. The record had irregular entries under very few names. Not all the entries had mentioned the measures used such as letters to the parents, detention form, call to parents, withdrawal of privileges etc. There are two reasons for the scant information found in the defaulters' record. Firstly, teachers were of the perception that the learners were not afraid of the repeated entries in the defaulters' record against their names and there was no noticeable difference in their behaviour in spite of recording or of complaining to the parents. Further, the recording procedure takes away the time from teaching.

Legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959) which is the 'assigned' power stems from the assigned role of the teacher in the classroom. According to McCroskey and Richmond (1982. p.4), all teacher power is based on student perceptions. If the learner does not perceive the teacher to have a certain type of power, the teacher's appeal to that power, whether direct or implied, is not likely to result in influence. Secondly, in South African primary schools, the class teacher (who is also called the form teacher) is in charge of the administrative duties (especially paper work) for that particular class such as marking registers, preparing a list of contact numbers of parents and writing reports to name a few. Invariably, it becomes the duty of the form teacher to enter the names and misdemeanours in the defaulters' record.

On analysis, the defaulters' record revealed that most of the entries were made by the form teachers only. When other subject teachers request for the file to enter the nature of the misdemeanour, the learners do not perceive them as having the legitimate power to make the entries for their class. Hence the subject teachers' appeal to legitimate power does not influence the behaviour of the learners in that class. Owing to the learners' rejection of the teachers' legitimate power as well as due to inconsistent recording in the defaulters' record by the participant teachers and the sparing use, this document seemed

to have lost its structural power during the time of study. The defaulters' record, a channel of communicating structural power (which limits the learner's ability to act against) has not been used to its full extent. This could be attributed to the time taken to access these files, overloaded schedules, time needed for syllabus to be covered and time taken to address the unruly learners. The recording is effective only when it is done instantly as soon as the default takes place. It loses its effect when recorded later since the learner forgets what he/she has done. The instant recording, although invaluable, is not achievable in classes other than the form class since the learners fail to acknowledge the legitimate power of the subject teachers.

B. Minutes of the staff meeting

The staff minutes are the channel of communication of power between the management and the teachers. The minutes convey the structural and legitimate power of the management team, more precisely of the principal to the teachers. Some of the teachers do not express their views and opinions when called for. These teachers exercise reduced power by being quiet during meetings. Although teachers take turns to be the secretary for the staff meetings, maintaining a personal record of the minutes is expected of all teachers by the management. Teachers conform to this expectation because of the structural power of the management. Signing of the typed minutes (for the official minute book) by all teachers is compulsory. Adhering to this school protocol is an acceptance of the SMT's legitimate power.

A close study of the minutes of the staff meetings communicates the legal authority and legitimate power granted to teachers. Teachers were requested to make sure that every learner had a copy of the school's Code of Conduct and to reinforce learner understanding of the levels of offences. The reinforcing would help learners to understand the gravity of their infractions. Noting down offences, using of pass-outs, practising a zero tolerance attitude towards discipline, and assisting in the formation of a disciplinary committee are all use of the legitimate power of teachers. Reward power is used by teachers in the form of praising learners and reading them stories to reward them

for good behaviour. According to the teachers, monitoring the use of pass-outs (learners hide them from view) and noting down the offences every day is not feasible and takes away the time from teaching. It was also noted that the learners demonstrate their lack of respect for authority for the staff and the office area. Learners walk into empty staff rooms during class time and use the toilets specified for the teachers and leave it in a messy state. The role of prefects, who are supposed to be the role models, came into question. Debadging them was one of the measures contemplated. The teachers were instructed to monitor the neighbouring classrooms in the absence of a teacher in that class. Although the learners' miseducative behaviour was discussed, no concrete measures were implemented. It was left to the individual teacher to find ways to manage the classroom. This proves Ingersoll's point (2003, p.170) about the irony that teachers who serve others and the society often do so alone.

The school's internal documents were analysed through the concepts of structural power and the five bases of power theorised by French and Raven and the concepts of positive power. The analysis of the documents reveal that the documents accords the teachers with structural and legitimate power. The utilisation of these powers is supplemented through reward, coercive and referent power.

The nature of teachers' power as revealed through the power analysis for disciplining learners is limited. Teachers' power is based on pupils' perceptions. As explained earlier, if the learner does not perceive the teacher to have a certain type of power, a teacher's appeal to that power, whether direct or implied, is not likely to result in influence (McCroskey & Richmond, 1983, p.2). According to Richmond and Roach (cited in Manke, p.154), "*...for teacher power to exist, it must be granted by the students. Although the legitimate title of 'teacher' and the adult status of the instructor may lend some initial power to the teacher, if students do not accept or consent to compliance with teacher directives, the teacher actually has no power...*"

5. 5. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS TOWARDS DISCIPLINE

The official legislation from the national government, that is, the South African Schools Act enumerates the role and responsibilities of parents and responsibilities of learners. Around the globe educational policies, white papers and reform initiatives position parents alongside teachers as key stakeholders in children's educational experiences (Brien & Stelmach, 2006, p.1). A knowledge of legislation on discipline also includes the knowledge about the responsibilities of parents and role of school management in dealing with discipline. The non-participation of parents in the school lives of their children is one of the most important and oft repeated grievances among teachers. According to the Act in Section 6 titled 'Responsibilities of parents with respect to the code of conduct (ELRC, p.B-38),

6.1. The ultimate responsibility for learners' behaviour rests with their parents or guardians. It is expected that parents will:

- a) Support the school and require learners to observe all school rules and regulations and accept responsibility for any misbehaviour on their part.*
- b) Take an active interest in their child's homework and make it possible for the child to complete assigned homework.*

6.2. Parents should attend meetings that the governing body convenes for them.

"Parents and teachers interact because of their shared responsibility for the welfare of the children in their care. Parents enjoy legal rights and responsibility to make decisions regarding the upbringing of their children" (Brien & Stelmach, 2006, p.1). Teachers value the involvement of parents in the education of their learners. The teacher participants were unanimous in reporting about the non-involvement of some parents in their child's schooling with regard to their misbehaviour. This could either be because the parents are kept in the dark by their children who give false stories, or it could be that these children are not staying with parents but with guardians like their grandmother or an aunt. It could also be that the parents are unable to take off from work for a few hours.

The participants also expressed their grievances about the dominating and demanding role played by some parents. When the teacher requests the parents to come to the school to discuss the misbehaviour of their children, some of them do not turn up. They do not acknowledge the letters sent to them. Some parents distrust teachers, which encourages their children to misbehave, because the learners know that the teacher does not enjoy the support of their parents. Some of the influential parents are able to bend the school rules. A few parents also write notes in threatening language. Such warning notes could be due to listening to the biased or one sided version of their children's stories.

Thus the teachers' judgement, capabilities, training and experience are not taken into consideration by these parents. The teachers' professional dignity is harmed. The teachers are defenceless and do not have any support. Generally parents expect teachers to give home work. In this study, not doing homework was one of the most repeated offences by the learners. Teachers complained that they have exhausted every avenue that they know of but are unsuccessful in getting the learners to understand the importance of doing homework.

The responsibilities of parents forms part of the knowledge of legislation on discipline. Through the following quotes, the grievance of teachers regarding the passivity and non-involvement of parents in the schooling of their children is given a voice.

Teachers deplore the lack of support especially from parents of miscreants, *"There is no support from parents of the learners who continuously cause misdemeanours. Discipline letters are sent and do not return and if they do there is hardly any management intervention. This sends the message to learners that these matters are taken lightly. Many learners do not respect their parents either, so, as a result, when parents do respond to the discipline letter, it is not handled with much authority"*.

Teachers speak of the poor background and strict upbringing in which they grew up as a child but in their view, today's parents spoil children. *"They have everything. Children think they are doing us a favour by coming to school..."*

There is less parental supervision and, *“Parents are now trying to please their children by making up for quality time by acceding to their demands in the form of monetary rewards...”*

Learner misbehaviour is attributed to wrong friendships, community in which they live, media and to *“parents who have lost the plot when it comes to disciplining or raising their children. Parents are in denial about their child’s behaviour because they cannot believe or accept that their child has done wrong.”*

Some of the parents play a meddling role, *“and get very involved to a point where teachers feel those parents are not assisting/ enquiring/ supporting, but dictating the way that things should be done.”*

Parents either show no interest in their child’s education or are too involved in the school. *“I believe that we as educators and also the parents do have the power to be involved but with limitations. Each role player has to know what their responsibilities are and exercise it with effectiveness, following the proper protocol.”*

Parents have been given the power to collaborate with the school in adopting a Code of Conduct. They form part of the school governing body. In my view, they also exercise power by choosing to either pay or avoid paying fees, to support or oppose school initiatives, to acknowledge or ignore school notices, to believe or disbelieve teachers’ messages, to accept or decline teachers’ request for discussion, to attend or abstain from meetings, to assist or desist in submission of their children’s assessment tasks and to trust or distrust teachers’ commitment towards their children. Thus parents choose to exercise either *power over* the teachers by looking the other way and not heeding messages and notices or choose to *share power with* the teachers by extending their valuable support. According to Ingersoll (2003, p.237), teachers are affected by the low esteem of the teaching profession The interference in the name of involvement in school affairs and such practices as the constant small talk among the parents who congregate inside the school waiting area for hours before fetching their children are evidence for the low

esteem for teachers and the teaching profession. The presence of power in the relationship between the teachers' and the parents is variously *power over* or *power with*. When some parents interfere, demand and thrust their selfish agenda on the teachers and threaten to go to the media and the Department they are exerting *power over* the teachers. On the other hand, the passive involvement of parents, that is, the parental responsibility ends with sending the children to school. Such parents do not attend meetings or maintain contact with the school throughout the eight years of schooling. This is also an exertion of *power over* the teachers, since the teachers are kept in suspense that the parent(s) will turn up any day to enquire about the progress of the learner. Further more the teachers feel provoked by the lack of communication by the parent even under extreme circumstances. There are parents who on their own initiative call upon the teacher to enquire about the performance of their children and promise full co-operation in disciplining their children. This joint action and effort leads to sharing *power with*. Care has been taken to explain how the dominating as well as passive (to non-) involvement of parents is an exercise of *power over* the teachers. At the same time, parents and teachers also share *power with* each other through trust, mutual respect and working together with the same goal.

5. 6. THE ROLE OF THE SMT IN ASSISTING TEACHERS

The school management team consists of the principal, deputy principal and heads of departments. An SMT may also bring in additional members of staff or someone from outside the school whom the management feels has specific skills or knowledge which will aid the management of the school (DoE, 2000, cited in Sister, 2004, p.17). Olsen and Cooper (2004, cited in Oosthuizen, 2009, p.47) state that members of the school management team will take responsibility for discipline issues referred by other staff members in the event of, for example, fighting and/or assault, possession of weapons, vandalism, smoking and using abusive language. One of teachers' most basic expectations is that SMTs should give them support. Another fundamental aspect of SMT support relates to responses when teachers complain of disciplinary problems, especially where parents are involved. SMT members seen walking the corridors and acting against

misbehaviour are considered to be supportive (Jones & Jones, 1992, cited in Oosthuizen, 2009, p. 48). In this school, however, the teachers expressed their concern that they do not have any support from the management in addressing this problem.

The teachers complained that they do not have professional support and, “...*SMT do not offer their help to educators. Since no formal alternatives are put into place, learners know that they have the upper hand and do not bother to do homework...*”

Teachers require management to be, “... *supportive of them. The management should understand that the teacher is in a trying situation and provide support and guidance...*”

Teachers’ attempts in enforcing school rules must be supported and encouraged by all stakeholders and “...*what is mentioned in the meeting should be enforced. Management must assist. They cannot put down the teachers all the time...*”

Monitoring learner movement and making their presence felt is vital for supporting teachers in their efforts to maintain discipline and in the absence of this support, “...*The school is not contributing to the development of morally sound individuals. Stricter rules are to be enforced. Minor misdemeanours are overlooked as part of growing up issues which will resurface in adulthood...*”

The grievances of the participants echo the words of Ingersoll, “*It is because they have so little power that teachers are dependent on those who have more power-usually the principal and deputy principal. If a teacher is not backed up, especially in disciplinary matters, the power of the teacher is revealed, often painfully, for what it is – a charade – and is vulnerable to challenge by students* (Ingersoll, 2003, p.174).

A few voiced their discontentment vociferously on not being supported, ignored and undermined. Teachers seem to experience a sense of disempowerment. Teachers expressed their displeasure with management since “...*teachers are forced to teach subjects that they do not have skills/passion for. Timetables are drawn and duties are*

allocated without consultation. New innovative ideas proposed by educators are often not considered for implementation by the authoritarian management and governing body...”

When teachers’ explanations were not considered about events that unfold in the classroom, teachers felt let down and wonder, “...*how can the management together with the parent undermine our abilities? How disappointing to know that they have no faith in us as qualified educators...*”

On separate occasions, the teachers felt under-appreciated, undermined and distrusted. In the words of Jenny Overton (2007, p.10), “*when faced with an individually difficult situation, the teachers were aware of a ‘battening down of the hatches’ mentality whereby they would engage in self protective behaviours*”.

The relationship between the participant teachers and the school management, that is, the ‘*agents of the educational system*’ as coined by Overton (2007, p.11) is not based on equal power relationships.

5. 7. TEACHERS’ PERCEPTION OF POWER IN RELATIONSHIP TO DISCIPLINE

The second research question is regarding the perceptions of teachers of their power in relationship to discipline.

“*A complete understanding of the power dimension in a relationship requires reference to the perceptions of all parties*”(Jamieson & Thomas, 1974, p.324). In this study, the teachers’ perception of their power and the power of the learner is of interest. Primary and secondary schooling are compulsory and learners are placed under the care of teachers for nearly sixteen years of their lives. Teachers do not just teach the different subjects, they also teach values and behaviour to the children. The job of teachers, according to Ingersoll (2003, p.4), is to help make socialised adults of unsocialised youngsters. Schools and teachers quite literally help pass on our society’s way of life and culture to the next generation. The participant teachers when asked about the joys of

teaching used the terms, *guide, to impart, to love, contribute, make a difference, pass on values, to help learners to reach goals, to make them feel as part of the class family, to be emulated and so on*. From this we understand that the primary school teacher is someone who is caring and nurturing and wants to contribute towards the development of a future generation. This is an example of the pastoral power of the teachers. Foucault describes pastoral power as power that is nurturing and caring and has the welfare of individuals as its initial and final goal. *“It is positive power, in the sense that caring altruistically for another is positive”*(Forrester, 1994, cited in Wickham, 1997, p.368).

The teachers’ perception of their own power varied from having power to do something, to having limited power and as being powerless. Two of the participants felt that they have the legitimate power *to control conflict situations, to maintain rules of the classroom, to command discipline and order, to educate, to enforce discipline* (legitimate power that comes with the position) *to pass or fail the learners, and to keep learners during break* (use of coercive power), *to encourage, to treat learners fairly and with mutual respect, to give them chances to take part in assembly programmes* (use of reward power). Two other participants felt that their power was limited because of boundaries and responsibilities and that all decisions had to go through management. The overwhelming notion was of powerlessness. In my experience, we feel powerless when we are not in control of a situation, when our instructions are ignored, when our voices are stifled and when our opinions are unheard.

The anguish experienced by the participants is reflected in the following extracts.

Learners drain the power of a teacher with bad discipline and disrupt the whole class with their antics. Teachers felt that they, *“... do not have the power to keep the learners’ attention throughout the lesson. Learners get bored easily no matter how well planned the lesson is. Their concentration spans are very low. I start the day by motivating them about their education and behaviour and a few lessons into the day, I realize that it was meaningless to them...”*

The teachers felt powerless and abandoned in the following situations:

- * *when the principal issues instructions to the learners that is contradictory to what I have said;*
- * *when the Department of Education informs teachers about teachers being suspended for verbal abuse and corporal punishment;*
- * *sometimes I wish I could just use the stick on errant learners;*
- * *when they blatantly inform me that their assignment / homework is not done;*
- * *when they run away instead of being at detention;*
- * *when they disregard due dates;*
- * *don't know what kind of punishment I can mete out to them when they are arrogant and that they are aware that we cannot use corporal punishment on them...*”

When the teachers give homework and the learner does not do it, he/she is given a second chance. “...*When the child still does not do it, I leave the child in the class to do it. If the child still does not do it, I won't hit the child because of the policy. It makes me feel powerless and want to leave the profession...*”

Policies should be user friendly for teachers to implement it and, “...*the ideas used in the policy are western ideas. I feel powerless because it is not easy to discipline children when at home another method of disciplining the child is used and in school it is a different story...*”

Teachers feel that learners no longer fear being sent to the office, “...*I feel powerless when learners are sent to the office and nothing is being done to sort matter out...*”

It seems the management shares views concordant with those of Cusack (1983), “*good teachers were those who keep students in a state of moderate order, maintain some cordial relations with them and do not send for administrative assistance*” (cited in Cothran & Ennis, 1997, p.548).

Participants’ verbalisation of powerlessness is due to various reasons. Teachers feel powerless because of conflicting teacher and learner interests, lack of parental support, and lack of management and departmental support. Teachers’ educational interests here

are that learners must do homework, serve detention during the prescribed time, to comply with due dates, to be attentive in class. It is obvious that learners have conflicting interests such as not wanting to do homework or staying in for detention or submitting projects within the due date or being attentive in class. This conflict of teacher and learner interests has led to the feeling of helplessness or powerlessness among the teachers.

Paulo Botas (2004, p.3) explains the nature of power relationship as follows.

*The power relation between two parties is a relationship where their activities are strained dynamically and restricted between the two parties. Because of these dynamic activities, their individual interests, strategies and agendas are constantly reshaping themselves according to the mutative power characteristics of one part to the other. This endless battle for control over one party by another originating in **a conflict of interests** [my emphasis] causes the pendulum of power to oscillate freely between two parties. The parties can be individuals, groups or sub groups that comply or resist one another.*

Teachers complained that learners' rights have been given precedence and learners know that teachers cannot use corporal punishment. The issue of children's rights within the context of disciplinary measures was found to be one critical issue in the dispensation of modern education (Chisholm, 2007). Teachers feel disempowered by the emphasis on children's rights and the ban on corporal punishment. This has "ushered an era of freedom for learners who no longer have respect or fear for their educators" (Maphosa & Shumba, 2010, p.397). This disempowering of educators has also led to feelings of abdication of the critical role of disciplining learners and the seeming abdication of this role could be attributed to the rise in cases of learner indiscipline in schools (Kgosana, 2006, cited in Maphosa & Shumba, 2010, p.396).

Post apartheid policy shifted the teacher-student relationship, with teachers and students formally equal in terms of rights and teachers charged with facilitating student rights. Many teachers have found it hard to adapt to these changes and schooling contexts often provide limited opportunity for them to do so. Many teachers interviewed talked about

the imbalance in power, stating that students now have more rights than they do (Hunt, 2007, p.1).

The learners are aware of the banning of corporal punishment in schools and that teachers will not hit them. As a result they are not afraid of teachers and of authority in general. When asked about the kind of power the learners had, all the participants expressed that the learners have power endowed on them by the Constitution, Bill of Rights and SASA. Teachers' perceive that learners have more power than them due to the childrens' rights sanctioned by the constitution and other national and international conventions. The publicity of childrens' rights through television programmes and the curriculum (such as that of Life Orientation) impact on discipline. One of the popular children's rights is the right to protection from exploitation and neglect and the responsibility to report abuse. They are aware that teachers are prohibited by law from hitting them. Learners assume that these rights are a shield to protect them from punishment in spite of the magnitude of their offences and a licence to avoid doing school work. They attend school but do not do any work. The learner's individual understanding of the rights is different from what it is supposed to be.

To narrate a real incident, the right to express opinion was misinterpreted as the right to talk and discuss with friends while teaching was taking place. When the learner was asked to wait for the lesson to finish, the answer was, "I have the right of speech".

To quote teachers' thoughts on the power that learners have, teachers are of the opinion that, *"...a child has lots of power, can be manipulative, can change situations to please himself. Bill of rights and Children's rights have given the child the power to question all instructions given to them. No more is power solely in the hand of the principal / teacher..."*

Learners display an indifference towards learning and have the, *"power to irritate and anger the teacher by doing things, for example, turning around and talking continuously; digging in their bags every minute making funny sounds in the class; not paying attention to lesson; have the power to lie to parents about being physically abused."*

Teachers perceive that in the new dispensation the rights of learners have received undue attention, “...*Children’s rights are over emphasized. They have more power than adults. The law makes sure that their rights are over protected and the poor teachers do not have rights at all...*”

Teachers believe that learners use their rights as weapons against the teachers “...*the power to ensure that corporal punishment is not used against them; in theory the learner is very aware of rights. It is the constitution and policy that have given the child the power to exercise rights and use these as weapon against the teachers. Consequently he/she has violated his/her responsibility and the child’s rights has taken precedence over his responsibility...*”

Emphasis is placed on learners’ rights more than responsibilities, “...*much emphasis is placed by the media, parents, school governing body, Department of Education on rights and little on responsibilities. They are given too much privileges, for example, being reinstated in the normal mainstream after engaging in severe misdemeanours...*”

Teachers postulate that, “*learners have more power because of the Bill of Rights, parental support and legislation.*”

Learners do not comply with the instructions given by teachers and offer, “...*resistance to learn, they know they have the power to manipulate me in many ways, like sometimes if I keep them in they will run out of the door right in front of me or they don’t even wait for me to come to the class. Some are even so brave as to come and lie to me about their friends and tell me that the transport is waiting for them...*”

Learners have no qualms about breaking school rules since they are not afraid of any punishment. This makes the teacher feel “... *powerless when kept in for detention, learners still chat and sit next to their friends. They take detention as a joke. They have the power when they constantly disobey me by chewing bubblegum, running out of the classroom, rock on the chair, wear coloured jerseys or jackets. Girls wear short dresses*

and make up, they don't tie or plait their hair and boys will wear takkies and ear rings. They basically defy the dress code even though they are not supposed to...”

The misdemeanours mentioned in the above quotes are examples of learners' resisting teachers' authority and power. According to Foucault (1980, cited in Benesch, 1999, p.316), “there are no relations of power without resistances”. “Power and resistance are inextricably linked. With power always comes resistance. This resistance is never in a position of exteriority to power. Their existence depends upon a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support or handle in power relations. These points of resistance are everywhere in the power network” (cited in Winograd, 2002, p. 345). Burbules notes that resistance is linked with compliance. Resistance is always a possibility since what is offered can be withheld. The tension between compliance and resistance is the form of most human interaction (1986, p.101). The learners' low value for traditional learning activities meant that any attempt to emphasise an educational focus likely would be met with resistance (Cothran & Ennis, 1997, p.549).

We live in an age of resistance. Learner power is communicated through resistance. The learners use their individual and collective power to excel or fail in school, to complete or dodge tasks and homework, to practice or disobey school rules, to respect or disrespect authority as it suits them, to attend school or be absent, to permit or disrupt the class proceedings, to support or violate classroom rules, to grant or deny teacher's power appeals. The resistance or non compliance of learners is overwhelming and at present the emerging picture of primary school children aged 6 to 14 in this school is of those who are brutal, defiant, disinterested in schooling, disrespectful, using profanities and virtually uncontrollable. The learners are becoming increasingly impatient, restless and short tempered. This age of resistance is however shared also by children who have developed immunity to the chaos and disruption in the school environment and still work diligently and efficiently.

Learners' compliance is important so that learning can take place. In teachers' perceptions, the learners seem to use their power only to offer resistance instead of

compliance. In order to avoid a show down, sometimes teachers give in. In my view, giving in to learners is sometimes not to be taken as a sign of weakness. In order to achieve the goal of learning and teaching, some give and take with learners is necessary. According to Pollard (1985, cited in Winograd, 2002, p.357), in the absence of a consensus between the learner and the teacher, order is achieved in one of the two ways, domination or negotiation. Teachers and learners engage in a variety of negotiation strategies. It includes bargaining and promises in return for cooperation to do work and allow others to do work. The same idea is reiterated by Pace and Hemmings (2007, p.13), *“In the real world of classrooms, authority is enacted through ongoing negotiations between teachers and students.”*

So, in order to encourage learners to do school work teachers engage in negotiations. They have to, *“repeatedly bargain with them, for example, if they behave, I will take them to the Art room during Arts and Culture. If you behave, you can sit next to your friend. If you complete your homework first, I will give you a star.”*

According to Winograd (2002, p.360) learners’ resistance and the demands made on the teacher are inevitable even in the best of teaching situations. He explains that the demands on teachers are made by macro structural forces, that is, the demands of teaching large groups of learners, office deadlines to be met, pressure of testing etc. As a result, it is not possible to meet the individual needs of all in the classroom. The macro political difficulties include inevitability of learner opposition to what is being taught, the problem of doing continuous assessment and reading in a large class, facing the challenges of individual learners who finish their work and are bored waiting for others to complete.

It is a struggle for teachers to keep all the learners occupied, for example, during a reading assessment where in a class of 42 learners, the teacher has to listen to every individual learner to assess his progress. Those learners who are awaiting their turn and those who completed reading will become fidgety and disruptive. Even when provided with interesting options and worksheets like a word search, the learners will lose interest

within a few minutes of starting the work. This non-cooperation, non-compliance and resistance illustrate that education is not their first concern. The tension created by the conflicting interests has to be handled tactfully through negotiation to avoid power struggle, confrontation and stalemate. In order to avoid chaos and to continue with the class work, the teachers negotiate with learners. Through this negotiation, the teacher and the learners come to an understanding. The teacher has to agree to give some form of concession. The bargaining/negotiation takes place to get class work, project or assessment task done for the learners' benefit, in return, for order and calm however short lived it may be.

Given the natural differences between teachers' and students' goals for school experience, the steady and unrelenting give and take of negotiation is an essential part of teachers' working conditions (Winograd, 2002, p.348). Thus negotiations have to take place on a perennial basis. Negotiations pave the way for a cooperative atmosphere in the classroom since the learners feel that they have won the situation. However negotiation and bargaining, in my experience, do not put an end to disruption and misbehaviour permanently. Learners never keep their end of the bargain. After a brief respite, they continue from where they left off.

According to King, (1997, p.7), "*discipline is a two edged sword. On one edge is enforcing standards, on the other is gaining the cooperation of your students*".

The referent power of the teacher combined with the use of corporal punishment worked in the past. In present times, teachers try to cope in the classroom using the tactics of self restraint, corrective interjection, angry explosion and immediate consequences. They also resort to bargaining and negotiating; implementing detention and using traditional or conventional techniques of discipline. In this school, the success of the above described measures in disciplining the obstreperous behaviour of learners is minimal. The exercise of power is found in every interaction between teacher and student and everywhere power is being negotiated between the teacher and the student (Gosling, p.23).

I quote from King (1997, p.13),

*Many believe that teachers will not have serious discipline problems if they have good lesson plans or are democratic teachers or genuinely love their students. The implication though perhaps not intended is that if students misbehave, it is the teacher's fault. I wish it were true that good teaching would end all discipline problems. **The problem of discipline in our schools today far transcend the individual teacher's ability to cope with them** [my emphasis].*

Nias (1989, cited in Winograd) believes that teachers cannot use brute power to get their way and to control students. It is not a viable option for most teachers, particularly those who have a sense of self that values warm personal relations and rapport with students (2002, p. 347). Similarly, Nodding (1995, p.75 cited in Manke, 1997, p.125) asserts that in a real and ultimate sense, teachers do not have control over what students do, unless they are willing to use the methods of a drill sergeant or one who 'washes brains' through physical and emotional coercion.

5.8.TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF AUTHORITY REGARDING DISCIPLINE

Sociologist Willard Waller in the early 1930's characterised the school as "*a despotism in a state of perilous equilibrium*" (Pace & Hemmings, 2007, p.4). He argued that schools are instruments of mass education in which students are antagonistic to constraints imposed on their spontaneous nature and a course of study that is largely unrelated to their own personal interests. Teachers working within the bureaucracy of the school must assert their dominance over students. But their dominance is never ensured because conflict and resistance are always lying in wait, ready to spring. Authority relations between teachers and students are thus unstable and exist in a "quivering" balance that may be upset at any moment.

Pace and Hemmings (2007, p.5) define authority as a social construction constituted by interactions between teachers and students that are variable in their forms and meanings. Max Weber's work on "ideal types" of authority has been used by several researchers to analyse classroom roles and relationships. Weber's three types of authority are traditional

authority, charismatic authority and legal-rational authority. The characteristics of these three types have been discussed in the chapter on conceptual framework.

The concept of power in social justice pedagogy and the issue of authority in feminist pedagogy together contribute to the literature on power and authority. According to Perumal (2007, p.45), feminist pedagogy posits that the teacher's authority emanates from the fact that he/she holds authority by virtue of greater knowledge and experience. In addition, the authority sought is authority with, not authority over the students.

In this study, the teacher participants were required to answer a question on their understanding of the term 'authority'. These participants had diverse understandings of the term such as *to be responsible and accountable, to discipline learners, to inform parents of their children's behaviour and reporting learners' bad behaviour to SMT*. These notions are examples of legal-rational authority. This type of authority also known as bureaucratic authority is supported by normative rules and laws based on rational values. This gives people in certain positions the right to issue commands. This authority enables teachers to uphold school rules and procedures through sanctions (Pace & Hemmings, 2007, p.7).

Authority is also understood as leadership. Leaders require legal rational authority to lead others. Examples of charismatic authority are revealed in the phrase *to be someone who people listen to*. This authority occurs with exceptional teachers who inspire learners with their commitment.

Traditional authority grants legitimacy. Teachers act *in loco parentis* due to the wide scope and discretion given by this authority. *Taking care of learners, listening to learners and mentoring the learners* are done by teachers' exercising their 'traditional authority'. Teachers acting in place of parents and taking care and mentoring and listening to their problems are evidence of 'authority with' relationship.

Teachers' authority in the subject matter being taught and in structuring a lesson is due to their expert authority as professionals. Expertise and command of subject matter and pedagogical knowledge are necessary to establish legitimacy. However the different types of authority do not exist in their pure form and are blended or 'hybridized' as teachers interact with students (Weber, 1947, cited in Pace & Hemmings, 2007, p.7).

Two of the participants viewed authority as being in a leadership position. The rest of the participants did not use the exact word 'leadership' or 'to lead' but implied leadership skills – to give direction, to make decisions, to be in charge, to be responsible and to be accountable. To the question, 'what authority do you feel you have as a teacher?' four of the participants felt that they had limited authority and their authority was undermined at certain times. One respondent explained it as authority in the subject matter being taught and as her being a power figure to a limited extent in maintaining discipline. Another participant explained that as a teacher she had the authority to control the structure of the lesson. A male participant asserted that teachers have to earn this authority and felt that some teachers have more authority and some less authority.

One of the teacher participant asserted that *"...a key role player in the education of the child since the academic excellence of the learner depends on the effective deliverance of teaching of the subject content. The authority to win the child over with unconditional love and respect. To make them understand that I do not dislike them but their inappropriate behaviour and actions. To get them involved in decision making. Letting them to be a part of the process to set up a set of rules for the class..."*

There seems to be an overlap of their understanding of the concepts of authority and power. Regarding the use of power to manage discipline problems the participants were in agreement that they were powerless. Regarding exercising authority, teachers seem to understand it as authority due to the position occupied as a teacher (key role player) as well as the authority of knowledge (effective deliverance of subject content). They assert the feminist view of *authority with* which is indicated by the exercise of unconditional

love, letting the learners to be a part of the process to set up classroom rules and making decisions.

Authority with is a form of authority that is based on caring and reciprocal relationships. (Perumal, 2007, p.46). *Pastoral power* which was mentioned in an earlier chapter (example - *in loco parentis*) and *authority with* have similar characteristics. Both concepts have the welfare of individuals as its initial and final goal. Both are positive powers. They try to ensure, sustain and improve the lives of each and everyone. Moreover, when teachers were asked about the reasons for choosing the teaching profession, they mentioned reasons that were caring and nurturing.

5. 9. GENDER, IDENTITY AND POWER

Literature on gender makes it clear that power is not only primarily associated with men and masculinity and distributed unequally between the sexes, but that it is viewed, valued and experienced differently by women and men (McClelland, 1975 cited in McNay, 2003, p.73).

For teachers, gender also casts authority issues in particular ways. We are socialized to expect females to defer to male authority, not to be authorities themselves. Students often expect female teachers to be nurturing or to smile. They become angry or challenge our authority when we do not fulfill their expectations (Culley, 1985 cited in Adams et al, 1997, p.309).

Out of the nine, seven of the respondents are female. When asked the question, ‘what difference do you think it makes to discipline in your classes that you are a woman/man?’ five women teachers were of the opinion that male teachers were more respected and feared and that learners, especially boys, fear the male teachers for no particular reason and stay in the class the entire period. Three of the respondents felt that gender does not make a difference in controlling the class.

Teacher participants voice their concern through the following extracts:

Being a female teacher makes a big difference towards discipline in the class, “...as a female, I feel that I am not viewed as a authoritative teacher when I tell learners that they will be sent to the male teacher to be disciplined or dealt with, they automatically change their attitude and often say they will do anything not to go that class. When the male teacher is due in a class, that class will never make a noise, their books are out, the work up to date and especially the boys remain in the class...”

It is difficult for boys to accept female teachers as being in authority,”... *at home they regard males as figures of authority. They take advantage of female teachers because of their motherly love...*”

Female teachers are compassionate and play a ‘motherly role’ towards the learners. “I like to nurture them and teach them not only about school but about life in general. I tend to take learners in different situations under my wing. On the whole, I am a very loving and understanding person.”

The majority of respondents believe that the male teachers wield *power over* the learners. The dichotomy of actor and acted upon exists in *power over*, the actor being the male teachers, while learners are acted upon.

I quote from Perumal, (2007, p.176), that “...while women are required to assume authority in educational and social spaces, the traditional conceptions of women render notions of authority incompatible with the role of women as nurturers and care givers...”

According to a male participant, “It is a man’s world. It is the societal norm that a man commands more discipline.”

A set of factors related to gender, such as: which subjects and grades which gender is charge of, which sports codes are led by which gender, and their rank in the school hierarchy, and the fact that male teachers are a minority (only two in number), render

male teachers more privileged and powerful. Over and above this, the honest admission of some of the female teachers that learners are more afraid of male teachers than of women teachers also gives credence to the power of the masculine identity. Possibly boys have an inherent fear of the male teachers since they anticipate use of physical punishment by male teachers although it is banned by law. The discrimination by the learners, between the male teachers' authority as power and the female teacher's authority as nurturer, is clearly evident from the expressions of the female respondents.

Identity is socially and relationally constructed, unique to each person and comprises an array of elements that continually form and reform as each person lives their life. The notion of identity includes a person's understandings, knowledge, beliefs, feelings and values (Overton, 2007, p.3). According to Newman (1997, cited in Francis & Le Roux, 2011, p.300) identity is our most essential and personal characteristic and consists of our membership in social groups (race, ethnicity, religion, gender, etc.), the traits we show and the traits others ascribe to us. Participants were asked about the aspects of their identity that had made a difference in the classroom.

Apart from the social identities, it is possible to see the teachers' handling of discipline in terms of their professional identity. The respondents framed their responses to the question on identity very much in terms of their strategy for the management of discipline.

Some relied on sternness: *"I tried to be strict with a friendly attitude and it does not always work. If I am firm, shout and demand respect it only lasts a short while."* Or *"My stern appearance, my loud voice, giving them incentives for tasks done."* Again: *"...to be consistent from start to the end of a lesson. Mete out punishment immediately to those displaying discipline problems/no favourites. Go through what I say. I don't make idle threats."*

Others use different strategies: *"...Humour..." can be used to manage the difficult learners.* Another uses, *"...ground rules, use meditation, play classical music in the background and read moral stories..."* Again, two try to connect at a deeper level:

“...learners to see through values, commitment, teaching style. Coming down to their level, counsel conflicts and problems...” and, “...empathy towards children, private interviews with troublesome ones, ask learners’ for their opinions.”

To the question, “what are the other aspects of your identity that make a difference to the discipline in the classroom?” the participants have described their identity as their beliefs, values, physical characteristics, traits etc., which the teachers use in the day to day interaction with the learners. Both male and female teachers have indicated that these aspects are used to manage the discipline in the classroom.

5. 10. TEACHERS’ USE OF AUTHORITY AND POWER IN MANAGING DISCIPLINE

To understand how the dynamics of power operate in a typical classroom, I draw on the observation undertaken to describe the typical pattern of interaction. Teachers, especially those working in a primary school where the learners are between the ages of seven and fourteen, have the prerogative of organising classroom space. This includes the arrangement of desks and chairs, a library corner and a garden corner, all necessary for the smooth flow of the teaching activity and for monitoring learner movement. In the school where the research was conducted, desks were arranged in the traditional manner. Each double desk could seat two learners. Each class had four rows of five double desks. In some classrooms which had learners less than forty, the most disruptive learner was given an isolated seat with a single desk a little away from his friends but not completely cut off from talking to them. All teachers preferred the space in front of the chalkboard. The teacher’s table was placed in the corner of the room, closer to the chalkboard with a view of the front door. Whether the desks were arranged close together or separated in the given room space it did not curtail the movement of the learners and their interaction with each other. Conversation took place between learners seated in adjacent desks. Learners also passed notes around thus having a dialogue in written form. As teachers moved around the classroom and caught the learners red handed, they reprimanded them in a soft to mild tone. It seemed that teachers had accepted that they do

not have control of preventing learners from doing tasks unrelated to the lesson. During observation, I noted that teachers did not record in the defaulters' record immediately. The learners were successful in doing things they wanted to do.

The physical conditions of the classrooms at the time of observation were uninviting and deficient in basic resources. The classrooms had dysfunctional fans and lights, broken switches and fan regulators, walls with dried up Prestik, dilapidated doors, cupboards without locks, lustreless chalkboards, dirty windows, litter strewn floors and overflowing bins. The desks had engravings and names written with Tippex. All these are a reflection of the learner rejection of authority and a display of resistance. Resistance was shown by learners' eating in the class and throwing the wrapper below the desk. The fans had stopped working because learners had thrown heavy objects on the fan blades. The light switches and fan regulators were switched on and off as a game. The classroom doors were always banged and the chrome door handles were broken into two. Tippex, the most favourite tool of the learners, had been used liberally. Whatever sanction was meted out did not fit the crime of destroying public property.

The learners wielded their power in such ways as: blurting out the answer without giving fellow learners a chance, walking in and out of the classroom during observation, running to different grades to borrow calculators and other things, dumping the worksheets inside the desk, throwing scissors, pens and pencils to one another in the air instead of passing them, dragging chairs instead of lifting them, and dumping newspapers unread in the bin. These are some of the misdemeanours that occurred during the observation.

The observation included lessons on comprehension passages, fraction, drama, collage, Zulu language and population distribution. The Maths lesson in Grade 7 required Geometry boxes or Maths sets and the collage lesson in Grade 4 required colour paper, scissors and glue. Half the class had come unprepared. In other lessons, learners wrote in books not designated for the subject. In the drama class which took place outdoors, the learners came without their scripts and the teacher's voice was drowned in the screaming.

The coping strategies of the teachers during these lessons were self restraint and corrective interjections. There was no outburst or angry explosion during the observation.

The lessons were a mix of teacher and learner centred methods. All the lessons started with questions on the pre understanding of the learner and proceeded to the explanation and discussion of a new lesson. There were learners who blurted out the answers before the rest of the class. The teachers' appeal for calm were ignored by some and respected by a few. There were no star charts but all the teachers used encouraging words of praise. The classroom rules and duty lists were displayed in some of the classrooms. The teachers displayed tolerance as well as resignation towards the learners. The teachers' powerlessness as expressed in the earlier chapter, in managing the misbehaviour of learners, was evident during the observation. Learners wielded power to do what they wanted even if it was to shout out the answers, coming unprepared for lessons, communicating with their class mates during teaching either through direct talk or passing notes.

It was not possible to observe all aspects of power in the stipulated time for classroom observation. Nevertheless, it was clear that teachers did not enjoy adequate control over the activities unfolding in the classroom.

5.11. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the data was interpreted and presented using the research questions as the guideline. The school's internal documents were analysed with the concepts of structural power, the five sources of power and the positive powers. The analysis revealed that the knowledge of teachers regarding the policy on discipline is restricted to basic information such as the banning of corporal punishment and abuse of all kind. The teachers perceive that they do not have the power in the classroom to discipline the unruly learners. They also believe that the learners' rights have been given too much weight by the Department of Education and that learners have the power to misbehave and disrupt teaching without suffering the consequences.

In spite of the backing provided to teachers in terms of the different sources of power propounded by French and Raven (1959), teachers seem powerless to manage ill-disciplined learners. Tauber (1985, p.135) explains that a teacher successfully exerting power over a student does so only because of the perceptions of the student, not because of something the teacher possesses. The ramifications of this situation are that students, as well as others who supposedly have power exercised over them, are in a position to resist this power by altering their perceptions.

The findings of this study are that teachers feel that learners have more power than them and experience a sense of powerlessness to manage difficult learners and disruptive situations despite recording misdemeanours (by the form teachers mostly), in the defaulters' record and following the sanctions recommended by the school's Code of Conduct. The impression is that this is because the learners perceive that teachers do not have the power to discipline them

To avoid power struggles and to get work done by the learners, teachers negotiate and bargain. This proves that teachers are not the sole sources of power in the classroom and power is co-constructed by the learner and the teacher.

Teachers' sense of powerlessness is compounded by other factors such as a lack of good working knowledge of the available alternative measures mentioned in policy; the misinterpretation and abuse of rights by learners; the undue importance given to learners' rights through the curriculum and media; the overcrowded and filthy classrooms with dysfunctional fans, graffiti and scribbling on the walls, and lastly the role of prominent stakeholders in the process of education such as the Department of Education, the school management and the parent community, which have failed to support teachers.

Teachers cannot manage the problem of indiscipline alone (Griffiths, 2003, p.113). Just like the mouse in the fable which enlisted the support and help of others, teachers need the help of the Department of Education, parents, colleagues, members of management, learners, the media and the community to enforce discipline.

The next chapter will focus on the dynamics of power experienced by teachers with the stakeholders. The concepts of power will be used to understand the dynamics of power.

'Power within' is consistent with conscientizing; 'power with' is compatible with inspiring and 'power to' in accord with liberating. (Parpart et al, 2003)

CHAPTER – 6

POWER ANALYSIS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the dynamics of power experienced by teachers with the rest of the stakeholders such as the learners, the parents, the Department of Education and the school management team. It draws on an analysis through concepts of power, namely *power over, power with, power to and power within*. The power analysis is followed by recommendations and personal reflection.

6.2. ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' POWER

This study is about teachers and their experience of power in the management of discipline, analysed through these four concepts of power: namely *power over, power with, power to and power within*.

Power over is considered a negative force of power in the form of domination as the effect on the individual(s) over which the power is wielded is likely to be in a position of powerlessness (Sullivan, 2002). *Power with* is considered to be an alternative for *power over*. *Power with* is positive power. It is about an equal power relationship rather than domination. *Power to* exists when a person perceives that they have the ability or capability to act and therefore is a positive power. *Power from within* is described as increased individual consciousness, self dignity and awareness (Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton & Bird, 2009, p. 8).

The management of discipline process in schools require the interaction and involvement of stakeholders who are the teachers, school management, parents and the Department of Education. Each plays a vital and interactive role.

The process of social justice requires an outlook of *power with* rather than *power over*.

The just use of power in such a society would be *power with*. This analysis seeks to understand whether that is what teachers' experience.

6.2.1. POWER OVER

The study finds that power is exercised over the teachers by the Department of Education, SMT, the learners and the parents. First, the power relationship between the teachers and their employer the Department of Education is not based on an equal power relationship, though this is not seen as problematic by teachers. Overton (2007) conducted a study on what teaching does to teachers in Australia. To quote, "...*Teachers are accepting of this situation, acknowledging that, as employees in an educational system, they carry a responsibility to behave in certain ways. The inequality of their power base in this context did not seem to concern them*" (p.7). This awareness of the inequality of the relationships between teachers and their employer is also noted in other educational literature (Ingersoll, 2003, Smyth, 2001 as cited in Overton, 2007, p.7). This inequality exists in South Africa too. Teachers understand the need for changes within education, after the 1994 elections. What they found difficult was the implementation of the changes without adequate support in the form of intense, detailed workshops. From the implementation of Curriculum 2005 and Outcomes based education to the latest, that is, CAPS (Curriculum and assessment policy statement), teachers are expected to implement the curriculum change with just a one day workshop to receive training.

Similarly, no training was conducted on how to manage the violence and poor discipline in schools. Level one teachers were not provided with training on alternative disciplinary measures after the abolition of corporal punishment and the publication of the manuals, *Alternatives to corporal punishment* (DoE, 2000) and *Co-operative Discipline* (Masite & Vawda, 2003). The misinterpretation of the rights of learners by learners and teachers

was another grey area that was not addressed by the Department of Education. In spite of the escalating violence in schools throughout the country's nine provinces, the Department is not awake to the seriousness of the deteriorating discipline, lack of effective measures and teacher burnout. The current discipline problems are a mix of the old and the new (the new including the use of cell phones and other electronic gadgets that are brought into the classrooms undetected).

The message sent to teachers by the Department of Education through the lack of support structures and workshops on alternate discipline strategies is not a positive one. Teachers are expected to face the problem alone. Poor matric results of learners in some high schools and devastating results in ANA of primary school learners has led some newspapers to blame teachers (Mail & Guardian online, July 2011).

The teachers' relationship with the agents of the Department of Education – typically the principal and persons occupying powerful positions at the district office – is also based on an unequal power relationship (Overton, 2007, p.8). The work requirements placed on teachers such as the implementation of CAPS, the preparation for the national exam in English and Maths called the ANA (annual national assessment), and the extra time needed for improving reading skills, combined with the paper work and ill discipline, are time consuming and exhausting without corresponding help. Teachers need support to fulfil these expectations. The SMT could have facilitated workshops by seeking the help of non-governmental organisations in the absence of departmental guidance, and thus empowered teachers with knowledge and skills. To quote Overton, writing of similar relationships in Australia, “*the notion of the ‘voice of the teacher’ having a forum to speak, the recognition of being heard and the response of having their opinions and professional understandings taken into account when educational decisions were being made appeared to be non-existent*” (2007, p.11).

Teachers' implementation of sanctions recommended by the school's code of conduct has proved ineffective in the case of contumacious learners. These violations are not strong enough to warrant suspension or expulsion but enough to ruin the sanctity of the

classroom. Learners exercise power over the teachers by not accepting the teachers' legitimate authority. The learners defeat the purpose of learning through 'less than honourable means' (Fisch, 1992, p.3) such as copying in spelling tests, class tests, term tests including copying projects. When misdemeanours are exposed the learners are unaffected by the loss of marks since in their opinion, teachers use power improperly.

Parents exert *power over* teachers by taking sides with their children, by not supervising the homework, not attending the meetings, by not replying to teachers' notes and by not monitoring the behaviour of their children. Teachers are expected to produce outstanding results and effective discipline. Teachers are powerless to fulfil all these expectations without the support of all the stakeholders.

According to Kreisberg (1992), *power over* is characterised by boundaries between the actor and the acted upon and the confrontation of wills and engage from a position of strength. The Department of Education and SMT act from a position of strength by thrusting through changes and ignoring genuine consultation with the classroom-based level one teachers. Teachers express a lack of support which in itself should be a matter of concern (Overton, 2007, p.12). The *power over* teachers has stifled the development of their capacity to adapt to change. A workable alternative would be to share *power with* the teachers who are the conduit for effective learning and teaching to take place.

6.2.2. POWER WITH

Power with is a jointly developed power where people fulfil their desires and develop their capacities through acting together (Kreisberg, 1992, p.70). *Power with* implies collective action and to act in solidarity. *Power with, power to and power within* are positive ways of expressing power. The common goal that should be shared by the teachers, SMT, Department of Education, parents and the community is to restore discipline back in the classrooms. To restore discipline among learners backed by self discipline and not by physical punishment would be a dream come true. The unequal

power relationship between the teachers and the Department of Education, SMT, learners and parents has to be equalised, starting with sharing power.

In this study, the teachers are not experiencing *power with*. Lack of working knowledge of the policies has led to diminished power in addressing the poor discipline. In the absence of staff development workshops and meetings with neighbouring school teachers, there is no sharing of information, knowledge and resources. Although the topic of conversation when teachers meet is about poor discipline, no further developments are able to take place to rectify the situation since teachers feel powerless.

Teachers strongly feel that the situation could change if they receive support, that is, if senior management and the community stand by teachers and speak with one voice. In the absence of solidarity and collective action, the unequal power relationship continues between teachers and the rest of the stakeholders. The Department of Education expects the teachers to implement the changes that are periodically introduced. The teaching community throughout the country has to be consulted regarding the contents of policies and the time frame for implementation. The lack of consultation with the teachers is an indication that teachers' voice do not matter.

Regular, constant communication between the parents and the teachers about the misbehaviour and lack of progress of the learner is lacking. The communication is mostly one sided, where the teachers send out notes and letters out of courtesy and a sense of responsibility. Teachers are not experiencing *power with* the rest of the stakeholders and thereby deprived of cooperation, collaboration and collective action.

Conversations and incidental observation indicated that teachers try to share *power with* the learners. Learners were consulted regarding the due dates for submission of projects to avoid clashes with other subjects. The majority of the learners were given minor or major role in class assemblies. The topics, the type of items (play, song, dance), the master of ceremonies, the prayer reader etc., are discussed with the entire class. The

classroom rules, mock election to choose class monitors and selection of entries for poetry and essay competitions are done together with the learners.

The learners in this study do not take these power shared moments seriously. They do not comply with the class rules that they helped to formulate. The learners do not have the interpersonal knowledge necessary to appreciate the opportunities (Winograd, 2002, p.357).

6.2.3. POWER TO

Power to is the power that some people have to inspire and boost the morale of others. It is a generating power that engenders possibilities and actions without domination, that is, without the use of power over. This type of power is related to 'power with'. In that, it allows, for the sharing of power. It manifests itself when a group generates a collective solution to a common problem allowing each member to express him or herself in the creation of a group agenda that is also assumed individually (Rowlands, 2006, p.2).

Power to refers to the unique potential of every person to shape his or her life and world. Education, training and leadership development for social justice are based on the belief that each individual has the power to make a difference which can be multiplied by new skills, knowledge, awareness and confidence (Veneklasen & Miller, 2006, p.8). When the individual effort is supported by other members it opens up opportunities to share power with others.

Teachers' lack of knowledge of policy regarding disciplinary measures needs to be addressed. Teachers' sense of powerlessness in handling learner misdemeanours has undermined their sense of *power to*. This has manifested as a sense of resignation, that is, things are beyond their control. The teaching profession is exhausted mentally and physically. The Department of Education has failed to empower or give *power to* the teachers to rise above the feeling of despair. The few workshops arranged by the Department in the past about curriculum implementation and assessment were poorly

organised, with untrained facilitators who could not impart the required knowledge needed by the teachers. The Department's excuse has always been lack of funds resulting in minimal resources at these workshops. No workshop on discipline strategies or discipline management has ever been conducted, which is the next most important topic after curriculum. The rhetoric of the Department officials during teacher strikes has always painted all teachers in a bad light to the public via the media resulting in anger and discontentment among teachers. Teachers' pursuit of higher degrees in education to empower themselves is not rewarded by promotion but by a minimal lump sum towards university fees. Teachers pursuing Masters' degrees are not eligible for study leave since there is no examination timetable as proof.

The role of senior management in empowering teachers is crucial to teachers' sense of well being. Trust in teachers' capabilities is a strong incentive to do better. Teachers have not been given opportunities to receive training through 'Acting' posts such as acting HoD, acting deputy principal etc., during the time of this research. This training is valuable to inculcate managerial, administrative and leadership skills. Teachers are capable of conducting workshops. They must be assigned topics of relevance to the profession and given the time and resources to conduct it individually or as groups. In the management of discipline problems, teachers feel constrained by the lack of support from all quarters.

6.2.4. POWER FROM WITHIN

Power from within, according to Kreisberg (1992, p. 68) is derived from power's etymological roots in being able. *Power from within* is linked to a sense of competence and joy at one's unfolding capacities.

Power within or internal power is a form of positive and augmentative power and is related to self-esteem (Rowlands, 2006, p.2) and a person's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge (Veneklasen & Miller, 2002, p.45). *Power within* has also been described as the capacity to imagine and have hope. Wilson and Coolican (1996 cited in Pan & Wang,

2000, p.425) point out that the concept of teacher empowerment has two categories. One is extrinsic power and the other is intrinsic power. Intrinsic power is internal power and is seen in the teachers' personal attitudes, in the interactions with others, in the ability to make decisions and contributes to a sense of efficiency. In schools, teachers face disorder, noise, lethargic attitude, impatient and restless learners, paper work and filing etc. every day. Teachers have to face these hurdles and obstacles and continue with teaching and assessment. Teachers cannot afford to take a break amidst the chaotic conditions and in order to accomplish the numerous tasks before them; they have to draw from *power within*. In my view, *power within* is also connected to will power. All the teachers experience chaos and discipline problems and all stakeholders are aware of it. In the absence of support, teachers have to draw from power within.

The dynamics of power experienced by teachers, according to my study is not the social justice version of *power with* but *power over*. Teachers are not supported by the rest of the stakeholders in their efforts to combat violent behaviour and to restore discipline in the classrooms. Teachers are expected to set right all learning and behavioural problems by the parents. In addition, parents have lost control over their children and expect the teachers to wave a magic wand and extract discipline and teach the skills of reading and writing, all during school time without any reinforcement from themselves.

According to Hargreaves (2001, pp.1076-77), in a culturally diverse, increasingly unequal and rapidly changing world, building strong reciprocal partnerships with others has never been more necessary. Yet in a world where parents are more demanding, teaching is changing, the cultural differences are widening, and most teachers are overloaded and unsupported, teachers' understandable inclination is to close their classroom doors. He suggests that policy must provide a framework that gives teachers the discretion, the conditions, the expectations and the opportunities to develop and exercise their emotional competence of caring for, of learning from, and of developing emotional understanding among all those whose lives and actions affect the children that they teach.

6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important for teachers to have a working knowledge of legislation at all levels – the national, provincial and the school level – which will empower and capacitate them to follow the correct procedures to handle critical situations. For example, in conducting a search for a dangerous weapon, human dignity is to be observed and the search is to be done by a person of the same gender in front of a witness. The proceedings must be recorded and records maintained safely to handle future queries. A working knowledge will allow teachers to approach the correct personnel in the school hierarchy for help and advice; to be informed of the correct protocol; to understand grievance procedures, dispute resolution and due process; to earn points in the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) teacher appraisal; and to share the knowledge with learners and to educate them about the disciplinary measures for the offences committed. The information on legislation gathered during this study has made me aware of what corrective measures are approved and allowed in disciplining the learners, as well as the importance of recording misdemeanours and safeguarding of documental evidence. It has enabled me to recommend disciplinary measures to be included in the Code of Conduct.

6.3.1. FORMULATION OF A SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

A discipline policy should be formulated in consultation with all the relevant stakeholders (teachers, parents and learners). In the formulation of the school policy, the guidelines prescribed by the Department of Education must be adhered to and informed by the relevant policy and legislation on discipline. The role, rights and responsibilities of the learners, teachers, parents, leadership and members of the governing body must be clearly stipulated. The involvement of supporting departments like the South African Police Services, the Child Welfare Department and other organisations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Africa (Mentoring) is recommended.

6.3.2. THE REVIEW OF THE LEARNERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

The school's current Code of Conduct for learners needs to be reviewed. All the stakeholders should be consulted before the implementation of changes to the Code of Conduct. Learners need to be educated about the different levels of offences and the possible action and sanctions that will be taken in the contravention of the code. The Code of Conduct should be reviewed periodically to include the new types of disciplinary problems and new circulars that may be issued by the Department of Education. The current measures suggested in the Code of Conduct were found ineffective and need to be changed to include the corrective measures recommended in the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and the manuals *Alternatives to corporal punishment* and *Co-operative Discipline*.

6.3.3. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL MATTERS WITH REFERENCE TO DISCIPLINE

The ultimate responsibility for learners' behaviour rests with parents /guardians. Parents should not abdicate their parental responsibility in instilling discipline. Parents should not take a biased stance in favour of their children. They need to involve themselves in their children's school lives and check on their school work and homework, assist with projects and teach them values and manners. When youngsters scream out demands at home it manifests itself in the classroom. So parents must not tolerate such disrespectful behaviour at home. Parents should take the initiative to meet the teachers and not wait to be called. Words of encouragement and positive feedback by parents will go a long way in motivating teachers. These suggestions could be tabled during the introductory parent teacher meeting in the first term followed by a newsletter. This could ensure the communication of school expectations to parents.

6.3.4. POSSIBLE CHANGES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

a) The school's defaulters' record needs to be modified to include the measures taken regarding the offence committed by the learner and these entries need to be taken seriously by the learners themselves. To ensure this, all teachers need to be consistent in the measures they use for the management of the various misdemeanours. The paramount importance they give to the defaulters' record should be communicated to the parents and the learners. Teachers must not treat the recording and maintenance lightly. It is an official document required by the school and hence should be used. Appropriate usage preserves the structural power of the document. It is not to be seen in a negative light like the Black Book maintained during apartheid times. Teachers should discuss the appropriate sanctions for repetition of offences recorded and implement it. Learners should be aware that their disruptive behaviour will not be tolerated by any teacher. By maintaining uniformity and consistency in their sanctions, they will be sharing power and knowledge in the work place.

b) The classroom rules in English and Zulu printed in bold along with the consequences for breaking those rules should be displayed above the chalk board. The learners should be constantly reminded about the levels of offences and the accompanying sanctions. Learners should receive the message that the school is serious about enforcing discipline.

c) The appalling physical conditions of the classrooms need to be changed into conditions fit for learning and teaching. The fund raising activities such as cake sales by the different grades could be utilised in improving the respective classrooms. This will instil a sense of belonging in learners.

6.3.5. DEPARTMENTAL SURVEY

Learner indiscipline is a serious problem and deserves serious attention. The Department of Education must conduct a nation-wide research study about the disciplinary measures used by primary school teachers to elicit the reasons for poor discipline, violent and

disrespectful behaviour of learners. Primary schools are stepping stones to high schools. With the realisation instilled in the primary schools that discipline is empowering, the time in high school would be wisely spent in acquiring skills for tertiary education instead of wasting it on criminalities.

6.3.6. DEPARTMENTAL WORKSHOPS

The Department of Education must conduct efficiently organised workshops for teachers on how to manage ill-discipline. This workshop should also address the issues of power and masculinity in managing poorly disciplined learners. The workshops should be able to explain the Schools Act, the corrective measures, the alternatives to corporal punishment and the use of cooperative discipline. Teachers should be enlightened about the different teaching methods as well as the various approaches to discipline followed all over the world. They should also receive training in the know-how of the formulation and periodical review of code of conduct and discipline policy.

6.3.7. STAFF DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

Teachers' understanding of policy and legislation is vague. Teachers should be given policy file with copies of the South African Schools Act, the KwaZulu-Natal Manual 6 on the formulation of the code of conduct, the manual *Alternatives to corporal punishment and Co-operative Discipline*, and the SACE code of conduct for teachers. Management should allocate time for teachers to peruse and discuss the contents of policies as a group. Teachers together with the members of management could brainstorm using the guidelines mentioned in policies and devise measures suitable to the school conditions. They could put together all the minor and major misdemeanours and come up with suitable measures to handle those offences. The success or failure of these measures can be found only if they are implemented. A time frame can be decided to check the workability of these measures. Teachers should empower themselves by acquiring a thorough knowledge of policies.

6.3.8. HANDLING ILL DISCIPLINE TO BE A PART OF EDUCATION COURSE

Teachers have to be prepared to teach the future generation of learners. The degree courses in education should think of a separate module on classroom management with the main focus on learner discipline. The courses should also prepare the student teachers to communicate and work with parents successfully.

6.3.9. CHANGE AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL

Ill-discipline has become an urgent issue in our schools. A few masters and doctoral theses is the first step towards exposing the problem. The University of KwaZulu-Natal should conduct research on a larger scale and gather data from primary and high schools funded by the Ministry or Department of Education. The results of such a study would carry weight and attention will be given. Opinions and suggestions from the teacher fraternity as well as from students and parent community throughout the province should be elicited. These suggestions could be communicated (before a deadline) through emails, post and fax to a special committee appointed for this purpose. Just as they have political debates before an election, academic debates should be held in various venues to address the problem of poor discipline. Effort of this nature has never been considered before. It is a mammoth task which can only be done with the support of institutions, universities and the department of education. If the problem is not addressed soon, the schools would be entering into an age of chaos, selfishness, disrespect, poor standard of education and violence. It might warrant police patrols, metal detectors, steel fencing, security cameras in classrooms etc.

6.3.10. TEACHING OF MARTIAL ARTS

Martial arts should be taught in all schools as part of physical education. Martial arts teach respect for the referee and the opponent. Martial arts also inculcate self-respect, self-discipline, responsibility, individual and team effort. There is scope for progression

and gaining of recognition in the form of different colour belts. Hopefully this will allow the learners to channel their immense energy positively.

6.3.11. THE POWER OF ALTRUISTIC LOVE

Literature, poetry and art manifest the power of love. Love that does not expect anything in return, love that is selfless, love that does not have a hidden agenda, love that works for the benefit of humanity, is altruistic love. Altruistic power is then “*a capability to use love to induce a person into doing something*” (Rummel, 2007). The person who labours long for a welfare bill, who suffers through deprivations to promote communism, who gives up all he owns to be a missionary in Africa, who demonstrates against the Vietnam War, or who goes to prison to protest a bad law may act from altruism, a basic integrative feeling – a love for humanity (Rummel, 2007, p.1). Teaching involves sacrifice of personal time, physical and mental energy. By seeing teachers who are altruistically motivated, learners may in the long run understand the power of altruistic love and become reformed.

6.3.12. ASSISTANCE OF MEDIA

A television serial on discipline should be broadcasted during prime time viewing. This should focus on manners, etiquette and behaviour and the overall importance of discipline from childhood to adulthood. The series should enlist the services of well-known teenage and child actors and actresses to star in it. Such a programme would be popular and be an eye opener for both parents and children. A viewers’ competition must be held wherein students and their schools should be able to win prizes sponsored by major business corporations. Since ‘reality shows’ are very popular among young people, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) should produce reality shows in which school kids must be able to participate with their teachers or parents. Media play a major role in peoples’ lives. Hence they should be utilized to bring about a major change in the youth of this country.

6.3.13. ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Religion plays an important role in our lives. The pastors, priests and the Imams could include the importance of good behaviour and other aspects relating to discipline in their sermons and satsangs. The learners could consider following the advice about manners and good behaviour if they hear it during the religious services.

Every attempt should be made to leave no stone unturned. Efforts from every angle – national, provincial and local levels of government participation, media, martial arts, altruistic power, teacher preparation degrees and religion has been suggested to restore discipline at home and in the schools. When learners realise the importance given to leading a disciplined life from all sides, slow but steady change will occur. The prevalence of good discipline will ensure the success of all departmental initiatives to promote literacy, numeracy and science in South Africa.

6.4. CONCLUSION

The study is about teacher management of learner discipline using the concepts of power. *Power over* is categorised as negative power and *power to, power with and power from within* are expressions of positive power. The study exposes the constraints experienced by teachers in managing the poor discipline of learners and explains the power relationship not only between the teachers and the learners but also between the other stakeholders, namely, the parent, the school management team and the department of education.

Lack of discipline is an urgent problem prevalent in all schools. Improving and restoring discipline is the responsibility of all involved- the learner, the parent, the teacher, the school management team and the Department of Education. It can be done only through the united and joint effort of all concerned which is to work cooperatively to achieve a common goal.

Since this study was conducted in a single school, its results cannot be generalised. Similar studies on discipline through the lens of power will add to the evidence of problems faced in managing ill-discipline in primary schools. The findings reveal that the dynamics of power experienced by teachers in their power relationship with all the stakeholders to manage learner ill-discipline is *power over*.

Power with is the power we achieve by working cooperatively with all concerned. *Power with* stresses the way in which gaining power actually strengthens the power of others rather than diminishing it, as occurs with *power over*. This raises the distinction between personal and collective empowerment (Luttrell et al, 2009, p.6).

Kreisberg (1992, p. 151), recommends that “...schools must be educational communities coalesced around a core of values guided by a sense of hope and possibility...these communities must nourish the voices of all their members; they must provide contexts in which people can speak and listen, learn and grow...they must be places in which teachers have a voice in decision making...”

As Goodson recommended (cited in Overton, 2009, p.9), researchers ought to make the voice of teachers heard, heard loudly and heard articulately.

To quote a North American proverb, ‘Don’t judge any man until you have walked two moons in his moccasins’. Teaching has become a very stressful profession. Individuals should empathise with teachers by understanding the working situation in which the teachers work before judging them.

Discipline is essential for effective learning and teaching to take place. It is the collective effort of all the stakeholders interested in the well-being of the learners’ that would produce a disciplined student community.

6.5. MY EXPERIENCES OF POWER

The journey that I undertook in doing this study was full of challenges, delays and tearful moments. It was a humbling experience. The research on power and authority enlightened me and dispelled my personal view of power as only negative. The readings helped me to connect the experiences in my life with positive and negative power. I started analysing every action, interaction and conversation through the lens of power. I could notice the hint of *power over* in the reply of the sales lady (without even checking the storage) that whatever was on display was all that was available, *power from within* in the action of the Indian Cricket captain M.S. Dhoni after India's victory in the T20 Cricket World Cup as he generously gave away his sweaty T-Shirt to a small boy in the spectator stand, *power to* through the learner's article (as a farewell gift) in the school brochure about the difference I made in her primary school life which enabled her to be confident to face the future and *power with* in the joint preparation and presentation of the programme on the historic arrival of the Indians in 1860 with the assistance of three mothers.

From childhood, to be precise, from the day I started going to school, I was taught that 'knowledge is power'. The explanation offered which I accepted and practiced was that the knowledge one acquires is the only thing that will last forever, that an individual cannot be stripped of his/her knowledge; fame, health and wealth may be transitory but knowledge is permanent. This maxim provided the foundation for me to pursue basic and higher education.

6.5.1. POSITIVE POWER

Life experiences and background are key ingredients of the person that we are, of our sense of self. To the degree that we invest our "self" in our teaching, experience and background therefore shape our practice (Goodson, cited in Overton, 2009, p.10). Hence a brief overview of my family background needs a mention here. My father was a student activist during the freedom struggle in India in the 1930s. My grandfather was the

principal of the local high school and served the British Raj. So my father spent his time both inside and outside the school taking part in passive resistance against the British rule. After my grandfather passed away, my dad left his hometown and moved to the city to eke a living. His love for learning had to take a backseat for the rest of his life. My mother came from a similar patriotic background and was thus deprived of the opportunity to pursue further learning. My parents fulfilled their dream of further education through my brothers and me. This background establishes the importance given to education in our family. We were brought up with strict discipline. Television and magazines were banned. We had to wake up at 4.30 a.m. to study, since dawn was the best time and the mind absorbed 100% of what was learnt. The discipline, the routines, the inspirational environment imprinted an intense passion for education in me. We internalised hard work, perseverance and success which were reinforced through the narration of many inspiring stories.

I would narrate three important life changing stories. One was the invasion of India by Mahmud Ghazni. Ghazni attempted to invade Delhi seventeen times and was successful the eighteenth time. During these frequent battles, the story goes, that Ghazni sought shelter in one of the caves. There he saw a spider spinning a web from one side of the cave entrance to the other. The spider's web got cut off by the gush of wind several times but the spider never gave up and succeeded eventually. Ghazni derived his inspiration to invade India from his observation of the spider which never gave up. This story was narrated several times especially during exam time by my father.

Another inspiring story was related to Alexander the Great who was known for his exploration, thirst for knowledge, loyalty to his troops and a human who achieved the impossible. Alexander was different from the other conquerors in that he learnt about the culture and practices of the cities conquered and integrated it with his own.

The third inspirational monologue is related to the reeds that grew along the banks of a river. I was advised to lead my life like these reeds as they are flexible yet strongly rooted and can withstand heavy flooding and any natural disaster. Later on in life, I came across

the fable, 'The Oak and the Reed'. It was written by Jean La Fontaine. In a dialogue between the oak and the reed, the reed tells the proud oak tree, 'I bend and break not before the trees' fall'. Although these inspirational stories were repeated throughout my childhood years, it was always interesting and never failed to uplift me. Apart from the inspiration and motivation, the heroes in these stories – Ghazni, Alexander and the Reed had something in common. They were disciplined which enabled them to perform unique acts and deeds. What message did these three stories along with so many others convey to me. The hidden message was that one has to draw from the power within oneself to turn a negative situation into a positive one and to visualize any situation with hope. When I came to South Africa, I lived in the homelands or the Bantustans for 15 years. The childhood stories helped me to draw on the *power from within* to survive in remote places, to change the barren land provided into a Garden of Eden and to understand the life and culture of the local people. *Power from within* helped me to do the impossible, extract the good out of every observation and situation and to accept the time spent in the homelands as a preparation for something major in the future.

Personally, my interaction with my colleagues is based on collaboration, camaraderie and harmony. As a temporary teacher, I served in different schools located in different suburbs. I never regarded this work experience as a problem. On the other hand, it was a unique opportunity and considered myself as a diplomat being posted to different countries. Like the legendary bird Hamsa, that could separate water from milk, my childhood training enabled me to extract the good and the positive out of every situation. I learnt to be a follower and a leader through my childhood experiences, and a leader through my work experience. I empowered myself by being independent and able to do things on my own.

6.5.2. NEGATIVE POWER

While in high school, in Standard 9, I had to change my subjects from the Science group to the Art group. I was constantly teased by the Physics teacher in front of the class who was unable to explain Physics in a way that all the pupils could understand. To avoid

these tearful incidents, I chose different subjects and thus lost the opportunity forever to enrol in professional courses later. I was powerless to resolve the issue with the teacher due to the fear for the subject instilled by the teacher, and an educational system which placed undue emphasis on science subjects. Power was exercised over me by my classmates in school (the experience of being excluded). My school mates had different tastes and always excluded me from their conversations. I was not fair enough, old enough or tall enough to gain access into this group. I consoled myself not as excluded but as exclusive. I was never given a chance to participate in quiz programs, or extempore speech, poetry recital or in school plays by my teachers. At college level too, I had to experience exclusion since I was the youngest in the class. I was powerless but not down. I still remember the personal note given by the head of the department on the last day of the degree course to each and every student. Mine read:

The baby of our class has grown and one day you will hear her voice in the U.N.

In my teaching career, I have come across pupils who are reluctant to learn, unwilling to accept help to improve their skills and refuse to understand the need for discipline in life, despite hearing examples of personalities that have lost everything due to lack of discipline. Despite spending every minute of the school day with the learners and for the learners, at the end of the year, I had an empty feeling. It was as though, I had spoken to a concrete wall. By being a living example, a role model, I tried my utmost to teach the importance of values. Conducting the study has now enabled me to understand that I have been using referent, expert, legitimate and reward power(s) so far. And that these powers did not have the influence it was supposed to because my learners did not perceive me as having power. It is the same study that has also taught me that power circulates between people/ individuals irrespective of how young they are. Through the literature review, I have understood that non cooperation, resistance, silence and inaction are also ways of exercising power. *Power over* others does not have to be only physically exercised. It can be instilling fear or manipulating the thinking process, restriction of thought and action and also being excluded. In the workplace the experience of power exercised over me by learners, SMT and parents through resistance, non-cooperation and repression is a reality. At the same time, I never allow painful incidents to affect me. I draw on my *power from*

within to cope with so that it does not affect my morale and ethics. To me, teaching is not a job. It is a sacred mission.

I have come to the end of this journey in completing the research study. I have many more destinations to go. I would like to end the 'reflections' with one of my favourite poems by Robert Frost- *Stopping by woods on a snowy evening*

The woods are lovely dark and deep

But I have promises to keep

And miles to go before I sleep

And miles to go before I sleep

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COVER PAGE FOR THE APPENDICES

Appendix One :

Observation Schedule: The use of the classroom observation schedule has been explained on page 61 – 62.

Appendix Two:

The semi-structured interview questions were used as guidelines for conducting the interviews.

Appendix Three:

The data questions were used to gather information from the participants for the second study.

Appendix Four :

The letter from UKZN granting *Ethical clearance* to conduct the study

Appendix Five:

Certificate of attendance – Conference on ‘Learner Discipline’ held in April 2007.

Observation Schedule – Appendix One

Classroom environment

| | YES | NO |
|---|-----|----|
| Is the Classroom clean and tidy? | | |
| Desk and seating arrangement- individual / group? | | |
| Any evidence of teachers effort with regard to Classroom décor and support material | | |
| Any display of learners work? | | |
| Are the Classroom rules displayed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How were the rules developed ? • When were the rules drawn up? | | |
| Is there a duty list displayed? | | |
| Any evidence of shared responsibilities of classroom chores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the responsibilities /duties negotiated with learners? Or prescribed by the teacher? | | |
| Are there any posters, charts on the wall? | | |

Learner participation

| | YES | NO |
|--|-----|----|
| Any evidence of group work? If yes, what criteria was used to group the learners? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading ability - Gender - Learners own choice | | |
| Do the learners do group work for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading - To do projects / assignments - Market day planning - To participate in competitions | | |
| Is there evidence of lesson planning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the instructions for activities clear - Are different activities planned for different levels of ability - Do the activities accommodate the different learning styles | | |
| Any evidence of the variety of teaching strategies used <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - teacher talk/ explanation - co-operative learning | | |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| - group work / Individual work | | |
|--------------------------------|--|--|

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Did the learners enjoy the lesson? In what way did the learners express understanding? | | |
|---|--|--|

Learning and Teaching Environment

| | YES | NO |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Is the lesson learner centred ? | | |
| How does the learner view the lesson? | | |
| Does the learner think the lesson as meaningful or irrelevant? | | |
| Are learners encouraged to express their opinion? | | |
| Are the lessons structured - Does the teacher accommodate current events/ happenings in the lesson? | | |
| Are learners rewarded for their participation? - sweets, smile, a gentle tap on the shoulder, being taken out for P.E., allowed to play silently | | |
| How are learners attitude towards learning in the classroom? - negative - positive - with apathy | | |
| Is there any evidence of learners' attitude / response towards homework? - happy to do homework - sulking to copy the work | | |

Classroom Ethos / Attitude

| | YES | NO |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Is there any evidence of teacher's attention towards learners? -do learners feel welcome? - is the teacher approachable? | | |
| Is there evidence of respect towards learners? *Are teachers patient / tolerant / discriminatory | | |
| Are learners disciplined? | | |
| What are the types of misdemeanours / offences that occur in the classroom? | | |
| What discipline measures are used ? | | |
| How much of time is spent on disciplining the learners? | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>What are the consequences for the various misdemeanours / offences?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are parents sent letters detailing the offence • Are the learners given detention ? • Are the learner names entered in the Defaulters' book? • Any additional tasks given ? • Any mention of suspension from sports activity? | | |
| <p>How do learners react to the punishment? if any?</p> <p>*Do they feel it is for their own good *Angry *Don't care attitude *Plead for forgiveness</p> | | |
| <p>How does the teacher monitor the progress of the learner?</p> <p>*any star chart?</p> | | |
| <p>Any evidence of encouragement of learners?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ask questions - to correct the learner's answer verbally - prompting - clapping to encourage - opportunity to write answers on the board | | |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>What is the teacher's attitude to my visit ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -hostile -confident -defensive -co-operative | | |
|---|--|--|

SEMI – STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How many years are you in the teaching field?
2. What subjects do you teach?
3. If you have been working during apartheid times, what kind of management set up was there regarding the management of discipline?
4. Can you share information on the behaviour and discipline of learners over the years from the time you started teaching till now. (From the time you started till 1994 and from 1994 till now).
5. Do you believe in corporal punishment?
6. What in your opinion could be reason for (the gradual deterioration/no change/ only minimal/ or any other) in the behaviour of learners?
7. What is your perception/ idea of discipline?
8. What are the major discipline problems you face on a daily basis?
9. What are the minor / trivial discipline problems you face on a daily basis?
10. Are you aware of the discipline policy in the school you work? Do you have a copy?
11. Do you have a copy of the code of conduct of the school ?
12. Does the code of conduct address the problems?
13. What are the policy documents that you use to guide you regarding the management of discipline?
14. How do you handle poor discipline in the classes you teach?
15. In your opinion, what is the role of management in maintaining discipline?
16. What is the role of a primary school teacher in maintaining discipline?
17. What measures have you used to improve the learners in terms of motivation and encouragement?
18. Has there been any training related to management of discipline problems?
19. Have you been treated unjustly or unfairly by the learners, colleagues & management?
20. Do you feel safe in your classrooms?
21. What can you do to improve discipline in schools?

Data Collection questions

(for the second study)

1. How many years of teaching experience do you have?
2. What do you like about being a teacher? What do you not like about being a teacher?
3. What changes in learner behaviour have taken place over the years that you have been teaching, if any?
4. If you have witnessed changes in learners' behaviour over the years, what would you attribute it to?
5. What are the manuals and documents that you refer for the management of discipline?
6. What impact does the policy of the department of education have on discipline in the classroom?
7. What do you understand by the term 'authority'?
8. What authority do you feel you have as a teacher?
9. What kind of power do you have as a teacher. Please explain.
10. What kind of power do your learners have? Please explain.
11. What are the constraints you face in the exercise of power?
12. What difference do you think it makes to 'discipline' in your classes that you are a woman / man ?
13. Are there other aspects of your identity that you think makes a difference to the discipline in the classroom?

THANK YOU!



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
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This is to certify that

ANURADHA VENKATARAMANI

attended an International Conference on Learner Discipline

*conducted by the North-West University
(Potchefstroom Campus)*

*from
2 to 4 April 2007*

Professor Hercules Nieuwoudt
Director of School for Education

Professor Izak Oosthuizen
Chair Organising Committee

Potchefstroom
April 2007

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30 JULY 2007

MRS. A VENKATARAMANI (206519658)
EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

Dear Mrs. Venkataramani

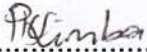
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I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted for the following project:

“An investigation into the perceptions and practices of teachers’ with regard to classroom discipline”

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Yours faithfully


.....
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA
RESEARCH OFFICE

cc. Faculty Research Office (Derek Buchler)
cc. Supervisor (Ms. T Damant)

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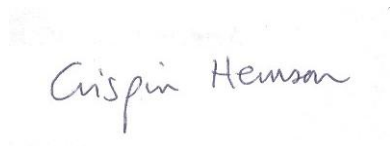
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This is to record that I have carried out a language editing of the dissertation by Anuradha Venkataramani, entitled **An Investigation Into the Perceptions and Practices of Teachers with Regard to Classroom Discipline.**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Crispin Hemson". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Crispin Hemson