

**A STUDY OF POST CORPORAL PUNISHMENT DISCIPLINARY  
STRATEGIES USED BY EDUCATORS IN AN ex-HOD SCHOOL**

**BY**

**VIJIALUXMI ISHAK**

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## ABSTRACT

This small-scale study was designed to investigate post-corporal punishment disciplinary strategies used by level one educators in an ex-HOD secondary school in South Durban.

This qualitative study gathered data through the case study approach for the following key questions :

1. What are the challenges being faced by educators in maintaining pupil discipline?
2. What strategies do educators employ to cope with post apartheid reforms such as large, multiracial classes, abolition of corporal punishment and the removal of a guidance counsellor?
3. What are the educators' perceptions of the support they receive from the school and the community, if any, in dealing with pupil indiscipline?

As this research examines educators' perceptions on pupil discipline, it naturally lends itself to the qualitative research design. Within the qualitative design the case study provides the opportunity to obtain first hand information which can be used to do an in depth analysis of how educators relate to various factors and processes regarding learner discipline in the school under study. In order to obtain a full picture of discipline in the school under study the investigator obtained data through semi-structured interviews, observations of managers', level one educators' and pupils' behaviour as well as review of documents such as the staff minute books and the educators' discipline records.

In response to the numerous post apartheid reforms that schools find themselves experiencing, schools need to develop strategies such as teamwork, collaboration, delegation and open communication. The collective creativity and energy generated as a team is what is needed to face the reforms that schools are constantly being bombarded with. It is these reforms which can adversely affect the discipline of learners if not anticipated timeously by monitoring mechanisms in the school. These monitoring mechanisms such as regular networking can result in improvement to present policies and procedures so that they can align themselves with these post apartheid educational reforms.

**DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I declare that "A study of post corporal punishment disciplinary strategies used by educators in an ex-HOD school" is my own work and that all sources consulted and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed 

**Vijjaluxmi Ishak**

15<sup>th</sup> December 2004

**Statement by supervisor**

**This mini dissertation is submitted with/ without my approval.**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Chikoko**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to study

This study was undertaken to investigate post corporal punishment disciplinary strategies used by level one educators in an ex-HOD secondary school in South Durban. The democratization of South Africa in 1994 has brought about ongoing dramatic multiple changes in the South African educational system. The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 and the South African Schools Act (SASA) 84 of 1996 indicate a move towards a school-based system of education management. This involved the devolution of power from national to school levels. The establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGB) consisting of parents, educators at school, non-educator staff and learners became a statutory requirement for every South African public school. SGB are charged with substantial decision-making authority in determining the policy and rules by which the school is organized and controlled. This includes the formulation of a Code of Conduct for learners.

Prior to 1998, the education system was guilty of acknowledging and rewarding only academia thus neglecting those learners with other skills (Sibiya, 1997:36 and Bhika, 1997: 49). The Education and Training Board of South Africa responded by adopting Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in its National Curriculum Statement. The aim is to develop the full potential of all learners. The Department of Education (DoE) directed schools to implement Outcomes Based Education in 1998. Educators have to rethink their role in the class as that of facilitator rather than disseminator of syllabus content. Lessons are to be learner-centred. Talk and chalk methodology is to be replaced by group work, problem-solving, role-playing and buzz work. This requires the educator to rethink classroom management strategies on how to implement these new methodologies in keeping with OBE without the classrooms becoming chaotic.

Inequality in educational provision prior to 1994 resulted in poor schooling facilities for African pupils. These schools were characterized by a lack of resources, dilapidated school buildings and under-qualified educators. The schooling system was often used in the African pupils' political struggle against the government. Schools were seen as the property of the state hence they were often boycotted and vandalised. These factors led to the demise of a culture of learning and teaching (COLT) in many African schools. In keeping with the non-discriminatory practices of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa schools opened their doors to all races. Many of the African pupils hoping for a better education began leaving for previously advantaged schools in neighbouring Indian, Coloured and White communities. The pupil populace in the school under study became racially integrated. Prior to 1994, ex-HOD schools were composed of Indian learners only. However no dramatic racial changes have taken place in the staffing or in the SGB. This has implication on how indiscipline displayed by other races is perceived and dealt with. In 1996 the Task Team (1996:26) made a statement referring to the status quo in many schools in the country, "While the vision for transformation is clear, the institutional context has not changed sufficiently to facilitate transformation." Eight years later this statement is still applicable to the school under study. This school through lack of racial representivity in the staff and SGB cannot adequately represent and reflect the values and norms of all the communities that this school is supposed to serve. Culturally acceptable norms of behaviour displayed by the African pupils do not seem to be adequately understood by both the educators and the SGB. Educators were not capacitated to deal with multiracial classes and other changes implemented since 1994. This has left educators overwhelmed, particularly as they attempt to affect discipline in large multicultural and multiracial classes.

The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 abolished the use of corporal punishment. This legally brought to a halt what many educators knew for years as the major tried and tested means of maintaining discipline in schools. Schools readily inform educators of this departmental policy but they do not seem to sufficiently equip educators with alternatives to corporal punishment. The Task Team (1996: 45) states that individuals who are working in environments, which are constantly changing, require

support. Such support from the School Management Team, the SGB and the parents is often missing in most schools. According to Parker-Jenkins (1999:75), the abolition of corporal punishment left many teachers wondering how to tackle disciplinary problems and how to respond when pupils challenged their authority. With the demise of corporal punishment, alternative methods of disciplining pupils had to be developed. Parker-Jenkins further states that teachers' authority needs to be maintained and not undermined. Wilson (1990: 3) asserts that in the past, it was assumed that teachers (backed by the home and society) enjoyed a certain authority and everyone, including pupils, agreed to this. The authority may have been based on some sort of consensus about morality, good behaviour, middle class values or a Christian way of life. However today in many parts of the world, this is no longer true. Authority is controversial, unclear and troublesome. In South Africa, schools teach learners the "The Rights of Children" but somehow learners do not seem to have internalised the responsibility associated with these rights. Learners often cite these rights when challenging the authority of the educator. Thus educators seem to face many difficulties in maintaining pupil discipline.

The new pupil: personnel norms (PPN) of 35 pupils (minimum) to one educator do not always ensure job security in a school. As subject specialists, the secondary school educators' primary task would be to attract pupils to their subjects to maintain their jobs in that school. However pupil numbers do not always ensure the best pupils for a particular subject. Pupils' self esteem may be lowered when they discover that they are weak in their chosen subjects. Failure and loss of interest in the chosen subjects often leads to pupil indiscipline. The educator seems to be faced with a moral dilemma, that is between being a subject specialist (which they are trained for) and enjoy some degree of job security or do one's best as a 'guidance counsellor' (which they are not trained for) in trying to maintain discipline.

Due to budgetary constraints, the Department of Education removed Guidance Counsellors from schools in 1997. This change and those highlighted in the preceding paragraphs seem to have had either a direct or indirect negative impact on pupil discipline and on the educator's ability to effectively manage his or her class. These changes require

schools to cope with pupils' indiscipline in different ways. Pupils come from different backgrounds and many of them face various challenges, such as learning difficulties, attention deficiency syndrome, issues of HIV/AIDS infection, domestic issues such as single parent, looking after younger siblings, part-time jobs, unemployed parents and drug addiction. All these and other social issues require the services of experts such as guidance counsellors. Not all educators had the opportunity of studying psychology as part of their educator- training course. Educators are thus, in the absence of guidance counsellors challenged to deal as best as they can with the underlying causes of pupil indiscipline. It is not clear whether or not schools are coping with these challenges.

### **1.2 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the school's current disciplinary strategies in light of new developments such as OBE and its consequences, large multicultural classes, abolition of corporal punishment and the lack of a guidance counsellor.

### **1.3 Statement of problem**

A study of disciplinary strategies used on learners in an ex-HOD secondary school in South Durban. New developments in the South African education system and the abolition of corporal punishment require the development and implementation of new and alternative disciplinary measures.

### **1.4 Sub-problems**

This study revolved around the following sub-problems:

1. What are the challenges being faced by educators in maintaining pupil discipline?
2. What strategies do educators employ to cope with post apartheid reforms such as large, multiracial classes, abolition of corporal punishment and the removal of a guidance counsellor?

3. What are the educator's perceptions of the support they receive from the school and the community, if any, in dealing with pupil indiscipline?

### **1.5 Background of the school**

The investigated school is forty-two years old and was an Indian school until 1994. It is situated in a former Indian area. 70 percent of the pupils are Indian pupils coming from lower to middle class backgrounds. The rest of the pupils are Africans (25 percent) and Coloureds (5 percent). The African pupils come from the neighbouring African townships. There are 1096 pupils of whom there are 600 boys and 496 girls. The school has always enjoyed a reputation of academic excellence.

The staffs is made up of an acting principal as of July 2004, two deputies, one of whom is permanent and the other is acting, four heads of department, and 28 level one educators of which 11 are male and 17 are female.

There are 28 class units with each unit comprising an average of thirty- eight pupils. The school has four grade 12 units, six grade 11 units, five grade 10 units, seven grade nine units and six grade eight units.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

This investigation hopes to shed light on how educators are coping with pupil indiscipline. It will also bring to the fore the constraints with which the educators are faced. Such knowledge is necessary to create ways to find working solutions within the parameters of the law in dealing with learner indiscipline. These solutions must maintain both the victims and perpetrators dignity and respect. This school was chosen because the investigator works in the school and will like to use the findings to motivate management to revisit existing disciplinary policies and procedures and modify them to suit new developments.

## **1.7 Assumptions**

This investigation was conducted with specific assumptions in mind. Firstly it was assumed that most if not all level one educators experience problems with pupil discipline in one way or another. Secondly it was assumed that as a result of this educators would cooperate with the researcher because they are genuinely interested in learning ways to affect discipline in pupils.

## **1.8 Delimitations of the study**

A number of factors negatively impacted on this investigation and these were: -

- although educators were willing to participate , time became a restrictive factor as educators were busy in the fourth term with final examination
- a few educators were unwilling to cooperate as they felt that this may prejudice them in the eyes of the management of the school. The researcher had to promise them that there would be anonymity and confidentiality at all times.
- since this was a small-scale study, it did not make provision for the opinions and views of managers, parents and learners. Hence the findings may tend to be biased in favour of level ones.

## **1.9 Constraints of the study**

The perceptions of other stakeholders such as school managers, pupils and the parents may have been necessary to fully understand issues of pupil discipline in the school. However the scope of this study was limited to level one educators only. The study was done in one school. Since each school has its own culture and situational factors therefore the findings may be restricted to this school only.

### **1.10 Definition of terms**

This section defines terms as they are used in the current study.

**'audi alteram partem' rule** means “hear the other side”

**Level one educator** refers to the classroom teacher.

**School managers** refer to the Heads of Department, Deputy principals and principal.

**Senior managers** refer to the deputy principals and the principal.

**School Governing Body** is composed of parents who have been elected by the community to govern the school.

**School community** refers to the pupils and parents of the pupils in the school.

**Department of Education** means the department responsible for education in the province.

**ex-HOD school** refers to an Indian school that was run prior to 1994 by the House of Delegates.

**Corporal punishment** refers to any deliberate act, which inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain the child.

**School Code of conduct** means a code of conduct for learners as stipulated in South African Schools Act 84 1996, Section 8.

**Alternatives to corporal punishment** refer to constructive, corrective, rights –based, educative practices.

**Co-operative discipline** refers to the role played by the senior management team (SMT), the community, the school governing body (SGB) and representative council of learners in formulating a school code of conduct.

### **1.11 Organisation of the report**

Chapter 1 consists of a brief background to this investigation, which forms a theoretical framework for the investigation.

Chapter 2 focuses on managing educational change in light of the multiple changes that schools find themselves constantly faced with and key concepts existing around discipline and its related issues. An attempt is also made to describe the present shortfalls in existing literature and the laws that prohibit the use of corporal punishment.

Chapter 3 commences with the reiteration of the statement of purpose followed by the research questions around which the researcher will elicit information by using semi-structured interviews.

Chapter 4 revolves around analyzing and interpreting data obtained from the research tool. Information is then presented so as working solutions can be found to reduce learner indiscipline.

Chapter 5 highlights the findings and recommendations for the effective management of learner indiscipline as a means to self- development of the learner.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This study investigates disciplinary strategies used on learners in an ex-HOD secondary school in South Durban. This chapter reviews literature around South African legislation relating to pupil discipline in schools. The legal framework must form the basis for the formulation of discipline policies and procedures in schools. In order to cope with the multiplicity of changes that schools are constantly challenged with, schools need to embrace the principles of managing educational change, which are examined in section two. Section three discusses the concept of discipline and some of the ways of managing discipline. The chapter concludes with a summary of emerging issues.

#### **2.2 South African Legislation pertaining to discipline in schools**

The Bill of Rights enshrined in the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996 guarantees dignity, respect, equality and safety to all its people. Section 12 (e) of Chapter Two on the Bill of Rights in the South African Constitution states that, “ Everyone has the right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way.” The Department of Education has further entrenched section 12 (e) of Chapter Two on the Bill of Rights in the constitution in its National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996. Section 3 of this act states: “No person shall administer corporal punishment, or subject a student to psychological or physical abuse at any educational institution.” According to Section 10 (1) and 10 (2) of the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996:

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

The South African Schools Act (SASA) also empowers the School Governing Body (SGB) with the formulation of the code of conduct. According to Section 8 (1): -

1. A 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.

It is clear from the legislation quoted above that corporal punishment is abolished from South African schools. Schools in general and individual educators in particular have to come up with innovative ways within the law to manage learner discipline.

### **2.3 Managing educational change**

New developments in education, such as OBE and its innovative teaching methodologies; large multicultural classes; abolition of corporal punishment and the removal of guidance counsellors requires that we constantly strategize in order to stay on top of the impact these changes can have on pupil discipline. Schools can cope with these challenges brought about by these changes by becoming learning organizations.

According to Senge (1993:127), learning organizations are those which are continually enhancing their capacity to create people that can operate in ways that are more empowering and inspiring than the ways in which they would normally operate. Thus in order to cope with change everybody associated with an organization must become learners. This implies that schools must provide the opportunities for all personnel to improve their efficacy either as a team or individually so that they may embrace change from a vantage point of strength.

Senge (1990: 67) mentions that for learning organizations to thrive they need to display shared vision, team learning and personal mastery. For schools to operate as disciplined organizations everybody must have a shared vision regarding the schools understanding of discipline. From my observations in the school under study there does not seem to be a shared understanding amongst the various groups with regards to managing discipline.

This is evidenced by the control or lack of control the educators in the school display in ensuring that the pupils adhere to the dress code.

Senge (1990: 239) describes team learning as being more insightful and more intelligent than we can possibly be individually. Thus for a school discipline plan to work it has to be formulated by a group where all important decisions occur in a group of people who need each other to execute the plan. Moloi (1999:18) confirms that organizational learning takes place when educators, principals, learners and parents succeed in harnessing individual and collective talents to improve their practices. Thus, apart from involving all stakeholders within the school, sound discipline should also involve parental participation.

Mental models refer to our perceptions of the world and how they impact on our decisions. Senge (1993: 132) argues that a person's mental models can be broadened through achieving one's own vision. Educators can accomplish this by playing a role in their own development. Moloi (2001: 9) argues that the challenge is for educators to develop the capacity and the will to improve themselves in an effort to learn and apply this knowledge for the benefit of the learners.

Nadler in Shukla (1999: 251) argues that successful changes in learning organizations are characterized by an individual leader who is able to serve as a focal point for the change, and whose presence, activity and touch have some special 'magic'. These transformational leaders provide the critical set of conditions under which employees can unfold, transform, grow and flourish in uncertainty. They go on to model and teach skills needed to build a learning organization. It thus becomes important for principals as head learners if they are to encourage learning amongst their followers should be for themselves to formally improve their own transformational leadership skills. At a departmental discipline workshop I observed that many of the male principals left the workshop long before the scheduled rising time. Was this an indication that these heads did not need the training on cooperative discipline? This indicates poor planning on the part of the Department of Education. A needs assessment should have preceded the

workshop. This audit could have then been used in the workshop to address the needs of the school managers in terms of handling indiscipline.

The Task Team (1996: 24) states that new education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery. A learning disability occurs when managers still operate in a rule driven, secretive and hierarchical management structure infused with authoritarian and non-consultative management styles and cultures. Day et al (199: 4) argues that learning organizations must collaboratively identify learning needs of its members. This must include an audit on how educators are coping with the management of discipline if schools are serious about maintaining COLT. Involving everyone in strategic planning and execution so that strategy becomes everyone's business must follow this. In accepting other people's actions and decisions, power is shared and leadership is promoted at all levels in the organization.

According to Lucas (1999: 49), a true learning organization encourages people, individually and in groups, to gather information, explore ideas, evaluate past performance and future needs, challenge assumptions, give and receive feedback, and share what is learned. There is no blue print for managing discipline except principles of good practice. Hence it is important to create the framework to allow educators to network seek support and share success stories. During the discipline workshop, which I facilitated at the investigated school, I found the educators to be very enthusiastic and eager to share their tried and tested disciplinary methods. This could provide the much-needed ideas for young inexperienced educators to try new ways of coping with issues of discipline.

Resistance to change flourishes where there is poor communication, little or no active participation and involvement in decision making and where tensions are allowed to simmer unchecked (Task Team, 1996:32). According to Fullan (1999: 34), collaboration leads to people working together as an agency. The urgency associated with educational changes coupled with the creation of an agency produce more energy leading to consolidation, reflection, celebration and the capacity to contain the anxiety and adapt

more readily to the environment in creative ways. Stoll and Fink (1996: 151) argue that the role of the principal as a driving force in inviting a culture of collegiality and development is vital. They further state that one of the qualities of a learning organization is to promote and invest in high quality staff development if organizations wish to change pupils' learning. Both collegiality and the spirit of continued staff development are useful in empowering all stakeholders in managing learner discipline.

#### **2. 4 The concept and some ways of achieving Discipline**

Docking in Parker-Jenkins (1999: 80) defines discipline as providing the boundaries to a child's wilful nature. In this way it protects him by helping him to establish his place in life.

Dewey in Parker- Jenkin (1999: 82) writes that discipline is training a person to consider his actions before they are undertaken deliberately.

Wilson in Parker-Jenkin (1999: 83) argues that discipline should be seen as recognition of a need for order and working together. Punishment and reward are educative rather than mere inducements to toe the line. Both discipline and control are forms of order, but order in each case is of a logically different kind. He sees discipline as part of an educative order, whereas control can be self induced or externally imposed.

Wayson and Lasley in Cotton (2004) [online] define discipline as being able to behave properly without direct supervision.

Naidoo in Premdev (2004) describes discipline as involving nurturing of self-control, conduct or responsibility.

### **2.4.1 The Concept discipline**

Dr Louise Davis in Masite et. al. (2003:13) writes that discipline must be regarded as guiding a child towards positive behaviour and learning. It must encourage a child to develop self-control so that he or she can attain self-actualization.

Humphrey (1998: 6) writes that discipline should not be seen as a means of controlling others or as Parker -Jenkins (1999: 82) puts it as a way to, “cow the spirit”. Ritchie and Ritchie in Parker –Jenkins (1999: 83) argues that when discipline is used to control, then the power politics of authority develops, where the educator is seen as a police officer rather than as a pedagogue. Thus when the educator and pupil are seen as adversaries, the disciplinary system can lead to alienation. Humphreys mentions that for a discipline system to work in schools and the home, it is for both adults and children to learn self – control. When parents and educators lose control they are hardly in a position to demand self-control from children. Children see this as an opportunity to control adults (op.cit). Discipline rather than punishment must be used constructively so that learners experience an educative, corrective approach in which they learn to exercise self-control, respect others and accept the consequence of their actions. (Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, 2001:9).

From the preceding paragraph, one can conclude that discipline refers to changing attitudes so that a person realizes its inherent value en-route to self-actualization so that one can play a useful role in society.

### **2.4.2 Some ways of managing discipline**

#### **2.4.2.1 The School and discipline**

Humphreys (1998: 5) highlights the narrow way in which educators and parents in their quest for peace and order, perceive discipline. Under-controlled behaviour such as shouting, hitting, temper tantrums, uncooperative behaviour, back-chatting and disruptive behaviour prevents self actualisation as much as over-controlled behaviour such as

passivity, timidity, shyness and elective mutism. Sadly it is the over-controlled behaviour that schools acknowledge as good behaviour. From my observation, pupils displaying over-controlled behaviour and good academic records are often the ones who are selected as prefects in the school under study. It would seem that this flaw in the prefect selection system is responsible for the school not being able to depend on many of these prefects to uphold the rules of the classroom and school.

If both under-controlled and over-controlled behaviour prevents the development of learners then rightfully a Discipline System should consider both types of behaviour. However in schools, we tend to concentrate on under-controlled behaviour because of its disruptive nature. The educational system also judges educators by how well they can control the under-controlled behaviour of pupils. This further neglects the acknowledging and correction of over-controlled behaviour. While the investigator realizes the importance of both types of behaviour in the development of the learner, due to the smallness of this study, this investigation will only consider the mechanisms employed to rectify the under-controlled behaviour of learners. The lack of attention on over-controlled behaviour in this research can perhaps motivate others to research this topic.

Parker–Jenkins (1999: 93) states that for a discipline policy to be effective, the school community must have inputs and ownership of a plan, which is responsive to the needs, and views of its members. Discipline must become everybody’s business. There must be a school-wide emphasis on the importance of learning and intolerance of conditions, which inhibit learning. Cotton (2004) [online] recommends that widespread dissemination and periodic review of rules and procedures ensures that parents, learners and staff understand what is acceptable and what is not. There are two Zulu concepts that should serve as guiding principles when devising a code of conduct for schools: ‘Tirisano’ which is working together and ‘Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu’ which mean that a person is a person only through other people. This means that schools should ensure a collective commitment among all stakeholders who are affected in or by the implementation of the code of conduct. Secondly, that the code of conduct embraces the right to human dignity. When schools are administering sanctions, care should be taken

not to infringe the learners' right by belittling, name calling, using derogatory language and humiliating learners in front of their peers.

Reid and Holly in Masite et al (2003: 16) argue that school culture influences the academic, social and personal achievements of the individuals within the school. Culture according to Trompenaars et al in Masite et al entails what we see and observe such as the school building; the language of communication in school, dress code of educators and learners. These observations reflect our deeper layers of culture that are our norms and values. Norms are what we agree upon as right or wrong and values define what is right and wrong. Values relate very closely to the ideals people share as a school. Culture is relatively stable when the norms reflect the values of the school (op cit).

I have observed the principal and deputy principal constantly remind educators of the importance of formal attire where they themselves lead by example in that respect. Inspections of pupils' attire at the assembly and daily at the gate also attest to this. The buildings too are cleaned and maintained by a very able supervisor and his team. However I have noticed that there is an ongoing battle between educators and some pupils with regards to their dress code. A discipline system thus has a better chance of working if there is congruency amongst the stakeholders in the values that they subscribe to.

Masite et al (2003: 20) argues that for a school to be welcoming of all learners irrespective of their socio-economic backgrounds, culture, health status, race, behaviour or ability it needs to make a conscious self reflection of its activities and policies. This could become part of the staff development activities where an earnest attempt is made to arrive at a common understanding of the underlying cultures and values of the school and how they can be challenged by all concerned as a means to school improvement. I have observed that the school under study does not meet as a staff to reflect on its policies or activities on a regular basis. This is likely to impact negatively on the school's effort to maintain discipline.

#### **2.4.2.2 The role of the School Governing Body**

Discipline according to Humphreys (1998:4) requires planning, creativity, commitment, patience and resources. Many schools satisfy the SASA requirement of putting a code of conduct together as an end in itself. Whether it is effective is seldom questioned thus the moral purpose of having a code of conduct is lost. Periodic review will keep this document alive. Humphreys argues that discipline is a means not only to safeguard children against adults' lack of discipline as it is to safeguard adults' rights in the face of under-controlled behaviour from children. Whilst Mr. Bridge, a facilitator at the recent Department of Education (DoE) Co-operative Discipline workshop, indicated that the Department cannot provide recipes for schools on how to deal with pupil indiscipline because of contextual factors. I agree with Morell (2000) when he advises that ministries of education must provide leadership and show commitment to new ways of creating classroom discipline. DoE need to employ experts to show schools how to effectively implement policies without running the risk of costly litigations. These litigations could also adversely affect the reputation of the school and hence its marketability. Experiences shared by the audience at the cooperative discipline workshop indicated that incorrect interpretation of the disciplinary procedure had resulted in the miscreant being inappropriately disciplined. It is evident that there is a need for the DoE's involvement to go beyond that of policy formulation. The DoE need to interact directly with schools on a larger and more frequent scale on matters of discipline.

The purpose of the school code of conduct is to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process (SASA, 1996). Snelch in Masite and Vawder (2003: 29) lists a set of guidelines for developing a Code of Conduct. The SGB must adopt a participatory decision making process to ensure a genuine commitment on the part of the teachers, parents and learners to successfully implement the code of conduct. This can be achieved by having an open discussion with all stakeholders, which will help bring about a better understanding of their perceptions and problems with discipline in the school. A special discipline-working group composed of representatives from all stakeholder groups can be established to organize and coordinate the whole process. The SGB can conduct

workshops and use survey questionnaires to gather valuable information on people's attitude towards and expectations of discipline in the school. Class-time can be set aside to give learners the opportunity to discuss discipline issues and the kind of code of conduct they would like implemented. Once the SGB has gathered the information, a code of conduct can be drafted and circulated for revision before the final draft is written and presented for final approval. The final draft must be communicated before it is implemented. A code of conduct must be reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis. For rules to be effective and purposeful they must be: -

1. reasons behind the rules. From my discourse with senior pupils many of them mentioned that they did not see how gelling or spiking their hair affects their school performance. Others indicated that no one took the time to explain the reasons behind some of the rules
2. rules must be clearly stated
3. rules must be fair, reasonable and enforceable
4. rules should be stated positively. One of the facilitators at the cooperative discipline workshop mentioned that learners do not register the negative part of the rules. The preferable thing to do will be to give them an alternative instead
5. rules must not inflict an injustice

It is important for learners and parents to know what the consequences are of inappropriate behaviour or misconduct. The sanctions or corrective behaviour for transgressing rules should be set out in detail in the code of conduct. The most extreme forms of sanction are suspension and expulsion, which are imposed for very serious offences. The procedure involved in a disciplinary hearing must also be outlined in the code of conduct.

#### **2.4.2.3 The role of Managers in maintaining discipline**

Researchers have found that in disciplined schools, principals are visible in the hallways and classrooms, talking informally with teachers and students, speaking to them by name and expressing interest in their activities and being supportive. They take responsibility

for handling serious infractions but they hold teachers responsible for handling routine classroom discipline problems. Managers assist teachers to improve their management and discipline skills by arranging for staff development activities as needed. I observed at one of the staff meetings at the school under study, the deputy principal indicated that far too many educators were sending pupils for trivial reasons to the senior managers to deal with. He indicated that it is important for educators to show evidence of trying to deal with the situation before sending the defaulter to the office. Previously at a meeting the principal categorically stated that an inability to deal with classroom discipline was tantamount to educator incompetence. Again if one reflects on these situations it is very evident that the educators resort to this cry for help not out of choice but out of frustration of knowing no appropriate alternatives. Thus educators need support to work as a team to creatively find ways of maintaining discipline.

Motjoli (2004:9) states that the democratic or participatory style of leadership is crucial towards the achievement of goals and objectives that are set in the school. This type of leadership is related to the collegial management approach. Collegiality is an approach or model in which members have equal authority to participate in making decisions, which are binding on them. Motoli quotes Wallace as describing collegiality as 'the official model of good practice' in self managed schools. Effective communication among staff members as well as between staff members and the management should be encouraged and strengthened so as to enable teachers to reveal their problems, thus assisting in resolving them collectively as a staff (ibid).

#### **2.4.2.4 The role of Educators in maintaining discipline**

Child Advocate Organisation defines corporal punishment in the following way:-

“Any deliberate act against a child that inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain him/her. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, paddling or hitting a child with a hand or with an object; denying or restricting a child’s use of the toilet; denying meals, drink, heat and shelter, pushing or pulling a child with force, forcing the child to do exercise.” [www.childadvocate.org](http://www.childadvocate.org)

It was surprising to find that many of the educators in the school under study were taken aback with this definition of corporal punishment, which I shared with them at a disciplinary workshop that I facilitated in the school on the 11/10/2004. For many educators corporal punishment meant physical punishment only. It seems quite obvious that there is a need for educators to be constantly informed via workshops about latest developments related to discipline and other matters that impact on their work. Another surprising fact is that the DoE accepted this working definition of corporal punishment in 2001 and yet the department only decided to share this information with the schools at a "Cooperative discipline workshop" held three years later, on the 27/09/2004.

At that same Departmental workshop Dr Nobin, the chief education specialist categorically stated that educators were on their own if they were found breaking the laws on corporal punishment. Mandla Msibi an education spokesman in Premdev states that teachers found guilty of corporal punishment could face losing their job or even a jail sentence depending on the severity of the case (2004). It is obvious that the department is serious about educators upholding the law regarding corporal punishment. However if this same will was used to empower educators with alternatives to corporal punishment then the need to police educators regarding corporal punishment becomes unnecessary.

However although the law clearly states its stance regarding corporal punishment, it is still widely used. The many newspaper articles attest to the widespread dehumanizing way pupils are being punished. As an educator in the school under investigation, I have had the advantage of making several observations regarding how educators discipline classes. From my observation and discourse with pupils during the Right Living and Guidance periods, I have found that the most so called 'disciplined classes' are the ones where the educators use some form of corporal punishment. In spite of the minutes of the school reflecting the continuous reminding of staff of the legal implications of using corporal punishment, this has not ceased the use of corporal punishment. I believe that educators in this school lack the necessary capacity and hence resort to the use of corporal punishment out of necessity rather than choice.

It would seem as if the DoE and the management of many schools are relying far too much on the law to act as a deterrent in itself. In doing so they have abdicated their moral responsibility to arm educators in a way that will allow them to uphold the law as a natural consequence to maintaining discipline in the class.

Parker-Jenkins (1999: 86) defines “authority” as something being “right”, “correct” or “legitimate” accorded to an individual of special status in the community. The learner must be taught the responsibility of acknowledging the dual authoritative position of the educator if he/she wishes to self-actualize. The educator’s first authority is gained as an expert in that person’s field and the other is the ‘de facto’ authority, which is necessary to maintain order in the class. (op.cit)

The educator can use the following proactive strategies to pre-empt disciplinary situations that may arise so that they can be managed consistently with a minimum amount of disruption and stress (Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, 2001:14).

The teacher must be totally aware of what the students are doing and what is going on in the class during the lesson. He or she must be able to attend to different events without being totally diverted by a disruption or other activity. Standing near inattentive students or directing questions to potentially disruptive students can also prevent indiscipline. Providing activities that have variety and offer challenge will also interest mixed ability learners in a class. In this way marginal students too can experience academic and social success. Using materials, pictures, language, music, posters, and magazines reflects the diverse ways in which pupils learn. Humour can be used to hold students’ interest and reduce classroom tension.

Distracting materials, such as athletic or art equipment or art materials, that encourage inattention or disruption should be removed. The challenge is for an educator to know his/her class well enough to know which strategy will work in a particular class. Most researchers and writers in Cotton (2004) [online] have noted, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” especially when it comes to disciplining young people in educational settings.

Cooperation and consistency among staff will also strengthen whatever individual teachers try to implement in their classes. Educators must reach out to all learners even those who may be part of a clique or a social group including gangs. It is important to lay the foundation for open communication so that learners acknowledge that you are genuinely interested in their welfare. Topics like conflict management, problem solving, tolerance, anti-racism, gender sensitivity; social differences must be included so that learners learn to build a co-operative learning environment. Steps must be taken to avoid favouritism. Educators must celebrate a broad range of student achievement. (Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, 2001:12).

Lorgat in Masite and Vawda (2003: 33) reports that from his discourse with teachers many of them feel disempowered believing that they have no support and that the law seems to favour the learners. Teachers are also of the opinion that matters of corporal punishment were often presented in a top-down and threatening manner to teachers rather than a co-operative journey, which requires support in building a human rights culture. The minutes of the school being investigated reflect this view. Staffs are regularly warned against the use of corporal punishment but no discussion is entertained on the matter.

It is important that rights and responsibilities are discussed with children from an early age. This must be made part of the school curriculum. Pupils must learn that having their rights respected means that it must in turn be reciprocated. Rights must not be confused with liberties. Pupils must be made aware that infringement of a person's rights has consequences for them. Masite and Vawda argue that the more positive the learner's perception of the educator's feeling towards him/her the better the school achievement and the classroom behaviour (op. cit.). Wilson and Cowell (1990: 151) state that learners come from different cultures, races, creeds and sets of values. There is thus an absence of general consensus with regards to notions such as authority, power, and discipline. This definitely calls for more discussion at the beginning of each year so that consensus is attained by all stakeholders. Teaching associations will have to do more to ensure that teacher's rights are given serious consideration especially those relating to safety at work (ibid.) Humphreys (1998: 7) mentions that teachers should not have to put up with the

minutest violation of their rights in and out of their classroom. It is a failure of a school discipline system when teachers spend more time attempting to control students rather than teaching them.

#### **2.4.2.5 The role of Counselling Services in maintaining discipline**

If learners display difficulties in socialization, learning barrier, emotional difficulty, distress, aggressive behaviour, bullying then schools should seek the help from professionals such as psychologists or community psychologists. (Alternatives to Corporal Punishment, 2001:14). The DoE suggests referrals to a counselor or social worker as a disciplinary action for level 3 misconduct (ibid). Schools need further clarification as to the availability of these services, such as who pays for these services and what is the procedure regarding enlisting these services. Often the red tape and the time involved does not make this a practical route to take. Thus schools need the DoE to provide more workable solutions, which are readily accessible to help schools maintain discipline.

Counselling Services for misbehaving students are based on the assumption that target students lack insight and understanding regarding their own misbehaviour. Positive outcomes have been noted by researchers as a result of observing and interviewing students to determine their awareness of their troublesome behaviour and the meaning it holds for them, providing information and instruction when necessary, setting needed limits and insisting that students assume personal responsibility for their behaviour and its consequences Cotton (2004) [online]. It is evident that deeply troubled learners require professional guidance counselling. In the absence of counsellors, schools must there engage in training educators with basic guidance counselling skills.

## **2.5 Survey of some research studies on discipline**

In a study on Secondary schools and their effects on children, Rutter et al. (1979) reports that in spite of many factors individual schools could still dramatically affect their pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour. These factors included pupil's ability at entry, social and home background. Pupils were found to make better progress academically, and were better behaved in schools, which stressed academic matters. These schools had well planned curricula, high educators' expectations, good coordination between teachers and a lot of preparation was put into the planning of the lessons with a sizeable proportion of teaching time spent on the subject. The data collecting methods used were school records, behaviour questionnaires and classroom observation.

A Cotton (2004) [online] report that some researchers have noted from their studies that learner misbehaviour is sometimes a response to academic failure. However improvement has been noted in classroom order where marginal students were provided with opportunities to experience academic and social success.

Lunn's (1970) research on streaming showed that children of average and below average ability had a more favourable attitude to class and school in non-streamed schools. Streaming can have a lowering of self-concept for the average ability child. This study seems to suggest the need for schools to reflect upon the methods, which are used to assess the abilities of ethnic minority groups. If these children are placed in the incorrect ability stream then it could have a crucial bearing on their achievements throughout their life. Lunn's research also showed that educator's low opinions of the abilities of lower working class pupils could have a self-fulfilling prophecy based on educator's expectations. This researcher used a number of attitude scales and sociometric techniques. I have noticed that the A and B classes which are usually made up of the science learners pose less disciplinary problems compared to their peers in the D, E and F classes of the same grade in the school under study.

In an investigation into the management of discipline, Sankers (2000) reports that schools need to use a strategic management approach to managing discipline. Semi-structured

interviews were used as a data-collecting tool. Sanker recommends a multi-agency approach in the management of discipline. This involves key constituents of the school community. He also argues that any lack of management skills ought not to be seen as educators' incompetence but as a cue for managers to provide professional development and support to educators who lack management skills.

## **2.6 Emerging issues**

This chapter deals with major issues that impact on this research. Underpinning the management of discipline in all schools in South Africa is a code of conduct, which has to be formulated by the school governing body in consultation with all stakeholders. The legal framework concerning discipline in schools was discussed. This lays down the parameters within which schools can mete out appropriate disciplinary actions.

In keeping with the multiple changes that schools find themselves in it is imperative that schools develop appropriate strategies to keep up with these changes.

Finally the chapter dealt with various concepts of discipline and how the SGB, the School managers, the guidance counsellors and the educators can manage discipline in a school. A concerted effort must be made by schools to empower all stakeholders in the management of discipline in a school.

The next chapter deals with the research methodology.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

This study investigates the post corporal punishment disciplinary strategies used on learners in an ex-HOD secondary school in South Durban. This chapter addresses the research methodology of the study. First, the research design is described. Second, reasons for respondent selection are discussed. Third the data collection methods are described. The chapter concludes with a summary.

#### 3.2 Research design

As this research examines educators' perceptions on pupil discipline, it naturally lends itself to the qualitative research design. The qualitative approach typically investigates behaviour as it occurs naturally in non-contrived situations thus there is no manipulation of conditions or experience. The goal is to capture the richness and complexity of behaviour from the participants' perspective. Participants' meanings include their feelings, beliefs, ideals, thoughts and actions. The data thus consists of words in the form of rich verbal description. Within the qualitative design the case study provides the opportunity to obtain first hand information which can be used to do an in depth analysis of how educators relate to various factors and processes regarding learner discipline in the school under study. As Verma (1981:62) states that the greatest advantage of the case study is that it endeavours to understand the individual in relation to his or her environment.

### **3.3 The respondents**

All the 28 level one educators in the school formed the target group of the respondents. It was necessary to consult all of them in order to obtain a full picture of discipline in the school. Moreover, the investigator is a part of the school staff hence this enhanced the accessibility of the people as respondents.

### **3.4 Data collection methods**

In order to obtain a full picture of discipline in the school under study the investigator obtained data through semi structured interviews, observations of managers', level one educators' and pupils' behaviour as well as review of documents such as the staff minute books and the educators' pupil discipline records. Using different data collecting methods of the same study is referred to as methodological triangulation. Cohen et al (2000:114) state that triangulation involves the use of more than one method in the pursuit of a given objective. This thus improves the validity of the measures of the same objective by using the semi structured interview, participant observation and documentation. The more the outcomes of one research tool correspond with the outcomes of another, the more confident the researcher becomes about his or her findings.

Although all the respondents were interviewed, due to time constraints half the respondents were interviewed in groups of three or four, using informal semi-structured interviews, which do not limit the naturalness and the relevance of the response. Grouping was based on gender, age group and teaching experience. This was done to see if these factors made an impact on maintaining discipline. The other half of the respondents were interviewed individually using formally semi-structured interview thus reducing interviewer effects and bias. This was done to strike a balance between investigator's objectivity and subjectivity.

Permission was sought from the principal earlier on in the year. The level one educators were briefed on the nature of the investigation and interview times were agreed upon.

Confidentiality of the participants' response in the interview was guaranteed.

All the respondents were asked questions related to key points such as: misdemeanours experienced most frequently in the classroom; how were the defaulters handled; does the discipline policies of the school adequately serve the needs of the school; what challenges relating to discipline were the educators faced with and what were the educators perception of the support they received from all the stakeholders. This type of interview allowed me to probe and obtain greater clarity. Responses were jotted down during the interview.

### **3.4.1 Interviews**

Cohen et al (2000: 167) describes the interview as an opportunity for participants to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own vantage point. The research interview is thus defined as a conversation initiated by the interviewer for obtaining relevant research relevant information (ibid). In this study interviews were semi-structured. The schedule consisted of key points to be covered during the interviews. The open-ended questions allow for the contents to be reordered, digressed and expanded for further probing on matters arising from observation. The added advantage is that the interviewer is able to answer questions concerning both the purpose of the interview and any misunderstanding experienced by the interviewee (ibid: 269). Verbal and nonverbal behaviour can be noted in face-to-face interviews. Interviews result in a much higher response rate than questionnaires especially for topics that concern personal qualities. Tuckman in Cohen (2000: 268) describes an interview as providing access to what is inside a person's head, it makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

### 3.4.2 Observations

Observation is an active process, which includes: muted cues, facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice and other unverballed social interaction. According to Cohen, (2000: 305), observation allows the investigator to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed or to discover things that the participants might not freely talk about in an interview situation.

Participant observation enables the researcher to obtain peoples' perception of reality expressed in their actions and expressed as feelings, thoughts and beliefs. As a member of the staff, I was able to obtain participant observational material, providing me with authentic, unbiased firsthand data. Cohen et al (2000: 188) states that the strength of observations is that unlike surveys and experiments, which rely on verbal responses of respondents, observations are less reactive and more objective.

The qualitative research seeks to catch the dynamic nature of events and to seek trends and patterns over time. As an educator in the school being investigated, I am part of the social life of the participants; hence observation is done through "complete observation". This is referred to as covert research since the participants do not know they are being observed (ibid). Burgess (ed) ((1985: 25) refers to this as hard-positions where the observer shares in the activities of the research in a direct and complete way and do what the observed do. Morrison in Cohen (2000: 311) argues that if the researcher is part of a context for a lengthy period of time, then not only will the salient features of the situation emerge and present themselves, but a more holistic view will be gathered of the interrelationships of factors. Qualitative research embraces emic approach where the definitions of the situations are captured through the eyes of the observed. Emic approaches use the conceptual frameworks of those being observed (ibid). Observations were therefore unstructured so as to generate hypothesis rather than test hypothesis.

### **3.4.3 Documents**

Official documents describe functions and values and how various people define the organization. Internal documents can show the official chain of command and provide clues about leadership style and values. According to Cohen (2000:147) data collecting from non-human source includes documents and records. These have the advantage of always being available, cost effective and factual. A number of documents were analysed. The schools code of conduct was examined to determine whether this document satisfied all the requirements as laid out in the South African schools act. Pupils' portfolios, which are kept by the office, was analysed to see whether it was being used, by whom and how frequently. Staff minutes indicated the kind of interaction that takes place between management and educators with regards to matters of discipline in the school. The educators' defaulters' book informed the researcher about the most frequently occurring misdemeanours. Class rules were looked at to see whether the rules were reasonable, just and understandable. Notes to parents indicated the kind of support that the parents offered to the educators.

### **3.5 Summary**

This chapter described the research methodology of the study. The qualitative paradigm was identified as the appropriate research design for this study. Within this paradigm the case study design was adopted. The chapter also described the data collecting methods namely semi-unstructured interviews, observations and documentation. The level one formed the sample since it is their perceptions on discipline that the investigation focuses on. The following chapter describes and interprets the data obtained from the data collecting methods used in this investigation.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This study investigated the disciplinary strategies used on learners in an ex-HOD secondary school in South Durban. This chapter presents and examines the data obtained through semi-structured interviews with level one educators, observation of school managers', level one educators' and learners' behaviour and analysis of school records. These findings are presented according to the key questions of the study. The key questions are:

1. What are the challenges being faced by educators in maintaining pupil discipline?
2. What strategies do educators employ to cope with post apartheid reforms such as large, multiracial classes; abolition of corporal punishment and the removal of a guidance counsellor?
3. What are the educators' perceptions of the support they receive from the school and the community, if any, in dealing with pupil indiscipline?

The chapter concludes with issues arising from the analysis of the data.

#### **4.2 Challenges faced by educators in maintaining pupil discipline**

Through semi-structured interviews, observation of school managers', level one educators' and learners' behaviour and document analysis, a number of challenges faced by educators in the school under study emerged. The main ones are addressed in this section.

#### **4.2.1 Lack of time in dealing with issues of indiscipline**

Respondents reported lack of time to handle matters of discipline. Educators of senior classes especially those preparing learners for provincial or national examinations indicated that they were under pressure to complete set syllabi. They were thus of the opinion that handling matters of discipline impinges on valuable teaching time. One educator had the following to say:

There is no time in my matric class to deal with class disruption and pupils not doing their homework. Completing syllabus is just far too time consuming.

Another reported:

I am here to teach, I don't have the time to give discipline letters to pupils' parents and then run after those who do not bring the letters back from their parents.

From the above responses it seems that the handling of indiscipline is viewed as an additional duty for the level one educators.

#### **4.2.2 Lack of counselling skills**

Some educators indicated that certain misconducts have serious psychological implications. Responding to this kind of indiscipline according to the respondents requires specialized counselling skills provided over a period of time and has to be done on a one to one basis. This is what one educator said:

Pupils talk to me about the rifts they have with their parents or the problems they experience with their boyfriends or girlfriends. I do not have the time or the knowledge to counsel them. They definitely need a guidance counsellor to whom they can pour their hearts out. He or she will be in a better position to give the learners more appropriate advice than I can ever hope to.

The responses obtained from the level one educators suggest that educators do not feel competent enough to counsel troubled learners who as a result of this can be a source of misconduct in the classroom.

#### **4.2.3 Male learners from low socio-economic backgrounds**

Many female respondents indicated that male learners coming from homes where the father figure is lacking or where the parents are unemployed tend to lack respect for female educators, are less ambitious and lack interest in academic matters. Their disruptive behaviour, vulgar language and poor work ethics attest to this. Observations also include the disrespectful way these learners address their parents during parent meetings. This licentious behaviour is what these deviant pupils expect to carry forth into the classroom. Defaulters' books of those educators who keep these record books indicate the number of times these pupils' names have been recorded for disruptive behaviour. The mark sheets reflect the extra marks, which the school in order for these pupils from low socio-economic homes to pass their grades assist them with.

This poor behaviour and performance from certain male learners suggests that they do not have a proper understanding of gender issues, they lack role models from the community with whom they can identify and most probably cannot relate to the courses offered to them by the school.

#### **4.2.4 Large classes**

Majority of the level one educators indicated that because the school was built 42 years ago, the classrooms are far too small for the present norm, which is about 38 learners per educator. Educators indicated that their movement amongst learners becomes difficult, control and feedback of learner's work on a one to one basis is impossible and discipline is often compromised. On this issue, one respondent said:

Overcrowded classes prevent me from implementing important methodologies, which are necessary for developing certain skills in learners in outcome-based education.

The respondents were asked what they thought of the deputy principal saying that group work should be avoided if it resulted in disruption in the class. Many of the junior level one educators presently teaching Grade 8 and 9 responded by stating the importance of group work in achieving some of the outcomes of OBE. Group-work according to the respondents taught social skills such as sharing, tolerance, time management, teamwork, co-operation and delegation.

This is what one educator said:

Educators cannot afford to leave out group-work rather they must creatively think of how they are going to manage group-work in the classroom

These responses suggest a lack of understanding, dialogue and creative teamwork to address the discipline issues emanating from large classes and small classrooms.

#### **4.2.5 Multiracial classes**

On the issue of multiracial classes, one of the educators said:

When I try to assert my authority in the interest of the child – the African learners use their own language, which I cannot understand.

I have observed that racial remarks amongst boys in the class have often resulted in physical or verbal altercations amongst them. This response seems to suggest that the subcultures within the school do not adequately understand one another. Such misunderstanding is likely to be a source of indiscipline. In the staff minutes dated 8/5/2002, the principal stated:

As indicated in the mission statement, ----- secondary is a multicultural centre of learning. There is no dominant culture, therefore all must adapt and contribute to a strong culture of teaching and learning.

Theoretically the school's intention to integrate the races is there but strategy to implement this cultural integration is missing.

#### **4.2.6 Inconsistencies in matters of discipline**

##### **4.2.6.1 Inconsistencies in the response made to the learners breaking the dress code rule**

Many interviewees indicated that they are tired of reprimanding pupils for not abiding by the dress code of the school. This is what one educator had to say regarding this:

If each and every form-teacher checks the dress code of their pupils then I would not have to waste my instruction time doing what somebody else should have done. Learners will end up thinking I am the ogre for constantly chastising them.

From my observation I have found that learners correct their faults in the form-teacher's presence only to break the rule once they leaves the classroom. Many managers and educators fail to realise this, often blaming the form-teachers for not doing their duty.

Another educator said:

Every-time I reprimand the learners for their hairstyle, they tell me but we have been to other teachers and they have not said anything so why are you bothering us. The educator also relayed an incident where he confiscated a pair of loop earrings from a learner only to have the learner's form-teacher ask the educator to return the earrings to the learner.

When asked if all the educators knew what the dress code was, majority indicated that they did as the dress code of the school for learners was discussed at the beginning of last year, 2003. There seems to be a difference in opinion among the level one educators regarding the importance of the school dress code hence the inconsistent approach to learners not abiding by this dress code.

#### **4.2.6.2 Inconsistencies in the way sanctions are meted out**

From my observation I have noticed that boys respond better when the male level one educators or someone in higher authority reprimands them. The reason for this is that often these male level one educators or managers send the offending pupils home. However the female level one educators cannot use the same sort of sanction. Secondly, although the acceptable colour of the school jersey is navy blue, some female educators feel sympathetic when disadvantaged learners wear grey or black jerseys. I have also noticed that on assembly days the boys do not wear coloured jerseys or jackets, spike or apply gel in their hair and are neatly shaven.

The male learners seemed to have cottoned on to the different ways in which their breaking the dress code rule is handled in the school hence the disparity in their behaviour in the presence of male and female level one educators and management. There also seems to be a lack of understanding in the school under study that male and female level one educators have different personalities. Some educators have by nature a sterner disposition than others. Consequently it is these educators who are perceived to be strong and are often complimented in staff meetings.

#### **4.2.6.3 Inconsistencies in record keeping**

When asked about whether the school rewards good behaviour the respondents were divided. About half the respondents knew about the accolade forms, which are filed in the pupils profile and stored in the office, the announcements at the assembly and the opportunity to be chosen as prefects at the end of grade 11. Perusal through these learner

portfolios indicates a very loose arrangement for the recording of both accolades and misdemeanours. Some misconducts were written on scraps of paper and other misconducts especially those handled by the office were often not recorded. Recording and filing of accolade and misdemeanours is time consuming hence the subject educator in whose classroom the misconduct takes place often feels that it is the duty of the form teacher to lodge the misconduct in the pupils profile and vice versa. The learners' profiles do not make provision for the reader to gather information regarding a learner's behaviour from grade 8 to 12. Omission of accolades and misconducts can have serious implications if these learner portfolios are being used for prefect selection or for drawing up learners' testimonials.

There does not seem to be a proper mechanism for the recording and the use of the pupils' profile. This could be the reason so many of the educators had forgotten to mention the learners' portfolios.

At a final screening of prefects for 2005, had the acting principal who was called to intervene in the public altercation occurring outside the school gate, not mentioned one of chosen prefect's role in this incident, this learner would have made the final list of prefects. This implies that either the prefect selection committee did not look at the portfolios of the pupils being selected or that the person who handled that situation failed to record the incident in the learner's portfolio.

There thus does not seem to be any consistency in the way the pupils' portfolios are maintained and used in the school under study.

#### **4.3 Strategies level ones use to handle learner indiscipline**

The strategies used by educators to handle pupil indiscipline were gathered through semi-structured interviews of level one educators, observation of learners', managers' and level one educators' behaviour and document analysis. These were compared with the procedure outlined in the school code of conduct.

#### 4.3.1 School code of conduct

The school code of conduct according to the School Governance and Training Unit (1997) should express the collective will of the school community and give legal force to the development of the standards of conduct conducive to the betterment of all the learners.

The schools code of conduct prescribes the following procedure for the handling of misconducts

- i. Educators will in the course of their duty correct minor behavioural or performance defects and this usually takes the form of informal reprimands or corrective instructions.
- ii. Where this proves ineffective or if sterner action is warranted , the case maybe referred to the office.
- iii. Depending on the seriousness of the transgression , the office may institute one of the following procedures
  - a. reprimand the learner/s
  - b. call for the parents/guardian of the learner for discussion and resolution of the issue.

My observations of various stakeholders' knowledge of the contents of the schools code of conduct suggest that they are not familiar with the contents. If one considers the number of times certain misdemeanours are recorded in the defaulters' book such as chewing gum, using tippex or carrying Koki pens attests to this. My other observation, which confirms this, is that pupils and parents do not follow the grievance procedure outlined in the school code of conduct. The grievance procedure is described as follows in the school code of conduct: -

If learners have a problem with an educator, they shall:

- i. firstly discuss the problem with the educator concerned with a view to seeking an amicable resolution to the problem.
- ii. If the first step fails to produce the desired result, then the learner may refer the issue to the next level that is the educators tasked with discipline issues.
- iii. If the issue is still not resolved, the aggrieved party may make a submission to the discipline committee.
- iv. aggrieved persons do however; enjoy the option of approaching members of management at any time, if in their discretion, it is likely to produce the most desirable results.

If this grievance procedure is followed then the many confrontational efforts made by irate parents could have been avoided. From my observations it seems that some managers and educators are unfamiliar with the grievance procedure. The reason for saying this is when the grievance procedure is not followed neither pupil nor parent is chastised by the manager. Secondly educators in certain learning areas request learners to bring koki pens, which are prohibited in the school code of conduct, as part of their subject requirements. Although the school has a well-constructed code of conduct, there seems to be an absence of content familiarity by all stakeholders.

The school does however make a concerted effort to provide all learners and parents with a copy of the school code of conduct when learners either registers for the first time or renews their registration annually. The staff minute dated 22/01/2002 records the principal as saying: "Discuss the school code of conduct in great detail."

It seems that thorough knowledge of the school code of conduct has not become part of the school culture. Although one educator in a group did say the following:

Educators should take the initiative to educate the learners with regards to the contents of the school code of conduct during the guidance period.

Another educator responded to the above by saying:

I have guidance, but I must be honest I don't do justice because there is no formalized structure for teaching guidance in the school. Secondly educators feel that they need this period for administration work because they have so few free periods therefore they are under tremendous amount of pressure. On the other hand pupils do not take the guidance and right living periods seriously because these are not examination subjects.

It would seem that both educators and learners are guilty of not using the non – examination subjects to discuss matters such as discipline, human rights and values.

When the respondents were asked if the school code of conduct was formulated in consultation with all stakeholders. Many of the older educators indicated that they were informed rather than consulted while the new educators indicated that they did not know. This could explain why many of the stakeholders were ignorant of the contents of the school code of conduct. From my observation the school does not have an induction program nor is the school code of conduct reviewed on a regular basis. This could explain the ignorance of the new educators in the school of study.

Confusion also exists over the disciplinary committee of the school, which according to the school code of conduct is made up of two educators. The schools duty roster asks for volunteers on this committee without stipulating number of individuals required. The level one educators and the acting deputy principal when asked about this discipline committee did not know the task description of this committee or who its members were.

There seems to be a lack of clarity regarding who and what the purpose of the discipline committee in the school is.

### **4.3.2. Procedure used to handle indiscipline**

When asked about how misdemeanours were handled, most of the level one educator's procedure indicated the following general pattern.

- i. speak to the defaulter
- ii. send a note to the defaulter's parents
- iii. if the deviant behaviour repeats itself then the defaulter is sent to the grade co-ordinator who is a Head of Department.
- iv. if the misconduct in the educators discretion is of a serious nature then the defaulter/s is referred to the office.

#### **4.3.2.1 Speaking to the defaulter**

Although majority of the educators have responded that this was their first line of disciplining, many of them indicated that speaking to pupils did not bring about a lasting positive change in their behaviour. A few educators indicated that they recorded these misconducts in a defaulter's book. This suggests that a defaulter's book is not compulsory for level one educators in the school under study.

From my observation I noticed that speaking to the defaulter has greater success if the pupil is spoken to on a one to one basis at the end of the lesson away from his or her peers. The frustration that occurs at the lack of success in getting through to pupils to correct misdemeanours at this stage and the lack of a forum to express this is probably what drives many educators to resort to various sanctions which are considered as corporal punishment.

#### **4.3.2.2 Sending a note home to the defaulter's parents**

Majority of the level one educators have indicated that although this seems to give some sort of relief, but it is temporary because the perpetrators go right back to their original misdemeanours. Another educator had the following to say on the issue:

Sending notes home to the parents brings about additional problems. Often the notes are either not taken home to the parents or the parents do not respond to the notes. You end up running after these pupils to remind them about taking the letters home or bringing the letters back from their parents.

This suggests that many parents of problematic pupils do not enforce their responsibilities and even when they do this control does not seem to be sustained.

#### **4.3.2.3 Sending the defaulter to the grade co-coordinator**

Respondents were mixed about how effective sending defaulters to the grade coordinators were. Some level one educators indicated that sending defaulters to the heads of grade (HOG) helped them reduce the occurrence of the indiscipline. Yet other level one educators did not indicate this kind of success. However from my observation it seems that if the HOG does not have the time to deal with the misconduct immediately then the exercise of sending the miscreant to the HOG becomes futile.

One educator said:

I do not like sending learners to the heads of grade because then he may think that I cannot sort my own problems. I make them stand and if that does not work then I send them out of the class and if that fails then I use the chalkboard duster. Corporal punishment works for me that is why you will see I do not have any pupils bunking their lessons and the attendance in my class is very good.

When asked if the educator did not get into trouble with the parents or office over the use

of corporal punishment and sending the pupils out of class. The educator indicated that the office has informally warned me against the use of corporal punishment. The parents have indicated in the parents' meeting and in the letters sent home to them that the educator must continue the use of corporal punishment. Although none of the other respondents indicated the use of corporal but the repeated warning in the staff minutes book dated 8/05/2002; 19/08/2002; 3/08/2003 and 19/08/2003 reads as follows:  
Corporal punishment is banned and educators administering it could face arrest.

From my observation the warnings are done in a very top-down and threatening manner. The periodic repetition of this warning in the minute's book also suggests that educators need to be constantly reminded against the use of corporal punishment. Gallie in Lorgat (2003) argues that meeting teachers' difficulties with threats and laws is not the answer. Gallie goes on to say:

We need to enhance the different roles and responsibilities of individuals, with specific obligations linked to the rights different role-players have. With this in mind, I clearly link rights and obligations tightly as two different sides of the same coin. Too often we want to argue rights at the expense of obligation. In enhancing the link between them, learners must be empowered and developed to understand and practice this phenomenon. In doing this, we will have to look at the development of a human rights culture at our schools.

The difference in the effectiveness of the head of grade in reducing the indiscipline seems to depend very much on the personality of the head of grade. This suggests an absence of procedure, which is used by the heads of grades to handle indiscipline.

#### **4.3.2.4. Sending the defaulter to the office**

Many level one educators have indicated that they send defaulters to the office when they have failed using the first three approaches mentioned above. Others indicated when the

misdemeanour was of a very serious nature then they would send the defaulter to the office.

From my observation, educators seem to vary in their discretion in how they view the severity of misdemeanours. Learners are thus sent to the office for various misdemeanours. The schools code of conduct does however grade misdemeanours into two levels. It also indicates when a learner displaying certain misconduct should be sent to the office

There seems to be confusion regarding how level one educators grade the severity of the misdemeanours.

The difference in what the educators on the ground are doing and what is suggested in the code of conduct could be attributed to two reasons. First, either the educators were not consulted when this document was drawn up or that this document has not been periodically reviewed to incorporate changes.

#### **4.4 Educators perceptions of the support they receive from stakeholders**

Interviewees were asked about their perception of the support they receive from the school governing body (SGB), parents, representative council of learners (RCL), prefects and upper management that is the deputy principals and principal in handling pupils' indiscipline.

##### **4.4.1 Support received from RCL**

The RCL is made up of two learners from every class in grade 8 right up to grade 12. This legal body of learners represents the views and grievances of rest of the learners in the school. Two learners represent the RCL in the school governing body.

In response to how supportive the RCL was educators emphasized that they received no assistance from the RCL in terms of maintaining discipline in the class. As one educator mentioned:

The only time we hear from the RCL is when they want to wear civvies on the last day of the school term.

It seems like the school has not taken full advantage of the RCL in maintaining discipline.

#### **4.4.2 Support received from Prefects**

The prefect body is composed of grade 12 learners who have been put through a screening process put together by the prefect committee. The entire staff then ratifies the list of candidates. The prefects' duty is to uphold the schools code of conduct in the absence of the level one educator in the class and in the school buildings during the breaks. This includes keeping learners away from the classrooms during the breaks thus preventing stealing or vandalizing of school property.

The majority of the educators reported that the prefects played a role in maintaining discipline only during the breaks. Interviewees did express the view that prefects were not effective in maintaining discipline in the classrooms. One of the respondents had this to say which probably explains the prefects' ineffectiveness:

Prefects are not treated as authoritative figures by fellow learners and there is no recourse available to the prefects to correct this problem.

Level one educators did indicate that the prefects could play a bigger role in maintaining discipline in the classroom. My observations as a form-teacher of a grade 11 class and the biology educator of another grade 11 class suggests that the prefects show no

initiative in bringing about discipline in the classroom unless they are asked to. Many of these prefects aid and abet the wrongdoers in class. I assume that these prefects are under pressure to fit in and are afraid of being ostracized by the rest of their peers. However these prefects do a disservice to the school by not helping to maintain discipline at all times. One educator mentioned that more attention should be given to the prefect selection criteria or prefect should go through vigorous training in leadership and assertiveness courses. Another level one educator reported:

Prefects are learners who happen to be in the right place in the right time hence they are chosen.

From my discourse with pupils you often hear remarks about how disgraceful some of the chosen prefects behave out of school. Another educator mentioned the following:

Many prefects take advantage of their badges by bringing cell-phones to school or indulging in boy-girl relationships. I have complained to the prefect mistress.

Unfortunately I did not have time to follow this up.

This suggests that prefects are capable of doing lots more in terms of helping with reducing indiscipline in class than they are presently doing.

#### **4.4.3 Support received from SGB**

The SGB represents the views and opinions of the parents. They thus form a vital link between the parents and school. The members of the SGB are thus in the ideal position to open and maintain lines of communication between parents and SGB. The SGB plays a role in drawing up the schools code of conduct and a role in disciplinary hearings.

When asked how supportive the SGB was in helping educators with discipline, level one educators felt that the SGB could do more in assisting them maintain discipline of a

routine nature in the school under study. Educators are of the opinion that the SGB could play a bigger role in the misconducts graded as level 1, 2 and 3 by the National Department of Education (2001). From my observation, it is the frequency of these misconducts, which stress the educators the most. One educator mentions:

The SGB needs to play more active role in all aspects of school. The members should not focus on certain areas thus neglecting an important area like discipline. They can assist by making home visits after hours of the parents of chronic defaulters. These SGB members can offer these parents support and assistance. Failing this these SGB members being part of the same community as the defaulters can link these learners with religious or counselling organisations in the community.

#### **4.4.4 Support received from parents**

Parents are expected to supervise their children's schoolwork, attend parents meetings and support the school in correcting the deviant behaviour of their children.

When asked about the support received from parents, educators felt that many parents have shifted the responsibility of their children's discipline to the schools.

One respondent said:

Parents when summoned to school seem powerless. They are not competent enough to deal with their children. Majority of the parents cannot see the severity of their pupils' transgression.

From my observation of how parents interact with educators it would seem that some parents regard the educator as their adversary. Parents often lose sight of the fact that both the parent and educator are actually in the same team. Both want the best for the learner and if the learner obstructs this pathway through misbehaving then he/she must be appropriately corrected. One level one educator reported:

Parents tend to defend or justify the poor behaviour of their children. If parents appreciate that the teachers and parents have the same objectives that is to develop a responsible child then there would be greater co-operation.

Another educator said:

Parents of pupils that you want to see at parent meetings do not attend. Often parents who promise to phone to find out if their child has stopped behaving poorly, do not follow through with their promises.

It seems that the parents meetings are not serving the needs of the level one educators in meeting parents of deviant and under performing learners. There thus does not seem to be proper lines of communication between the school and these parents.

#### **4.4.5 Support received from senior management**

Senior management refers to the deputy principals and the principal and they are expected to assist with misdemeanours of a serious nature.

When asked about how supportive senior management was, views of the level one educators were mixed. Some level one educators felt that although senior managers supported them but these senior managers were not effective. These level one educators reported that the miscreants were asked to apologise to the level one educator or the senior managers failed to inform educators of the consequences of the senior manager's intervention. Level one educators felt that their authority was thus being undermined rather than being supported. This suggests that even the managers' hands are tied regarding implementing effective disciplining. One of the deputies principal alluded to this in a staff meeting. Almost all the male respondents indicated full support from the senior management team. One male educator stated:

Senior management is very helpful. They assist by calling in parents when necessary. If you are unhappy with the way they conduct discipline, they are happy to give you answers.

While many of the female respondents were very wary about enlisting the assistance of senior managers. One female educator had this to say on the matter:

I am reluctant to enlist the managers' help as a female as I am afraid it would be construed as a sign of my weakness or incompetence.

In the staff minute book dated 22/04/2003, the principal states:

Certain female educators are experiencing problems in disciplining boys. An appeal was made to educators to act decisively and firmly and arrest the problems of discipline. Learners are not to be sent out of the class or to the office unless they are threats. Educators must try to resolve discipline problems. If discipline problems cannot be resolved then the educator should record the details and bring the learner to the office at 14h20

Again one can see that in the school under study very little discussion seems to be entertained on the matter of discipline. Although majority of the male educators have indicated in my discourse with them that they do not have any discipline problems but from my observation indicates otherwise. Many female educators are too afraid to publicly acknowledge that they have problems with discipline because managers may acknowledge this as a sign of weakness on their part.

This has probably hindered the lines of communication between senior managers and level one educators. The level one educators also felt that the senior managers could play a more instrumental role in providing forums where all stakeholders could network offer suggestions regarding discipline, request support without being made to feel incompetent, make plans to implement and try out new suggestions regarding discipline, resolve

discipline issues as a staff and empower everybody on alternatives to corporal punishment and cooperative discipline.

Senior managers made observations of discipline in the classroom and hasty conclusions were drawn regarding the competency of the educator. Before the “audi alteram partem” rule could be used, these conclusions were publicized in the staff meetings. This for some educators have destroyed all hopes of the school trying to work together to achieve discipline. Sankar (2000: 63) argues that ineffective management of learner behaviour must not be seen in terms of the educator’s personal inadequacy or negligence but in the lack of training in classroom management skills. From my observation, I recall one of the managers appealing to the educators not to send every misdemeanour to the office. This begs the question: if level one educators know procedure and effective ways of disciplining why then were learners being sent to the office for minor misdemeanours and consequently run the risk of being labelled incompetent?

#### **4. 5 Emerging issues**

The main challenges that emerged were:

1. The educators lacked time to handle indiscipline. It is obvious that educators in the school under study perceive their priority role as that of disseminator of specialized knowledge and indiscipline is seen as an infringement of this duty.
2. Lack of counselling skills makes it difficult to handle misconducts that have a psychological origin.
3. Large classes which makes implementation of OBE methodology difficult.
4. Multiracial classes suggests misunderstanding amongst subcultures
5. Inconsistencies in the way level one educators respond to miscreants breaking the school dress code, in the sanctions used by male and female level one educators, in the way senior managers support the different victims and in record keeping in the learners’ portfolios.

With regard to strategies used by educators to handle indiscipline it was found that there was an incongruity between what was being prescribed in the schools code of conduct and what was being implemented on the ground. This could be attributed to a lack of teamwork, absence of forums on a regular basis for networking amongst stakeholders and the use of non-consultative mechanisms for school policy formulation.

Evidence shows that there is not enough support obtained from stakeholders in reducing indiscipline in the classroom in the school under study.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the study, draws conclusions that emerge from the findings and gives recommendations in response to the conclusions.

#### **5.2 Summary of the research**

Chapter 1 set the scene of the study. It described the background to the study, the research questions and its setting. Chapter 2 reviewed literature. Key areas reviewed include current disciplinary legislation on corporal punishment, literature on managing educational change, which has immense value for empowering school personnel to cope with educational changes and finally theory on issues of discipline. Chapter 3 described the research methodology. The study utilized a case study approach. It also described the three data collecting methods namely the unstructured interview, observation and review of documents. Chapter 4 presented and analysed the data collected. Conclusions are drawn in response to each of the research questions.

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

**Research Q1.** What are the challenges being faced by educators in maintaining pupil discipline?

1. Educators reported that due to pressure on their part to complete syllabi in their subjects, they did not have sufficient time to handle indiscipline.
2. Findings seem to suggest that educators lack counselling skills.

3. Large classes in small classrooms seem to suggest that implementation of certain OBE methodologies very difficult to manage.
4. Behaviour of other race groups in multiracial classes were not understood by the level one educator. This seems to suggest that level one educators viewed this as a source of indiscipline in the class.
5. Inconsistencies in how educators responded to learners breaking the school code of conduct were also viewed by the level one educators as a reason for indiscipline in the school.

**Research Q 2.** What strategies do educators employ to cope with post apartheid reforms such as large, multiracial classes; abolition of corporal punishment and the removal of a guidance counsellor?

Findings seem to suggest an incongruity between strategy prescribed in the schools code of conduct and how discipline was being handled on the ground. The majority of the level one educators described the following strategies for the handling of indiscipline.

1. The level one educator speaks to the defaulter if the offence is minor or a first offence.
2. If the offence is repeated or of a serious nature then a note is sent home to the defaulter's parents. The parent responds in writing.
3. The defaulter is sent to the grade co-ordinator who is a Head of Department if the deviant behaviour repeats itself.
4. If the misconduct in the educators discretion is of a serious nature then the defaulter/s are referred to the senior management team.

**Research Q3.** What are the educator's perceptions of the support they receive from the school and the community, if any, in dealing with pupil indiscipline?

1. Findings suggest that parents have shifted responsibility of disciplining their children to the school.
2. Respondents reported that the school governing body should play a bigger role in supporting level one respondents in chronic routine type of classroom indiscipline.
3. Findings seems to suggest a lack of capacity on the part of the representative council of learners (RCL) and prefects, to assist level one educators with indiscipline in the classroom.
4. Level one educators have indicated the need for senior management to provide opportunities for networking within the school to resolve issues associated with indiscipline.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

1. Whilst teaching to complete syllabus is part of the task description of the level one educator, cognisance must be taken of the meaningful role the learner needs to play in society . Learners must therefore be educated holistically. This includes disciplining the learner so that the he or she learns self - control. Level one educators need to change their mindset regarding discipline because it is only through self-control can a learner attain self-actualization.
2. In response to the changes that schools are constantly bombarded with, all role-players can meet these challenges by empowering themselves. This can be done by role-players taking the initiative to study, staff development programs being arranged by the SMT or workshops being organized by the various role-players. A needs analysis must precede this. In this way certain emerging issues arising from data analysis can be addressed. Improving their counselling skills can assist the level one educators. In this way they will feel more competent to handle indiscipline arising out of

psychological problems. The level one educators and managers can also be work-shopped on alternatives to corporal punishment and cooperative discipline. This will prevent the need to use corporal punishment. Parents can also learn to improve their parenting skills so that they can become co-operative partners in helping the school reduce indiscipline. The RCL and prefects can learn leadership and assertive skills. This will help them support the level one educator in maintaining discipline in the classroom. There are six high schools in the area that can get together and offer subject packages that cater for the differential needs and abilities of the learners. This will allow learners from different backgrounds to identify and see relevance in what is being taught in the school under study. Ensuing deviant behaviour can thus be avoided because learners will not be frustrated and demotivated with what they are learning in schools.

3. It is important for the school to create structures that will allow all role-players to network. This implies opening the lines of communication and encouraging teamwork. In this way level one educators will be able to discuss, find solutions, and clear up misunderstandings thus preventing inconsistencies when handling matters of indiscipline and make requests without feeling incompetent. I have noticed that the school has four large classrooms, which they have acquired over the years. Networking can allow level one educators to swop classrooms in order to implement OBE methodologies, which require larger venues.
4. Whilst the school has a school code of conduct, findings on the ground suggest that for this document to become a working document it must be owned by all the role-players. There is a need for this document to be formulated in a collaborative manner by the community, the school representative council of learners (RCL). In this way stakeholders become morally bound to implement the school code of conduct. Although this is going to be a mammoth task but the agency produced with all the stakeholders will create the energy, which is required to find solutions around this challenge. This will also give the African and Coloured pupils and parents an opportunity to have a say in the formulation of the school code of conduct. Having a

school code of conduct, which has been collaboratively formulated, will also help maintain consistency in the strategies employed by all educators to correct indiscipline. Periodic review of the school code of conduct will also help incorporate new strategies in response to changes.

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## **Appendix 1 (a)**

### **Interview schedule for the level one educator**

The following questions were asked in relation to the key questions.

**Key Q1.** What are the challenges being faced by educators in maintaining pupil discipline?

1. What are the main post- apartheid educational reforms, which challenge you in maintaining classroom discipline?
2. What other contextual challenges do you face in maintaining discipline in the classroom?
3. How does each of these challenges impact on your ability to maintain discipline in the class?

**Key Q2.** What strategies do educators employ to cope with post-apartheid reforms such as large, multiracial classes; abolition of corporal punishment and the removal of a guidance counsellor?

1. Was the school code of conduct formulated in consultation with the pupils, level one educators, parents and school managers?
2. Is the school code of conduct reviewed regularly?
3. What strategies do you use to handle indiscipline in your class?

**Key Q3.** What are the educator's perceptions of the support they receive from the school and the community, if any, in dealing with pupil indiscipline?

1. What role do the following stakeholders play in assisting you with the handling of learner indiscipline:
  - i. Representative Council of Learners
  - ii. Prefects

- iii. School governing body
  - iv. Parents
  - v. Senior managers
2. Are you comfortable with seeking help from senior managers with regards to handling learner indiscipline?
  3. Does the school create opportunities for the level one educators to discuss issues of learner indiscipline?

## **Appendix 1 (b)**

The data collecting methods shall use observation of behaviour and examining of documents. The schedule for each instrument shall be as follows:

1. Observed behaviour between:

- Level one educator and learner
- Level one educator and level one educator
- Level one educators and parents
- Level one educator and managers
- Manager and learner

2. The following documents are examined:

- Staff minute book
- Learners' portfolios
- School code of conduct
- Notes to parents
- Educators' "defaulters' books"