

**STIMULATING SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT IN A
PRIMARY SCHOOL: A DEPUTY PRINCIPAL'S SELF-STUDY**

BY

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COLLAGE OF HUMANITIES

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I, Khulekani Luthuli, declare that

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This thesis is submitted with/without my approval.

.....

PROF. KATHLEEN PITHOUSE-MORGAN

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this self-study research was to learn about stimulating school-wide positive behavior support in a multicultural primary school. As a deputy principal, I was concerned that learners were continuously displaying disruptive behavior, thus impeding the culture of teaching and learning. By adopting a sociocultural theoretical perspective, I understood that learners' actions take place in sociocultural context. I therefore anticipated that taking a sociocultural approach in working with learners, teachers and parents as a school-wide group who come from diverse sociocultural backgrounds could help facilitate interesting and valuable interactions. Because this was self-study research, I was the main participant in the study. The other participants who helped me answer my research questions were two of my former school friends, four grade 6 learners, two post level 1 teachers, two Heads of Departments, and two school governing body parents. I also worked with two fellow Master's students as my critical friends. My first research question was: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* Responding to this question through memory-work and arts-based self-study methods enabled me to understand how recalling my past supportive and unsupportive experiences could help me to learn about positive behaviour support. My former primary and high school friends discussed supportive and unsupportive experiences with me to evoke memories of the past. My second research question was: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* In response to this question, I used arts-based self-study and collective self-study methods to engage learner, parent and teacher participants to collaborate in deliberations on positive behaviour support for learners. Self-study research enabled me to reconsider my managerial and teaching outlook and practice by interacting with our school-wide community. I learnt that it is a core part of my responsibility as a deputy principal to ensure that respectful, trusting and empathetic relationships within the school community support and promote the socio-emotional and academic growth of learners. As a school manager, I should serve as a role model in cultivating supportive relationships with parents, teachers and learners.

ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| ▪ ANC | African National Congress |
| ▪ IFP | Inkatha Freedom Party |
| ▪ HOD | Head of Department |
| ▪ PE | Physical Education |
| ▪ RDP | Reconstruction Development Programme |
| ▪ SCM | Student Christian Movement |
| ▪ SGB | School Governing Body |
| ▪ SRC | Student Representative Council |
| ▪ UDM | United Democratic Movement |

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

As a newly appointed deputy principal and experienced teacher in a multicultural school catering for learners¹ from diverse racial and multicultural backgrounds, I noticed learners, especially those with academic attainment challenges, showing problem behaviour. I wondered whether this might be related to a lack of behaviour support in the school. Consequently, the aim of my self-study research was to explore ways of cultivating school-wide positive behaviour support aimed at assisting learners to act in ways that are honest, responsible, trustworthy, considerate, and respectful. My personal inspiration for wanting to help learners in terms of positive behaviour support was drawn from remembering the lack of positive behaviour support exhibited by my former teachers in my early years of schooling. I became aware of this personal motivation through composing a poem on my primary school years. My research supervisor asked me to compose the poem (see Figure 1.1.) in the initial stages of my study to help me to identify the focus and purpose of my research.

My primary school years

I don't remember having a decent conversation with teachers; I was fearful of them
I always wanted to become a teacher so I would change some aspects of my schooling that had affected me.
Dehumanising learners by people we trusted was the order of the day.
I was not good enough for class A, but was wasting time in class B, teachers would tell me.

Ninety percent of the Bible scriptures and poems I did in primary are still in my memory.
I always wanted to become a teacher so I would change some aspects of my schooling that had affected me.
I always wanted to change the perception that teachers come from another world.
I was not good enough for class A, but was wasting time in class B, teachers would tell me.
Teachers would embarrass you in front of the class.

I always wanted to change the perception that teachers come from another world.
Dehumanising learners by people we trusted was the order of the day.
Teachers would embarrass you in front of the class.
I don't remember having a decent conversation with teachers; I was fearful of them.

¹ In South Africa, the term “learners” is used to refer to children and adolescents in school, while “students” refers to those studying in higher education institutions.

Figure 1.1. French Malaysian pantoum poem for changing the aspects of my schooling that affected me negatively.

Based on the above Malaysian pantoum poem, which is “characterized by repeating lines that echo throughout the poem” (Furman, Langer, & Taylor, 2010, p. 63), I was able to examine the way I was taught at school and my motivation for becoming a teacher. The poem also inspired my reflect on the way in which I had been teaching, as well as the way in which I could contribute to positive behaviour support for learners as a deputy principal in a multicultural primary school. Composing the poem triggered memories of my own past supportive and unsupportive schooling experiences. Correspondingly, Cole (2011) claimed that there is a strong connection between our childhood remembrances and our present-day teaching practices. Through recalling such memories one can explore a variety of emotions that would inform one’s destiny as a teacher (Cole, 2011).

In the poem I mentioned that I always wanted to become a teacher so that I could change some aspects of my schooling that had affected me negatively as a learner. I meant that I wanted to ensure that I would provide consistent care and support, as well as increase the level of confidence in learners. I thought that I could do that by giving learners the leeway to express themselves more in co-curricular and extra-mural activities, such as spelling bees, quizzes, assembly talks, readathons, creative writing and more. I also indicated in the poem that I did not remember having a decent conversation with teachers and that I was fearful of them. In this line I meant that I wanted to become a teacher who would interact with learners. I wanted to be a teacher to whom learners would find it easy to talk. I wanted to be a teacher who would show learners respect and care and open lines of sound dialogue between learners and me and among learners. I believe that as a deputy principal it is paramount to foster the socio-emotional development of all learners in my school. This is in contrast to my own memories of primary school expressed in this line in the poem: “Dehumanising learners by people we trusted was the order of the day”.

In this chapter, Chapter One, I present the focus and purpose of my research. Next, I offer background information to put my study into context in terms of the recent history of education in South Africa. I then expand on my rationale for the research and clarify my research questions as benchmarks for my study. To follow, I explain why I adopted a sociocultural theoretical perspective for my study. I also clarify my understanding of the key concepts of positive behaviour support and school-wide learning. I further briefly describe

the self-study methodological approach that shaped this study. In conclusion, I recap this chapter and provide an overview of the dissertation.

Focus and purpose of the study

The focus of my study was on school-wide positive behaviour support in the primary school where I am deputy principal. I aimed to investigate possibilities for positive behaviour support for learners, with the aim of maximising positive learner engagement in my school. The purpose of the study was to learn about formulating a positive behaviour support system that would be inclusive of diverse cultural and racial backgrounds within the school. To achieve this purpose, I planned to seek the help of learners, parents and teachers.

Behaviour is an imperative social capacity that one acquires informally and in formal institutions such as schools. Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, and Feinberg (2005) advised that positive behaviour support in schools can promote social capability by educating learners on how to interact more constructively with peers and adults through intensified conflict resolution, problem solving, negotiation, and friendship building. Additionally, Venter (2010) noted that positive behaviour support can help people to offer and receive positive social recognition, which may increase social involvement and constructive communication. On the other hand, a lack of positive behaviour support may come to the fore in aggressive, obstructive behaviour, which can negatively influence future interactions (Venter, 2010). Cheney et al. (2009) noted that positive behaviour support must be coherent and cost effective for schools to continually use it to enhance learners' social outgrowth.

The reason for choosing to do this research was stirred by my awareness of a lack of positive behaviour support for learners in my school; I was concerned that this could be leading to poor learner academic attainment and an increase in negative social behaviour. As Algozzine, Wang and Violette (2010) explained, it is strenuous to learn and teach when you are spending more time on discipline-related interactions than on those associated with learning and teaching academic content. Hence, as Anderson and Kincaid (2005) observed, it is prudent for schools to create school-wide positive behaviour support teams that will develop comprehensive expectations and rules to intensify the focus on positive social behaviour and to make certain that such behaviour is responded to efficiently.

Moreover, I also wanted to explore the joys and challenges that I might encounter by embracing school-wide positive behaviour support in our school. I felt that I also needed to uncover my weaknesses in as far as behaviour is concerned. I anticipated that making myself vulnerable to learners, as well as my colleagues, might help me to learn about addressing behaviour in my school. I also hoped to find strategies for stimulating and encouraging colleagues to look at behaviour from a different perspective.

Background information

The education system in South Africa before democracy in 1994 was unequal for different racial groups that were defined as White, Indian, Coloured and African (Kallaway, Kruss, Donn, & Fataar, 1997). This inequality in education was caused by the apartheid system that was pioneered by the government of White rulers (Clarke & Worger, 2016). Apartheid was a political and social system in South Africa while it was under the White National Party Government rule. In this system, South African people were separated according to their race, and these races were obligated to live and go to school independently from each other.

As Kallaway et al. (1997) explained, inequality in education in South Africa before democracy in 1994 was constructed along race, class and topographical lines. Each racial group had its own curriculum development protocols. Schools that fell under separate education departments (House of Assembly for Whites, House of Delegates for Indians, House of Representatives for Coloureds, Department of Education and Culture, as well as Department of Education and Training, for Africans) were treated unequally. Inequality was evident with a gap in quality in schools' infrastructure, the learner-teacher ratios, the curriculum, the funding, teacher salaries, teacher training levels, learner teacher support-materials, as well as rules and expectations for school codes of conduct. The best and most accessible education was reserved for urban White children.

Today, a democratic South Africa has one Department of Basic Education² where all schools have had to adjust to new ways of administration of curriculum and of developing and maintaining positive behaviour support for learners in terms of codes of conduct. A major post-apartheid shift has been the banning of the use of corporal punishment based on the constitution of South Africa (1996) and the South African Schools Act (1996). The South

² Prior to 2009, the Department of Basic Education was known as the Department of Education.

African Schools Act (1996) stipulated that teachers should not administer corporal punishment to any learner at school. The policy however, did not recommend other lawful corrective measures to be implemented by schools, leaving schools vulnerable in terms of behaviour control.

Corporal punishment was a form of punishment that was widely used in South African schools before the period of radical transformation of the education system in South Africa. Morrell (2001) argued that corporal punishment was an essential part of schooling for most teachers and learners in the twentieth century South African schools. Furthermore, Naong (2007) reported that the South African education system is in a period of modification from a system that encouraged corporal punishment and the advancement of barbaric, punitive teaching. Awareness of the scrapping of corporal punishment therefore encouraged me to seek for an alternative positive behaviour support system for learners that would promote and maintain constructive learner-teacher relationships. As Naong (2007) highlighted, South African teachers are now faced with the task of trying to preserve discipline without unwarranted brutality, and encouraging reasonable moral thought and behaviour without brainwashing.

The Department of Education's policy document on *Alternatives to Corporal Punishment in the Classroom* (2000, p. 9) claimed that "many of the measures used to maintain discipline were reactive, punitive, humiliating and punishing rather than corrective and nurturing." However, it also advocated that if positive discipline strategies were used zealously, learners could undergo an informative, restorative drive in which they would learn to exercise self-discipline, consideration of others and accept the outcome of their actions (Department of Education, 2000).

Rationale

I am a recently appointed deputy principal of a multicultural primary school in the Central Business District in the city of Durban in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. It is a multicultural school because learners who attend the school come from various racial and cultural backgrounds. For example, we have African, Coloured and Indian learners. In addition, approximately three quarters of learners who attend the school are foreign nationals who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. It is my first time in a multicultural school where learners come from such diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Correspondingly, I am aware that in post-apartheid South Africa, it is important to consider approaches to school discipline in relation to “promoting integration of and respect for cultural diversity” (Payet & Vije, 2008, p. 158). In my understanding, learner positive behaviour support should be central in nurturing and developing tolerance among learners who come from diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. As Pala (2011) stated, we must acknowledge that the development of learners who will possess and act upon ethical sensibilities must begin when they are very young.

Garner (2011) demonstrated that school leadership is pivotal to the construction and conservation of an encouraging school environment where an ethos is conveyed which promotes inclusion and where leaders exemplify their values, linked to ethos of the school. Good leadership is marked by an ability to impart a positive vision that is logical and consistent and where staff feel able to contribute to shaping the school’s positive ethos (Garner, 2011). The research topic of stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a primary school was important to me as a deputy principal because of a concern that was raised by noticing the negative behaviour displayed by learners in my school on daily basis.

I observed that my school had a challenge in coming up with positive behavioural support measures that would assist teachers in performing their duties without hindrances. Learners were continually brought to the office for various offences of misbehaviour, thereby impeding the culture of teaching and learning. This affected me directly as deputy principal because I ended up dealing with learners who misbehaved all the time, thus derailing other duties that I had to perform. Moreover, I was concerned that I was not consistent with punishment meted out to learners who had committed similar offences because the school did not have a proper policy for a behaviour support system. And, as Ward, Gould, Kelly and Mauff (2015) explained, erratic discipline approaches can give rise to belligerence and other worrying behaviour on the part of learners.

Along with a lack of proper behaviour support, the school was maintaining a below par academic performance based on Annual National Assessment³ statistics. I was perturbed by the loss of instructional time due to trying to solve behavioural problems instead of focusing

³The Annual National Assessments are standardised national assessments for languages and mathematics in the intermediate phase (grades 4 – 6) and in literacy and numeracy for the foundation phase (grades 1 – 3). (Department of Basic Education, n.d.)

our energies on instilling a culture of teaching and learning. I therefore anticipated that creating a school-wide positive behaviour support system that would embrace the diversity of learners in my school could benefit both teachers and learners.

Warren et al. (2006) highlighted that many schools face the challenging problem of educating learners whose behaviour is a serious obstruction to their own schooling as well as that of others. As Cheney et al. (2009) put it, the school-wide positive behaviour support model stresses increasing levels of support to intensify positive social behaviour and decrease controversial behaviour among both learners and teachers. I therefore anticipated that this study would help me to learn about developing strategies for stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support to further assist the school and ultimately, the Department of Basic Education. I anticipated that the value and the potential contribution of this study would be to learn more about positive ways to reinforce helpful learner social behaviour patterns within the school community, with the aim of serving as a catalyst for inspiring a school-wide culture of teaching and learning.

Research questions

The following two questions guided my research:

Question 1

What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?

Responding to this question (in Chapter Three of this dissertation) enabled me to understand how recalling my past supportive and unsupportive experiences could help me to learn about positive behaviour support. My former primary and high school friends discussed supportive and unsupportive experiences with me to evoke memories of the past. Answering this question also helped me to evaluate the role I play in as far as positive behaviour support is concerned.

Question 2

What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?

In response to this question (see Chapter Four), I engaged learner, parent and teacher participants to collaborate in deliberations on positive behaviour support for the school.

A sociocultural theoretical perspective

Gerhard and Smith (2008, p. 50) maintained that a sociocultural perspective is grounded on the belief that learning is not an individual activity, but is rather a social experience. Similarly, Samaras et al. (2014) asserted that learning is active and social, and that interchange shapes individuals' mental practices. Likewise, McMurtry (2015) observed that social interaction can assist learners to adjust and restructure their understanding. He further pointed out that a sociocultural perspective on learning concentrates mainly on how learning happens among people in relation to cultural and social surroundings. I therefore anticipated that taking a sociocultural approach in working with learners, teachers and parents as a school-wide group who come from diverse sociocultural backgrounds could help facilitate interesting and valuable interactions in terms of personal experiences, social and cultural relationships. As Easton (2012, p. 50) affirmed, "learning means that we work with many people, encouraging discoveries and learning from mistakes, helping everyone to find what works." In my view, this means that learning is lifelong and that we learn through interacting with others. Along a learning journey we are bound to make, mistakes. However, we can learn more through the mistakes that we and other people make to come up with constructive discoveries.

Banks et al. (2001) advised that if teachers are to create learning opportunities for all learners, teachers must be enlightened about the social and cultural aspects of teaching and learning. Similarly, John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) maintained that learning and growth take place in communally and culturally shaped surroundings. Moreover, John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) affirmed that "human functioning is tied to cultural, institutional, and historical settings since these settings shape and provide the cultural tools that are mastered by individuals to form this functioning" (p. 193). And Northfield and Sherman (2004) attested that our actions, the way we perceive ourselves and treat one another begins from the values and beliefs we develop as we grow in relationship to others. Thus, I realised that I could improve my practice as a deputy principal by getting to know and understand my learners' cultures, family backgrounds, beliefs and daily habits so that communication between us could be enhanced. I anticipated that having parent participants in my study would bring about deeper understanding of the learners' cultural backgrounds (see Chapter Four).

Positive behaviour support

I was concerned because many learners attending my school displayed behaviour problems such as late coming, bullying, disruption in classrooms, fighting and littering. Such antisocial behaviour can create an unsafe learning context, undermine authority, and constitute a danger to the school population (Luiselli et al., 2005). Cheney et al. (2010) maintained that poor social relationships in schools can give rise to a lack of classroom transformation and academic achievement, and to overall school non-performance. A difficulty our school faced in relation to learners who regularly came late, were bullying other learners, were disruptive in class and were fighting against each other, was that the level of teaching and learning was compromised due to instructional time being spent on discipline. Moreover, as McIntosh, Campbell, Cater and Zumbo (2009) explained, such behaviour problems often result in office discipline referrals. Teachers in my school would often send learners to the office for various offences of misbehaviour, thereby impeding the culture of teaching and learning. Hence, as Lewis (2001) pointed out, the way teachers were dealing with discipline in class was actually disturbing learning.

It was with all of these challenges in mind that I wanted to learn more about school-wide positive behaviour support, which aims to ensure that learners' positive behaviour in schools is encouraged and maintained at all times (Luiselli et al., 2005). Scott (2001) affirmed that by "using school-wide systems of positive behavioural support, schools can decrease the number of unruly and unacceptable behaviours by students, providing a clearer focus for intervention on the students with the greatest support needs" (p. 88). Lassen, Steele and Sailor (2006) suggested that attempts to support pro-social behaviour, denote clear suggestions, and utilise purposeful behaviour management methods are more effective in changing learners' behaviour for the better. The main aim behind positive behaviour support is to prevent all the foreseeable misbehaviour happening on a daily basis and maximise learner engagement by allowing learners to take more responsibility in making the correct decisions in recognising good behaviour and understanding the impact of behaviour on others (Turnbull et al., 2002).

Positive behaviour support formulation should involve participation of learners in coming up with rules and expectations envisaged from them (Turnbull et al., 2002). Lewis (2001) advised that teachers must engage learners more in decision making and must be seen to be extending more non-directive hints, acknowledgement of positive behaviour, and deliberation with unruly learners, to allow them to comprehend the influence of their behaviour on others

and to puzzle out how to behave more positively. In addition, Kaufman, Sara and Sawyer (2004) affirmed that more time spent on learner consultation in learning activities diminishes the level of behaviour complications in class. In a framework for developing and enacting humane behaviour policies and practices in schools, Sullivan, Johnson, Lucas and Baak (2015) noted that schools should safeguard that learners are primary to all decision making and action and also include them in pertinent and meticulous learning through teaching about positive behaviour. I therefore planned to invite selected learners to give input towards school-wide positive behaviour support for our school. For this reason, in planning my study I decided to give learner participants the opportunity to write down what they would like to see included in a learners' positive behaviour support policy for the school (see Chapter Four). I also chose to ask them to consult their peers to add on what they might have missed out.

Furthermore, Handler, et al. (2007) advised that school leaders must establish a team of stakeholders to contribute to developing positive behaviour support practices. Examples of stakeholders are parents, school psychologists, support personnel and community liaisons. Furthermore, schools should involve all members of the school community to enhance a sense of ownership to construct and maintain relationships within the community (Sullivan et al., 2015). Anderson and Kincaid (2005) affirmed that it is prudent for schools to engage school-wide positive behaviour support teams that will develop comprehensive expectations and rules that will intensify the focus on positive social behaviour and to make certain that such behaviour is responded to efficiently. Drawing from what I gathered from my reading, I learnt that for positive behaviour support to be adopted and adhered to by relevant structures, a school needed to develop a positive essence by engaging the participation of teachers and parents, as well as learners (see Chapter Four).

Easton (2008) emphasised that teachers can learn from one another to improve their own professional lives and the culture of their working environment in order to assist one another to make changes. Easton (2012) claimed that teacher learning is enhanced if teachers in learning communities are given a chance to figure out how to organise themselves specifically and what to do in these communities related to school's goals. Hence, I chose to formulate a positive behaviour support group that would include teachers in addition to parents and learners.

Handler et al. (2007) advised that experts such as psychologists, educator specialists and community counsellors can be invited to give input with regards to learner positive behaviour support. Therefore, I decided to invite a professional psychologist to have a private session with learners, and thereafter to give the school feedback on what she had discovered. Furthermore, the psychologist gave advice to teachers on positive behaviour support for learners. For example, she reminded us teachers that our school code of conduct should be focused on an ethos that conforms to the South African constitution. She also recommended that teachers should give learners an easily understood picture of what they should or should not do, as well as which channels of communication they should use if they are aggrieved.

School-wide learning

Weeks (2012) observed that an effective culture of learning can enhance learning in almost every aspect of education and every stage of life. Similarly, in my study I intended to contribute to developing a culture of learning that could bring about conducive conditions for teachers and learners, including regular attendance, punctuality and pro-social behaviour (Sedibe, 2006). Weeks (2012) further stated that in the context of a culture of learning, the mental models learners acquire would influence not only how they learn, but also how they behave in general.

Sedibe (2006) noted that working together also means sharing, and this plays a vital role in shaping the school's quality and character, thus establishing a culture of teaching and learning where learners' achievements will be increased. Weeks (2012) further stated that "a culture of learning emerges through a collaborative learning experience, as well as the sharing of ideas, expectations, values and beliefs between teachers, students, parents and other pertinent role players" (p. 7). Because of my understanding that learning and development occur in socially and culturally moulded surroundings, I intended to utilise the opportunity of having learners, teachers and parents with diverse cultural backgrounds at our school to contribute to an overall culture of school-wide learning that would be accommodative to all.

Du Preez and Roux (2010) maintained that culture can be understood in terms of shared values, beliefs and principles. In the same way, John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) demonstrated that sociocultural approaches highlight the interconnectedness of social and personal processes in the re-development of knowledge. I anticipated that in my institution, although

learners and teaching staff come from diverse cultural backgrounds, we could uphold common school-wide values, beliefs and principles that would further bring about stability in as far as learner behaviour is concerned.

Methodological approach

The methodological approach I chose for my study was a self-study methodology. (I offer a detailed discussion of my self-study methodology in Chapter Two of this dissertation.) Samaras and Roberts (2011) noted that in self-study research, teachers carefully explore their actions and the provisions of those actions. Therefore, I anticipated that self-study research could be a way of developing as a more prudent teacher and school leader. Furthermore, Austin and Senese (2004, p. 1231) maintained that “self-study urges teachers to find their own voice, to improve their practices, to extend their relationships, and to discover and document their potential as leaders of change”. Through self-study research I hoped to improve my practice as a deputy principal by getting to know and understand myself better, in relationship with learners, parents and teachers in my school community.

Additionally, Samaras and Roberts (2011) explained that self-study allows teachers to “work with critical friends in an intellectually safe and supportive community to improve their practice by making it explicit to themselves and to others through critical collaborative enquiries” (p. 43). LaBoskey (2004) clarified that self-study research is not only for the self as it pushes us to communicate our learning and make it accessible for critical observation and further reflections. What I found most interesting in the self-study methodology is that it offered me an opportunity to do introspection in dialogue with others and then develop myself through reflecting on the mistakes I might have made along my teaching career.

Conclusion and overview of the dissertation

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce my study. I began by explaining the focus and purpose of my research. Subsequently, I put my study into context in terms of the history of education in South Africa. I then gave further details about my motivation for undertaking the research and spelled out my research questions as points of reference for my study. Next, I explained why I took on a sociocultural theoretical perspective for my study. I also explained how I understood the key concepts of positive behaviour support and school-wide learning in the context of my study. I then briefly introduced my self-study methodological approach.

In the next chapter, Chapter Two, I clarify my adoption of a self-study research methodology. Also, I depict the context for my study. I explain my position as a researcher as well as a participant and give details of how other participants enhanced my study. I also make clear the function of critical friends (my fellow Master's students) in my study. I then give an account of my data generation practices and meaning making. I give details of how I tackled ethical issues and validity. Additionally, I bring to light research challenges that could have hindered my study. To close, I offer my key learning about carrying out self-study research.

Chapter Three is intended to respond to my first research question: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* In responding to this research question, I remember and reflect on past supportive and unsupportive experiences. I remember the encouragement I received from my grandmother and my Christian Education teacher. I further look at supportive and unsupportive memories of my primary school and high school days with the assistance of my primary school and high school friends. I also explain the helpful role played during my adolescence by a community member. Subsequently, I depict and consider my early and current teaching experiences. I then show concept maps that I produced to consolidate my learning from recalling supportive and unsupportive memories. I end with my core learning from remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences.

In Chapter Four, I relate how I involved learner, teacher and parent participants to help me to answer my second research question: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* I depict and reflect on my learning through my interactions with learner, teacher and parent participants. I then show how I created a chart and concept map to consolidate my learning and demonstrate how I enriched this learning through discussion with my research supervisor and critical friends. To conclude, I express my main learning from engaging with members of our school community.

In the concluding chapter, Chapter Five, I review my self-study dissertation. I then give details of how my study has affected me personally and professionally. Next, I deliberate on my methodological learning. Finally, I explain what I plan to do differently in the future because of this study.

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH PROCESS

Introduction

The intention behind doing this self-study research was to draw on my past supportive and unsupportive experiences in learning about school-wide positive behavior support in my role as a deputy principal of a multicultural primary school. In the previous chapter, Chapter One, I introduced my study. I clarified the focus and purpose of my research. I also put my study into context with respect to the history of education in South Africa. I expanded on the impetus for undertaking the research and listed the two research questions that gave direction to my study. Next, I shed light on why I adopted a sociocultural theoretical perspective for this study. I also described my interpretation of the key concepts of positive behaviour support and school-wide learning. I then gave a brief introduction to my self-study methodological approach. This was followed by an overview of the dissertation.

In this chapter, Chapter Two, I explain my choice of a self-study research methodology and of memory-work, arts-based and collective self-study research methods (Samaras, 2011). Furthermore, I describe the context in which my study took place. I then move to explaining my dual position as a researcher as well as a participant and how other participants enriched my study. I also spell out the role of critical friends in my study. This is followed by a description of my data generation and how I consolidated my learning. I make clear how I addressed ethical issues and validity. Furthermore, I give examples of research challenges that could have hampered my study. In conclusion, I offer my most important learning about undertaking self-study research.

Research methodology

The methodological approach for my research was self-study. According to Samaras (2011), self-study research can be best understood by actually using this methodological approach. Hamilton, Smith and Worthington (2008) described self-study research as a focal point for teachers chasing a superior knowledge of their individual practice settings and their work, with a concern for improving teaching and learning. Furthermore, Hamilton and Pinnegar (1998) defined self-study as the study of an individual, the individual's ideas, as well as the "not self" (p. 236). They explained that it draws on an individual's life, but it is more than that as it includes a reflective look at texts, events, people and concepts. Moreover, LaBoskey (2004) affirmed that self-study is improvement-aimed, whereby one wishes to transform

one's self first in order for one to be better situated to inspire change in others, with the aim of changing the school and the environment for the better.

Samaras (2011) explained that, through self-study research, teachers can work to improve their expertise, with the aim of positively affecting learners' learning, as well as impacting policy decisions and education systems. Additionally, Hamilton et al. (2008) highlighted another aim for self-study research, which is to contribute to the professional learning base, as well as creating a deeper understanding of the educational world. I embarked on this self-study research journey because I wanted to improve my practice as a deputy principal by influencing constructive change at my school in relation to positive behaviour support for learners. I also hoped that sharing my learning about stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support could assist my colleagues, and ultimately, the Department of Basic Education.

Using a memory-work self-study method (Samaras, 2011) enabled me to remember and explore my past supportive and unsupportive experiences with the help of two of my former school friends (see Chapter Three). One of my former primary school friends and one of my former high school friends assisted me in answering my first research question: *What can I learn about positive behavior support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* Reminiscing about past supportive and unsupportive experiences with my former primary and high schools friends enabled me to recall memories that I might not have remembered if my friends were not there to deliberate with me. For example, when looking at a photograph that I had taken at my former primary school that showed a mango tree, my former primary school friend reminded me of an incident where I was reported by my classmate for mimicking our principal, Mr Vezi. I had demonstrated to the other boys how Mr Vezi shouted when he was teaching us IsiZulu in class. I was called into the staffroom to repeat what I had said in front of teachers. I was severely punished for making a joke out of Mr Vezi, despite asking for forgiveness and saying that I was only playing. As Samaras (2011) explained, using a memory-work self-study method serves to unearth the ways in which events we remember have created the foundation of who we are today. Pithouse-Morgan, Mitchell and Pillay (2012) emphasised that memories play a pivotal part in present individual and collaborative patterns of thoughts and actions and that we can cautiously work with memory to become alert to and intervene creatively in these patterns.

In addition to using memory-work, I also engaged in arts-based self-study. Samaras (2011) maintained that an arts-based self-study method can help to stimulate and elicit self-reflection through the arts. In addition, LaBoskey (2004) advocated that arts-based self-study is potentially holistic and also allows researchers to view unique aspects of their educational experience. Similarly, Weber (2014) reiterated that an arts-based approach can increase our learning by including the often “neglected, but important ways in which we construct meaning through artistic forms of expression” (p. 10). Furthermore, Samaras (2011) noted that self-study researchers can use a variety of art forms to portray, interpret and convey their study as they make it public. Hence, my participants and I used visual arts-based practices, such as drawing and photography, to generate data in response to my first and second research questions (see Chapter Three and Chapter Four).

Samaras (2011) advised that, as a self-study researcher, you may choose a collective self-study approach to jointly study an issue by establishing a team or group while you explore your part within that collective ask. Thus, I engaged a positive behaviour support group (which comprised four grade six learners, three post level one teachers⁴, two heads of department and two School Governing Body [SGB] parents) to assist me in responding to the second research question : *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?*

Location of the study

This study was conducted in an urban primary school that is situated in the heart of the Central Business District in Durban in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. The school falls under Umlazi District. About 70% of learners in my school reside in the city of Durban and the remaining 30% come from different townships around Durban. Because of its urban location, the school attracts learners from various racial and socio-economic backgrounds. Approximately three quarters of learners who attend the school are foreign nationals who come from diverse cultural backgrounds. The teaching staff comprises 90% Indians and 10% Africans.

Our school is a state fee school. A state fee school is a government school that falls in the category of schools where the parents pay school fees. Most parents of these children at the

⁴ A post level one teacher is a teacher who is at the base of the teaching rank in the school setting.

school are literate. The teacher-learner ratio is 1:40. The school is co-educational; it caters for boys and girls. The school includes grade R up to grade 7. Grade R provides elementary schooling whereby learners are prepared for schooling in grade 1 the following year. The school is working in collaboration with a Non-Governmental Organisation that provides lunch to learners who need it. Most learners are brought to the school every day by arranged transport such as taxis and trains.

Research participants

Hamilton, Smith, and Worthington. (2008) described self-study research as a look at a professional person in action, generally against educational backgrounds. Furthermore, they claimed that self-study researchers concentrate on their work by scrutinising their unique values and their professional practices (Hamilton, et al. 2008). Since this was self-study research, I was the principal participant in my study. I have been teaching for 22 years and hold a Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours degree. As a participant myself, I examined my past supportive and unsupportive experiences in relation to the possible supportive and unsupportive influences on my practices as a deputy principal with regard to positive behaviour support in my school. I also explored how I could improve my practice in this regard.

Table 2.1. lists the participants who assisted me in generating data to answer the two questions that informed my research. Pseudonyms have been used for all the participants.

Table 2.1.
Biographic information of participants

| Former primary and high school friends | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------------|--|
| Pseudonyms | Teaching experience | Grades taught | Race | Position | Highest Qualifications |
| Fortune | 21 years | 6 and 7 | African | Head of Department | Bachelor of Education (BEd) Honours degree |
| Mduduzi | 22 years | 12 | African | Deputy principal | BEd Honours degree |

| Teacher participants | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Pseudonyms | Teaching experience | Grades taught | Race | Position | Highest Qualifications |
| Miss Dlomo | 10 years | 5 and 6 | African | Post level one | BEd degree |
| Mr Siphika | 11 years | 7 | African | Post level one | BEd degree |
| Mr Pillay | 31 years | 7 | Indian | Post level two | BEd Honours degree |
| Mrs Singh | 33 years | 3 | Indian | Post level two | Master's degree |

| Parent participants | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Pseudonyms | Position | Race |
| Mrs Moremi | SGB member | African |
| Mr Okeke | SGB member | African |

| Learner participants | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Pseudonyms | Grade | Race | Gender |
| Tshinya | 7 | African | Male |
| Alexander | 7 | Coloured | Female |
| Victoria | 7 | Indian | Female |
| Nokuzola | 7 | African | Female |

One former primary school friend

I chose Fortune, a former primary school friend, as a participant because I still have his contact number and we see each other quite often. Fortune is a 47 year old professional teacher. He has a BEd Honours degree in Mathematics. He has 21 years of teaching experience in the intermediate and senior phases. He is currently a head of department (HoD) for the intermediate phase (grades 4 to 6) in a primary school. Fortune came to my former primary school to do standard 4 (now known as grade 6). We therefore spent two years (standards 4 and 5) as friends in a primary school.

One former high school friend

One of my former high school friends is Mduduzi. He is 48 years old. He holds a BEd Honours degree. He is working for the Department of Correctional Services in Durban, teaching grade 12. He has been teaching for 22 years. We became friends at the age of 8 years. However, we only attended standard 9 and 10 (grades 11 and 12) together at my former high school. The reason I chose him as a participant is because of his vast experience in the field of education and because he is also passionate about education. Mduduzi is my childhood friend as well and it was easy to get hold of him.

Four grade 7 learners

I chose four grade 7 learners to participate in my study. They were all school prefects at that time. The reason I chose prefects was that they normally are learners who are considered to be well behaved. Moreover, they usually command respect among their peers. I anticipated that it would therefore be easier to work with them because they would be willing to go an extra mile in making certain that positive behaviour at school was maintained at all times. I chose three girls and one boy and they were all 12 years old. The male learner, Tshinya, is a foreign national from the Democratic Republic of Congo. He lives with his parents and two siblings, one of whom is attending the same school. One girl, Alexander, is a Coloured learner. She resides in the city of Durban with her grandmother. The next girl, Victoria, is an Indian girl. She lives in the city of Durban with her parents and a younger sister. The last participant, Nokuzola, is an African girl from Umlazi Township south of the city of Durban. She stays with her mother and two cousins.

Two post level one teacher participants

I decided to choose two post level one teachers, one from the intermediate phase and the other one from the senior phase. The intermediate phase covers grades 4 to 6. The senior phase is grades 7 to 9. However, the exit class for primary school is grade 7.

Miss Dlomo is an African teacher who teaches IsiZulu in grade 5 and 6. She is 43 years old. She has 10 years of professional experience and has taught IsiZulu for the past eight years in the intermediate phase. She holds a BEd degree. The other post level one teacher participant, Mr Siphika, is 44 years old. He holds a Bed Honours Degree in Natural Sciences. He has 11 years of teaching experience and has been teaching in the senior phase for the past seven years.

Two head of department (HoD) teacher participants

My school has three heads of department. There is one in the foundation phase, one in the intermediate phase and one in the senior phase. Mrs Singh is a vastly experienced professional with 33 years of teaching. She is Indian and holds a Master's degree. She is now 62 years old. She has been a HoD since the year 2000. She is also a form teacher in grade 3. Mr Pillay is Indian. He is 52 years old and is a HoD for grades 6 and 7. He holds a Bed Honours degree in Mathematics. He has been teaching for 31 years, 12 years of which he has been a HoD.

Two school governing body (SGB) parent participants

Mr Okeke originates from Nigeria. He is a self-employed motor mechanic. He is 33 years old. He resides in the city of Durban. He has one child in our school doing grade 2. The other parent is Mrs Moremi. She works for the Justice Department in the Durban High Court. She has two children in grade 5 and 7. I chose to select these two parent participants because they are members of the disciplinary committee within the School Governing Body (SGB) and they both live close to the school. I therefore anticipated that it would be convenient for me to get hold of them.

Critical friends

One of the most important characteristics of self-study research is that it allows for critical collaborative enquiry (Samaras, 2011). Lunenberg and Samaras (2011) advised that self-study research requires that the study should be open to collective viewpoints. According to

Samaras and Freese (as cited in Evans, Ka 'Ōpua & Freese, 2015), self-study requires collectivity for constructing new conceptions through discussion and appraisal.

Schuck and Russell (2005) described a critical friend as a trusted person who asks thought-provoking questions, offers another perspective, and provides critique of a person's work as a friend. Furthermore, critical friends encourage and seek respectful questioning and dissimilar opinions to gather different standpoints (Samaras, 2011). I worked with two critical friends who I knew to be helpful, reliable and trustworthy. I consider my critical friends trustworthy because we are all driven by the same purpose and passion of completing and doing well in our Master's research studies. Pithouse-Morgan and Samaras (2015) claimed that critical friends can work together to exchange ideas, come to new understandings, listen to and reflect on their own beliefs and assumptions. Furthermore, Samaras et al. (2014) described the role of critical friends as eliciting new concepts and expositions, questioning the researcher's speculations, and supplying open, honest and positive reactions. In the same way, I shared and learnt new information by engaging with two critical friends, who were my fellow Master of Education (MEd) students. Like me, they are both African and speak isiZulu as their home language. They are both school teachers who had chosen to conduct self-study research in primary schools. We would meet at least four times a month; sometimes it would be more than four times, depending on the amount of work we needed to cover at that particular period. We met together with our research supervisor and also independently as a group of students.

Evans, Ka'Ōpua and Freese (2015) claimed that collaborating with critical friends can allow one to share ideas and beliefs, to better understand and critically reflect on one another's viewpoints. I managed to generate more data by embracing and understanding my critical friends' perspectives through discussions, debates, dialogues and also texting one another using WhatsApp⁵ (see Figure 2.1). For example, we would debate on how one should approach a particular chapter based on the research question one was attempting to answer. I also shared readings that are relevant to my critical friends' research studies by printing them out since I have access to the internet at my workplace.

⁵WhatsApp is one of the cheapest forms of social media communication found on smart cellular telephones and is used globally.



Figure 2.1. Critical friends giving each other some guidance on WhatsApp.

Interaction with my critical friends created room to minimise mistakes and I thought more broadly about my research topic because of the different points of view that were brought forward by my critical friends (see Chapter Three and Chapter Four). Moreover, my critical friends played a significant role in making certain that my study was well structured and had value by promoting multivocal discussions, sharing challenges and ideas that I encountered in my research and improving my professional practice. For example, we discussed how I should introduce a particular chapter, and the ways in which I could deal with participants during my engagement with them. While engaging with them through oral communication and writing text messages, my critical friends opened a new page that I had not previously thought about. Similarly, critical friends played a pivotal role in providing and maintaining a constructive tone by sharing views and asking provocative questions that shaped my study (Samaras, 2011).

Data generation

Data were generated using six main research activities: 1) taking photographs (I took photographs of my former primary school and also asked teachers at my school to take photographs); 2) social networking (using WhatsApp and e-mail) and audio-recorded discussions with my former school friends; 3) audio recordings and minutes of positive

behaviour support group meetings; 3) my memory drawings and learners' drawings; 5) my reflective journal writing and 6) my artefact retrieval.

Taking photographs

Mitchell, Weber and Pithouse (2009,) pointed out that “‘looking, gazing, seeing, noticing: gathering evidence and evaluating’, these are at the heart of any self-study, especially those using photography-based methods” (p. 127). In my study, I visited my former primary school and took some photographs that helped me to remember the past (see Chapter Three). Furthermore, I showed my former primary school friend these school photographs to evoke his memories of supportive and unsupportive experiences. Cole (2011) demonstrated that sharing forgotten memories as a group often stimulates another teacher’s unremembered memories. Hence, objects such as photographs could be important tools to elicit memories of the past. In self-study research on cultivating intrinsic motivation for learning Technology, Magubane (2014) noted that photographs can elicit emotions, and that over and above that, there can also be other viewpoints that a researcher can unearth by working with photographs.

I also asked my teacher participants in the positive behavior support group to identify and take photographs of areas around the school where most learner misbehaviour occurred. Each teacher went around the school taking photographs with his or her cellular telephone of areas he or she felt were hot spots for learner misbehaviour. For example, they went to take photographs of the boys’ and girls’ toilets, the playground and the back of the laboratory where learners are forbidden to go (see Chapter Four). They further explained in writing why they felt those were hot spot areas.

The teachers’ photographs of hot spot areas for learner misbehaviour made me realise that photographs could play an important part in assisting me in informing learners by showing them the pictures of where misbehaviour patterns frequently occur. The photographs could also serve as a constant reminder for learners as well as prefects to always be vigilant around those areas. To this end, the teachers’ photographs were displayed on the bulletin boards of learners’ classrooms.

Social networking and discussions with school friends

I used WhatsApp messages and e-mails to relive memories of supportive and unsupportive experiences with one former primary school friend and one former high school friend. I was inspired by Magubane (2014) who suggested that using a social network such as Facebook could help generate data with participants without having to meet in person if one has an idea in mind and one has no one present to share or debate it with. Data were generated by reminiscing about our primary and high school past experiences through social media (see Chapter Three). When time permitted, I also made arrangements to meet with my friends to engage in deliberations of our past supportive and unsupportive experiences. I audio-recorded these face-to-face discussions. During my study, my former high school friend was transferred to another province. We therefore used WhatsApp as means of communication and it worked out well.

Audio-recorded positive behaviour support group discussions and minutes of group meetings

For the most part, each participant's and my experiences and ideas were shared and discussed among group participants in separate meetings. For example, I shared and discussed ideas with learners at a separate meeting to avoid possible intimidation from both parents and teachers (as described in Chapter Four).

The audio recordings and minutes of meetings that I organised for the school-wide group members at school assisted me in capturing and storing relevant data related to positive behaviour support for the school. Masinga (2012) pointed out that by using an audio recorder one is able to gain further awareness of the whole data generation process as one can go back and listen to how one engages with others and the way in which one responds to the situations that arise within the process of the data generation. Therefore, listening to audio recordings helped me gain more understanding of what was recorded and moreover to analyse the discussions of the events of each day through replays. I also took minutes of the meetings.

In listening to the audio recordings, I could not help but notice different attitudes exhibited by participants. For example, I noticed and felt the excitement that was shown by learners during our discussions. They were willing to get everything they did not like off their chests in such a way that they would sometimes speak simultaneously without even noticing. I also noticed that it took them sometime to say what they liked about the school. They would at times

quarrel among themselves when it came to talking about the things that the teachers were doing right. On the other hand, I noticed that teacher participants were holding back on certain things, such as when I asked them if there would be any time where they would scold, use corporal punishment, or tease learners. I sometimes felt that the reason they would do such was that I was their superior and they would not like to be reprimanded or appear to be mean teachers.

Drawing

Memory drawings

I used memory drawing to stimulate and exemplify memories of my past experiences (see Chapter Three). According to Pithouse (2011), memory drawings can be used by self-study researchers “as a method for recollecting, representing, and examining . . . memories” (p. 38). As I was not that confident in my drawing ability, I asked my teenage son to help me in creating these memory drawings. The discussions that we had about the drawings helped me to express and elaborate on my remembered experiences. Although I thought that my son’s drawings in some ways depicted a contemporary perspective of a South African classroom, I also felt that some of his drawings managed to capture my stories of my primary school and high school years. After viewing the drawings, I could see a gradual evolution of educational experience between my years of schooling and my sons’ current schooling, but I felt that the drawings could still serve the purpose of eliciting my memory experiences.

Learner participants’ drawings

Mitchell, Chege, Mainac and Rothmand (2016) reminded me that drawing has been shown to be productive in modifying some of the normal power dynamics associated with the research or researcher and in safeguarding leeway for disregarded populations to both speak about and then speak back. Moreover Literat (2013) noted that participatory drawing is a research practice that is suited for work with children and youth across various cultural backgrounds. Literat (2013) pointed out that through participatory drawing, children are able to communicate feelings that they could not demonstrate verbally or in writing. I therefore provided learners who participated in the positive behavior support group with drawing as an expressive avenue to voice their inner stories. Likewise, Pithouse (2011) demonstrated that drawing can allow people to look at their individual experiences in depth and from another

standpoint; it can evoke their own opinions, emotions and behaviour and consideration of the possible effect of these opinions and emotions and behaviour on themselves and others. I planned to use this research practice with learners because I anticipated that they might find it a challenge to express their emotions and frustrations verbally or in writing.

I asked learner participants to draw what they liked and did not like about their school (see Chapter Four). They asked to draw as a group for they felt they needed to discuss what they wanted to draw and then choose one learner to do the drawing. The learners seemed to enjoy the process of drawing. I observed that the most enjoyable moment was when they were debating about what to include in the things they liked as well as those they did not like. What pleased me was the level of respect and commitment that all learner participants displayed towards the drawing exercise I had given them. For example, each of them wanted to explain to me the significance of each drawing they had drawn on a chart.

Reflective journal writing

I, as the main participant and the researcher, kept my own journal throughout the research process. I recorded in my journal the highlights of what transpired during meetings and discussions with participants as well as critical friends. I also recorded anything that inspired me whilst I was engaging with learners, teachers or parents at school. For example, I wrote about how the head girl at my school when speaking in the assembly said that she would have appreciated to have a father like me who takes his time to listen to children the way I do. She further stated that learners always respected a teacher who listened and respected them because it takes two hands to clap. Listening to her saying that made me feel like crying. What made it special was that it came from an Indian girl whose upbringing was not the same as mine in terms of sociocultural and historical backgrounds.

Masinga (2012) advised that keeping a reflective journal can provide moments of reflection and can enhance interpretation of the experience gained from each research data generation session. She explained that it further can assist in making each session more educative. Reflective journal writing also helped me in remembering my past experiences (as presented in Chapter three). For example, when a grade R learner approached me and asked to have lunch with me in my office, I realised how I could not recall having such a conversation with a teacher during my primary school years. This prompted me to write about my primary school years in my journal.

I did however experience some challenges with regards to journal writing. I would sometimes procrastinate and would end up forgetting what I was going to write. The procrastinating would be caused by me not being used to writing in a journal; at times I would feel that what I was writing in my journal did not make sense or did correlate to my research. I felt reassured when I read a self-study dissertation by Makhanya (2010) who explained that keeping a journal was difficult for her since she was not familiar with documenting her thoughts and feelings in writing because, according to her experience, doing so is uncommon within our African culture.

Artefact retrieval

Artefacts are objects with a personally significant meaning (Samaras, 2011). I used artefacts, such a photograph of my grandmother and certificates from my teaching career, to evoke some memories of the past (see Chapter Three). Evans, Ka 'Ōpua & Freese (2015) saw the use of artefacts in self-study as a catalyst to elicit unremembered memories of the past. They also highlighted that sharing one's own experiences by presenting an artefact to another person can deepen one's self-understanding (Evans, Ka 'Ōpua & Freese, 2015). For instance, when I was looking at and writing about the photograph of my grandmother, I felt grateful and honoured to have her featured in my study. Because my grandmother was my inspiration and I looked up to her for motivation, it was fulfilling for me to share her photograph with others through my study.

Below is a data generation summary table that shows my two research questions, data generation activities, the participants and data sources.

Table 2.2
Data generation summary

| Research Question | Data generation activities | Participant s | Data Sources |
|--|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering | a) Writing in my reflective journal on my personal memories of supportive and unsupportive | a) me | a) Reflective journal |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| g supportive and unsupportive experiences? | <p>experiences and stories from my grandmother when I was growing up</p> <p>b) Visiting my former primary school with the aim of taking photographs to help evoke past memories.</p> <p>c) Audio recorded discussions during meetings, WhatsApp and emailing with former school mates</p> <p>d) Artefact retrieval</p> <p>e) Memory drawing</p> | <p>b) me</p> <p>c) One Primary school friend and one high school friend</p> <p>d) me</p> <p>e) Me and my son</p> | <p>b) Photographs of former primary school</p> <p>c) Social networking and audio-recorded discussions</p> <p>d) Photograph of my grandmother, certificates and trophy</p> <p>e) Memory drawings</p> |
| What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community? | <p>a) Writing in my reflective journal on my observations and reflections on the behaviour support group meetings.</p> <p>b) Audio-recorded discussions with positive behaviour support group and minutes of meetings.</p> | <p>a) me</p> <p>b) Positive behaviour support group comprising four grade six learners, three post level one teachers, two heads of department and two school governing body parents</p> | <p>a) Journal entries</p> <p>b) Audio-recordings of discussions with behaviour support group.</p> |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | c) Learner drawing activity. d) Teachers' photograph taking activity | c) Learners in the positive behaviour support group d) Teachers in the positive behaviour support group | c) Learners' drawings d) Teachers' photographs |
|--|---|--|---|

Consolidating my learning

I used concept mapping to consolidate my learning in response to my first research question (see Chapter Three). As Butler-Kisber and Poldma (2010) explained concept mapping can be used as a way of conceptualizing emergent ideas before they take form by giving a visual sense to messy thoughts held in the mind during the analytic process, and by helping researchers to represent visually ideas that emerge from the data being analyzed.(p. 5)

Creating maps of ideas, thoughts and feelings that I became aware of in writing about my memories (as presented in Chapter Three) helped me to bring together and express what I was learning through this memory-work. I presented these concept maps to my research supervisor and two critical friends. The maps, together with our discussions, helped me make sense of my learning in response to research question one of my self-study: *What can I learn about positive behavior support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?*

In responding to my second research question, I created a chart to consolidate what I had learned about positive behaviour support from working with my learner, teacher and parent participants (see Chapter Four). I then developed this chart into a concept map. I presented the chart and concept map and had discussions with my supervisor and two critical friends to deliberate on what I had learned about positive behaviour from the group participants. The chart presentation and discussions assisted me make sense of my learning in response to

research question two of my self-study, *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?*

Ethical issues

Samaras (2011) maintained that respect for the validity and nobility of the lives and lifestyles of all people is a very significant matter in research. She further advocated that as experts and in our ongoing endeavours to enhance our profession, it is our commitment and responsibility to safeguard that in the process of researching we do not cause harm to others, to our learners, workmates, or the school community. Although I was the main participant in this study, I also had participants who helped me answer the two research questions for my study. These participants had to be protected and respected. As a researcher, I had to ensure I considered cultural, social, political and economic backgrounds of all participants involved in my study.

Thomas and O' Kane (1998) advised that for research to be done with children, both children and their parents or guardians are required to give their consent. Hence I wrote consent letters to learner participants and the learners' parents and guardians (see Appendix A). I ensured that learners understood what they were consenting to in being involved in the study as I had an obligation as a researcher to treat all participants equally and fairly. Children should be entitled to the same degree of confidentiality and privacy as their adult counterparts (Morrow & Richards, 1996). Graham, Powell and Taylor (2015) stated that researchers should always make certain that learner participants (in particular) are protected from any physical, emotional, or social harm that they may face because of their engagement in the research. Furthermore, Thomas and O' Kane (1998) asserted that protection of children from abuse is made difficult by the fact that children are unable to defend themselves as much as most adults do and therefore that social establishments have unique rules for protection of children. I made certain that learners felt safe and protected during our sessions by emphasising to them that whatever we discussed would not pinpoint any learner. I also needed to safeguard learners from any physical, emotional, or social harm they faced because of their participation in my research study.

I also wrote to the teachers who were chosen to participate and to the School Governing Body parents. Letters of consent were also written to my former primary and high schools friends.

In these letters I assured all participants that pseudonyms were going to be used throughout the study.

My family gave consent for me to use my grandmother's photograph because my grandmother was passionate about education and would have been proud to have seen her photograph in my dissertation. I also felt that it was ethical to include her photograph because by showing the photograph I was honouring her memory and her supportive contribution to my life.

A challenging experience I had with regards to ethical issues was that some teacher participants were sceptical about revealing to me what they thought were doing wrong to learners because of frustration. The teachers explained that they were protecting themselves from being charged with misconduct. However, I told them that all the names used in my study were not their authentic names and that I could not disclose what they had told me in confidence.

Validity

Creswell (2009, p. 190) explained that "qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures", for example, by documenting the research process in as much detail as possible. In addition, Creswell (2009, p. 190) pointed out that "validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research, and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participant, or the readers." To illustrate, to enhance validity I had an appointment with my former primary school friend to deliberate and remind one another with the help of photographs of the garden and dustbin taken at my former primary school. Our deliberations were audio-recorded and kept on my computer for future reference. Furthermore, I had to diarise our meetings for reflection. I also generated data with my former primary and high school friends using WhatsApp because we could not meet all the time.

In addition, Feldman (2003) advised that we can enhance the validity of our self-studies by noticing and making public the ways in which we generate and make sense of data in our research. In my study, this was done by providing a comprehensive and detailed narrative of how data was generated and of how I learned through my research process, providing

substantiation of the value of the changes in my own understanding and practice of positive behaviour support (Feldman, 2003). Furthermore, engaging in discussions and deliberating on issues of positive behaviour support using numerous approaches with my fellow MEd students (my critical friends) helped me garner alternative perspectives to enhance the validity of my study (Samaras, 2011).

Research challenges

One of the challenges I foresaw was that data generation could take some time because of time constraints. I had to generate data outside the school's instructional time and I could not get hold of learner and parent participants in the afternoons since learners were going home and the parents were at their workplaces. I therefore asked participants if we could utilise some weekends, Sunday mornings, to cover the lost time. Along my research journey I found it a challenge to meet with the two parent participants due unforeseen circumstances they each encountered. To overcome this challenge, I had to make separate meeting arrangements with each of them.

Another challenge was that I anticipated that I was likely to get conflicting responses on possible positive behaviour strategies from learners and teachers because the strategies would affect them directly. I thought that the teachers might also want to include some rules that would accommodate them and make them more authoritative. In overcoming that obstacle, I engaged in separate meetings with learners and teachers so that they would feel free to communicate all that was in their minds. It was also hard for me when I generated data with participants that I thought did not relate to my research. Every time when that happened I would feel that I would not have enough and relevant data to complete my study. However, I had to just persevere. I also had to spend money for refreshments every time the positive behaviour support group gathered. A home cooked meal and or sandwiches instead of buying take away food helped me save some money.

An unforeseen challenge I encountered was that there were times when I could not pay much attention to my studies because of two deaths in my family that happened in a space of one and half months. Another unforeseen challenge was when my laptop computer that I used to store data for my study was stolen and this slowed my progress as I had to wait for a few days to purchase another computer. I also lost part of the data I had already generated when my

laptop computer was stolen. In addition, at times I had a challenge in accessing the internet to do the printout of articles I needed to read for my study. And in some instances I could not gain access to the university library because of the continuous student protests which forced the institution to close down on numerous occasions. Also, I was also not able to spend as much time as I would have liked with my critical friends for discussions, deliberations and sharing ideas. This was because we live far apart from one another. And, remembering some of the unsupportive experiences, from my former primary school in particular, was unpleasant because I would think of other former primary school mates who did not have a similar support structure which encouraged me to persevere.

I wish I had known how to more efficiently manage time to do this study. I wish that I could have been more organised with regard to record keeping. I also wish I had known that this self-study research would require a person with a lot of self-discipline. I also wish I had known that embarking on this study would demand total commitment on my side and I would need to sacrifice most of the regular things I used to do before registering for the Master's programme.

If I were to embark on such a study again, I would ensure that I manage my time effectively. I would keep separate files for my reading records, articles and revised chapters. I would draw up timetable for dates of meetings or sessions with my participants upfront. I would also stress to the participants the importance of availing themselves whenever we have to meet. I would ensure that all data captured on the day are saved and stored in different data storage devices. I would also encourage and motivate for more meetings with critical friends for discussions. I would invest in a contract for internet installation at home. I would be more disciplined and keep up to date with my work; for example, I would spend at least two hours every day on any aspect of my research.

Conclusion

In this chapter I began by discussing the relevance of using self-study as a research methodology for my study. Furthermore, I described the context in which the research happened. Next, I explained how and why I selected participants. I also explained the role played by critical friends in my study. A discussion of data generation and consolidating my learning followed. I then explained how I addressed ethical issues. The validity of my study was considered, followed by research challenges.

As Samaras and Roberts (2011) explained, self-study teacher research is planned to inspire teachers to be agents of their own learning and growth while working jointly with others. Feldman (2003) argued that teachers do not want to just study their practice through self-study, but they also want to improve it in a certain way that will affect what happens in their schools. The most important learning about undertaking self-study was the opportunity it provided me to always reflect on my teaching and managerial practices and develop myself through the mistakes I might have made. I learned that I needed to transform myself to be a better teacher first before I could change others. Through engaging in self-study methodology, I shared my teaching and managerial skills with both teachers and learners. That was done by involving teachers and learners in discussions pertaining to curriculum or classroom management, especially on learner positive behaviour support. I learned that discussions are particularly significant in self-study because they help one to understand other peoples' viewpoints and learn from them.

CHAPTER THREE: MY MEMORIES OF SUPPORTIVE AND UNSUPPORTIVE EXPERIENCES

Introduction

Self-study research requires a deep moral dedication to inquiry that links the past and the present to conceptualise a new future (Lunenbergh & Samaras, 2011). Samaras and Roberts (2011) explained that self-study researchers commence with questions, which they create from introspection and observation of their own practice. Likewise, in choosing self-study as my research methodology I intended to explore and contribute by learning about stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support for learners at my school. This chapter, Chapter Three, is aimed at answering my first question: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?*

In responding to this research question, I recalled past supportive and unsupportive experiences using the memory-work methods explained in Chapter Two. To prompt remembering of supportive and unsupportive experiences, I created memory drawings in collaboration with my son and took photographs that reminded me of my primary school memories. I also retrieved artefacts that reminded me of some of my experiences. In addition, I drew on discussions with former school friends to evoke the past. I also used consultations with my research supervisor and critical friends (my two fellow Master's students) to enhance my learning from this memory-work.

In this chapter, Chapter Three, I recall the inspiration I received from my grandmother and my Christian Education teacher. I further explore supportive and unsupportive memories of my primary school and high school days with the help of my primary school and high school friends. I explain the supportive role played during my adolescence by a community member. Next, I describe and reflect on my early and current teaching experiences. I then present concept maps that I created to consolidate my learning from recalling supportive and unsupportive memories.

My early source of inspiration: My grandmother



Figure 3.1. My source of inspiration: A photograph of my grandmother in her late sixties.

My grandmother had seven children, five daughters and two sons. She would tell us, her grandchildren, about how her husband passed on whilst she was pregnant with her last born child. She then played a role of both father and mother, working as a domestic worker, raising and educating her children.

Years later our mothers gave birth to us. We were born out of wedlock and that put more strain on my grandmother. Our mothers were unemployed then and depended on my grandmother's pension for survival. There were 13 grandchildren altogether in my grandmother's home (my mother had four children).

My grandmother brought inspiration for her "never say die" attitude that she demonstrated to her children and her grandchildren. At a young age my grandmother instilled discipline as well as healthy competition among us. The Christian Religion in the family was also paramount.

Our grandmother always would tell us stories of encouragement. These were stories that would lift our spirits, make us feel important, loved and eager to do well in school in terms of academic attainment and maintaining good behaviour patterns. Every story my grandmother told had a moral lesson; but she would never want to shed light on why she was telling us a story. I guess she left everything for us to figure out ourselves. Some of the stories she told are only now beginning to make sense to me in relation to the life I am leading currently. For example, I remember how, when I was in my third year of studying to become a teacher, our grandmother told us a story of a hen. My siblings were already working at that time because I was the youngest of the 13 grandchildren.

This is how my grandmother related the story of a hen:

There was once a hen that laid 20 eggs. She made herself a very big nest outside the chicken coop the owner had made for his chickens. This hen would hardly leave her eggs for she feared that something bad could happen to them. Every morning she would wake up before every other chicken and wander about her nest seeking for food until her eggs were ready to hatch.

After hatching, the hen was always protective of her chicks for no one or nothing could come closer to them. Every time there was one chick that was walking far from the hen, she would leave the rest in the safe place where the dogs or the eagles could not see them. Whenever she spotted the eagle hovering over the area, the hen would call all her chicks spread her wings and hide them until the eagle gave up.

The hen would always be on the alert for dangerous animals that could prey on her chicks. At the same time she would teach them how to survive on their own. She learnt to develop precautionary measures for her chicks by leaving them inside the chicken coop and going out to look for food. She would go from one neighbourhood to another, crossing the dangerous roads, risking her life fighting with competitors for food so she could feed her offspring.

As months went by, the chicks developed into young chickens. They began to explore the area by walking next to their mother at all times. They would group together to protect each other every time they sensed danger around them. When these young chickens became old enough to be fully developed chickens, they stuck together, they protected each other and they looked after their frail mother.

The meaning of this story of a hen and its chicks began to sink into me long after my grandmother had passed on. I started to realise that my grandmother could have been talking about my family in this story. She was describing the achievements we have attained through respect and positive behaviour. This memory of the story of the hen brings the feeling of protection, guidance, discipline, caring and loving that my grandmother displayed to us as young chicks that needed guidance towards the right direction. Taking care of learners at school brings me a feeling of contentment. I can now see how that generates from an inspirational woman who protected, guided and nurtured me to be what I am today. The story of the hen taught me to listen to other people, to respect them, no matter how young or old, and value their being around me; for they would not be in my life if it was not meant to be.

The church factor: A Christian Education teacher who instilled confidence in me

The fear of God was one of the family principles that we had to adhere to at all times. As children at home, we had to follow adults, my grandmother in particular, every Sunday to church. I soon joined Christian Education with children of the same age group. We had a teacher, Miss Zulu⁶, who was very kind and religious. Miss Zulu was a unique person. She managed at all times to be at our level of understanding as Christian Education children.

I remember when we had to perform a role play in front of the congregation. It was from the Holy Bible where Jesus visited Jerusalem. Jesus was one character everyone in the class wanted to play. Miss Zulu was the one to decide on the roles that we were going to play. There were three main characters in the role play, Jesus, a donkey and the narrator. The rest of the children would carry palm trees and garments to lie on the ground where the donkey carrying Jesus was going to walk. Miss Zulu gave me a role of a narrator. I initially did not like the role I was given because I did not understand what I was supposed to do. I felt that I deserved to play the role of Jesus. However, Miss Zulu called me aside and told me that I was the most important character in the play because I would be the only character that the congregants would be listening to narrating the story. I had to read the story, know my lines and narrate the story such that I would be in line with the action from other characters.

⁶All names of people and institutions described in this chapter are pseudonyms.



Figure 3.2. My moment of glory: A memory drawing of narrating a role play from the Holy Bible.

As soon as I understood my role in the play, I realised that I was the most important character. That was evident in the way Miss Zulu spent time with me making certain that I narrated the story with precision. I remember how I developed self-confidence after being told by Miss Zulu that she believed in me and that there was no one in the class that was going to do the narrating part better than me. She also stressed that I should not go to sleep without practicing my role because I was going to do it in front of the congregants. I wanted Miss Zulu and my grandmother to be proud of me. Miss Zulu would always tell the class that there was nothing we could not do if we were disciplined. I therefore learnt to be disciplined in everything I did at a young age because that was instilled in me by Miss Zulu, my Christian Education teacher.

My junior primary school years: Trying against all odds to impress my teachers

I started my first year of schooling, which is now known as grade 1, in 1974. I spent my primary school years in two different schools. My junior primary school was separate to the senior primary school. During my primary school years, many primary schools had a separate junior primary that started from first year of schooling (now known as grade 1) to `standard 2 (which is now grade 4). The senior primary school started from standard 3 (now grade 5) up to standard 5, which is now grade 7.

My junior primary school was located in the township where I lived. My school only enrolled African learners who resided in the township. Most learners walked from home to school. All the teachers in my junior primary school were African females. There were approximately 400 learners in my school. The first year (now grade 1) and second year (grade 2) had two classrooms. Standards 1 and 2 each had three classrooms. The school was new and made of bricks. It had a huge bare playground.

I do not recall the first two years I spent in the junior primary school. However, I do remember Mrs Mtshali who was my class teacher in standard 1 (grade 3). She was just a loving teacher. She would bring us sweets every Friday and give these to us during the last period before we left for our respective homes. I remember that she made me sit at a desk next to her table. She would call me during break time, and give me food she had brought for her own lunch. I would feel the love she displayed towards me as that of a mother to her own child.

I remember vividly how, when it was time for assessment; Mrs Mtshali would take us to the playground with our slates in our hands. A slate (see Figure 3.3.) was a tool that we used to write on instead of an exercise book. It was made out of a type of rock called metamorphic rock. The slate was used on both sides. Learners used to write different subjects on this slate. We used a special pen made of metamorphic rock.

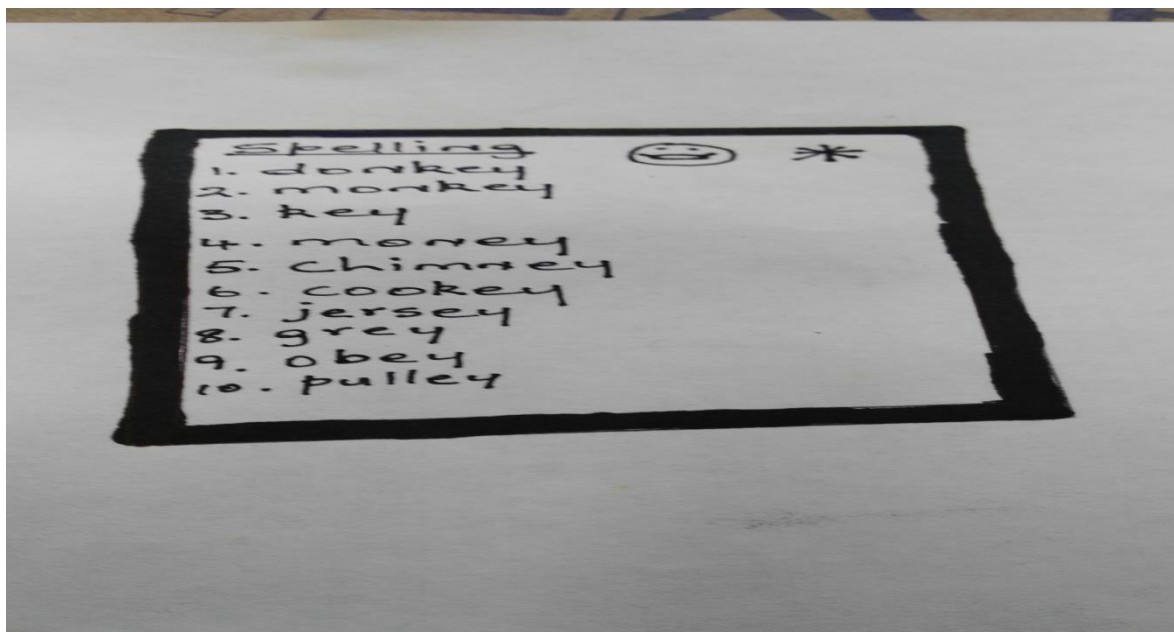


Figure 3.3. My pride. A memory drawing of a slate that we used in a junior primary school.

I remember that every Friday would be set aside for spelling of words extracted from the comprehension passages or stories that were read from Monday to Thursday. Mrs Mtshali would take us learners to the playground. She would separate us in a way that we were far apart from each other. Mrs Mtshali would stand at the centre so that we could all see and hear her when she was speaking. With our slates in our hands, Mrs Mtshali would ask us to write the spelling of 10 words. Mrs Mtshali would collect all our slates after we had finished writing the spelling. She would mark them and give them to us. I recall how Mrs Mtshali would praise me in front of the class for writing the correct spelling consistently. I used to get total marks for spelling every word correctly. We were only allowed to take our slates home on the Fridays. I remember how I would rush to get home with my slate to show my grandmother my achievement before the spelling words could be erased by touching the slate to my clothes. I got compliments from my grandmother and my teacher each time I had every spelling word correct.

What made me happier was the fact that I was attending the same class with learners that were way above my age group. Gauging myself and doing well against older learners gave me the confidence and a feeling of pride that I was capable of outsmarting learners older than me.

Teachers in the junior primary loved the learners as if we were their own children. For example, I remember when my grandmother could not afford to pay for a school trip to the snake park. My teacher, Mrs Mtshali, wrote a letter asking for permission from my grandmother to let me go on the trip. Mrs Mtshali paid for me and brought food for me as well. Whenever I was around Mrs Mtshali, I felt the warmth of her love and protection for me.



Figure 3.4. A memory drawing of my junior primary loving teacher.

The images in Figure 3.4 show Mrs Mtshali showing kindness in her engagement with us learners and treating us like her own children. They also show how Mrs Mtshali taught me very well; she showed passion for teaching. In my discussion of this drawing with my supervisor and my critical friends, I talked about my teacher in the junior primary school who was very protective of me and who was also a loving teacher to all learners. She was an understanding teacher and we learners respected her for being kind to us learners.

My senior primary school years: The fading away of my joy for schooling

Things started to take an ugly turn when I moved from the junior primary to senior primary school. The senior primary school went from standard 3 (now grade 5) to standard 5 (now grade 7). My senior primary school was located approximately 3 kilometres away from my junior primary school. My senior primary school enrolled only African learners coming from the same township where the school was located. The school had African teachers only, both males and females. The senior primary school was bigger than my junior primary school. Each standard had three sections. The senior primary school had a playground and a large piece of land that was used for gardening.

The protection, the warmth and love that I received from my junior primary teachers, such as Mrs Mtshali, was no longer in existence in the senior primary school. I was intimidated by male teachers as well as the older learners from standard 4 and 5. I was constantly reminded by my standard 3 teacher, Mrs Mthebe, that teachers were not there to baby sit and be friends with learners, instead they were there to teach.



Figure 3.5. Cultivating inspiration: A memory photograph of a garden plot I shared with two friends at my former primary school.

Supportive senior primary school experiences: My only hope of recognition by teachers

The highlight of my primary school years was when I reached standard 5. The first thing that came to my mind when I was walking down my former primary school memory lane was my

garden plot. The girls at the school were taught how to do knitting and crochet while the boys worked in the gardens. Only the standard 5 boys had the privilege to be in charge of the school gardens.

I visited my former senior primary school in November 2015 and took a photograph of the school gardens (Figure 3.5) because it reminded me of how it instilled a sense of pride for boys to work in the gardens. The reason for taking this photograph was because the garden stirred my remembrance of the care, dedication, precision and discipline I used to exhibit whenever I was working in the garden to produce crops of high quality.

My garden plot was in the middle of many garden plots at the school and it was one of the biggest. My two friends and I were in charge of this garden plot. Somehow it happened that we all had different preferences when it came to taking care of the garden. My specialties would be to plant seeds and water the garden. My friends would get rid of weeds and protect the seedlings by covering them with dry grass and tomato sacks. We would do this with accuracy and great zeal as a team. It was a mammoth task to perform someone else's job if he was absent from school. Looking back, I can see how taking care of the garden taught me to work harmoniously with other people, to value their contributions and input and accept criticism without feeling disgruntled.

We all wanted to get the best outcome during the harvest time. Every criticism and contribution from friends worked to the betterment of our project. A male learner would only be recognised by school teachers for attaining high academic achievement or for yielding excellent produce from the gardens. Boys with quality harvests would be given a trophy by the principal in front of teachers and learners during the assembly. That prompted us to work very hard in making certain that our garden was one of the best. Our garden was a symbol of hope that if we gave our all towards the project we could get recognised for our hard work.

I remember the joyous feeling I would have when the seedlings cropped up above the sand. I spent many hours during break time and after school watering and watching the crops I had planted growing up, full of life. I would protect my seedlings as if my life depended on them. I now realise that the protection I exhibit towards learners, friends and my family stems from the seedlings I used to protect from birds and other animals. Although it was not a pleasant experience to attend senior primary school because of physical abuse meted out to us by

teachers, I would never miss coming to school because of our garden. I was one of the first learners to come to school every morning with a watering can in my hand. To be an early bird became a habit for me such that I am still very particular with regards to keeping time.

In my senior primary school years one would seldom get praised or recognised for a job well done, be it at home or school. We would be told that it was our culture not to praise young people because they would become arrogant. I can now see that the main reason we took such good care of the garden was to be recognised by teachers and by parents at homes. Standard 5 was one of the highlight years of my senior primary school life because our garden plot was judged as the best and we were praised by all the teachers at school. We then started to develop self-belief. I remember that in the next September quarterly tests I was moved from the B to the A class because my academic performance had improved tremendously. I recall the confidence I felt when I moved from class B to class A. I was determined to always keep my place in the A class because I had belief in myself. The garden was a mirror reflecting my achievements and a sense of believing that I could overcome all the challenges that came my way.



Figure 3.6.: My sense of pride. A memory drawing of my former primary school principal handing over a trophy for a job well done.

The image in Figure 3.6 reminds me of the sense of pride I felt when my two senior primary friends and I won a trophy for the best garden plot. That is the time where I was recognised

by teachers for a job well done. This brought joy and encouragement that it was possible for me to succeed. I also felt happy with reaping the best harvest with my friends. I was happy that teachers selected all vegetables from my harvest to take home with them, even though we learners were never allowed to take home any of the harvest.

The photograph that I took of the school garden represents the kind of teacher I wanted to become when I had completed my school years. The love I displayed for my garden was so evident such that I would come to water it even during school holidays. Every time I observed the seedlings developing into becoming fully grown crops that bore food for human consumption I would imagine myself selflessly doing great things for learners just to see a smile on their faces because I had no one at school to put a smile on mine. I remember how I would always do introspection about treating learners in a fair and just manner.

Unsupportive senior primary school experiences: My years of pain, suffering and hatred

The primary school refuse bins

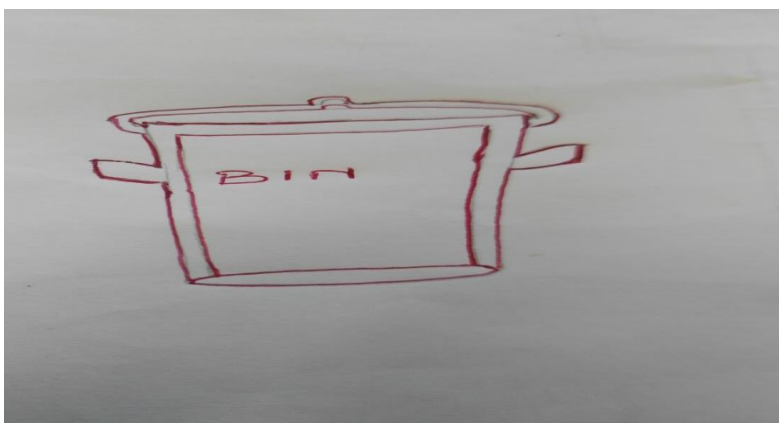


Figure 3.7. Rough times. A memory drawing of a refuse bin used as a tool to help administer corporal punishment.

Each class in my former primary school had its own refuse bin. Teachers always made certain that the school was kept clean at all times. The purpose of refuse bins in school was to assist in getting rid of waste and to keep the school clean. Little did we know when we started at the school that teachers would also use the refuse bins as tools to punish us. Whenever I see a

refuse bin memories of my former primary school come flooding back. I remember the beatings meted out to us by teachers using the very instrument that was meant to control dirt in the school. The beatings would be accompanied by harsh words from the teachers. For example, Mrs Mtethe would call us “baboons” and “barbarians” and she would say that we would follow in the footsteps of our mothers as school dropouts. My memory drawing of the refuse bin (Figure 3.7) symbolises the grief of our young voices as learners who were not heard by teachers. These voices were blocked; they were shut and put in a rubbish bin for no-one cared to listen to them.

Teachers would explain categorically to learners the reasons for using refuse bins when they gave us the hidings. They would compare us to what was inside the bin. I remember one incident where I was beaten up because I did not have shoes and came to school barefoot. I was not the only one in my class who did not have shoes; there were five of us. I was 10 years old, doing standard 3 then. The reason I did not have shoes was that my grandmother could not afford to buy shoes for me because she was educating 13 children with a domestic worker’s salary. I recall how Mrs Mtethe would first command all those who wore an incomplete school uniform to come to the front of the class. She would then start talking, telling us how we smelt bad. Out of embarrassment and shame, we would all go and hide behind the door where the refuse bin was usually kept. Mrs Mtethe would go on to say that our brains were the same as the bin we were pushing ourselves against; she would explain how we would not amount to anything in life. Hearing her saying that in front of the class felt very painful because my class mates would not stop laughing at us. We would be a laughing stock even during lunchtime.

Sometimes I would prefer to be beaten rather than to listen to all the negative things Mrs Mtethe used to say about us. All those utterances would eventually lead to us holding the refuse bin, getting punished for not having school shoes, which was something that was beyond our control. Being punished for not having school shoes made me have questions that I could not get answers for. My cultural heritage did not allow me to ask questions of adults, especially the questions whereby my family members would have to give an account of why they could not buy me shoes. I began to doubt the love my family had for me. I also doubted myself because all Mrs Mtethe’s utterances managed to find their way and sank into my mind. I started to think that I was not good enough to attend school and that something was lacking in me, and that therefore I deserved to get all the beatings.

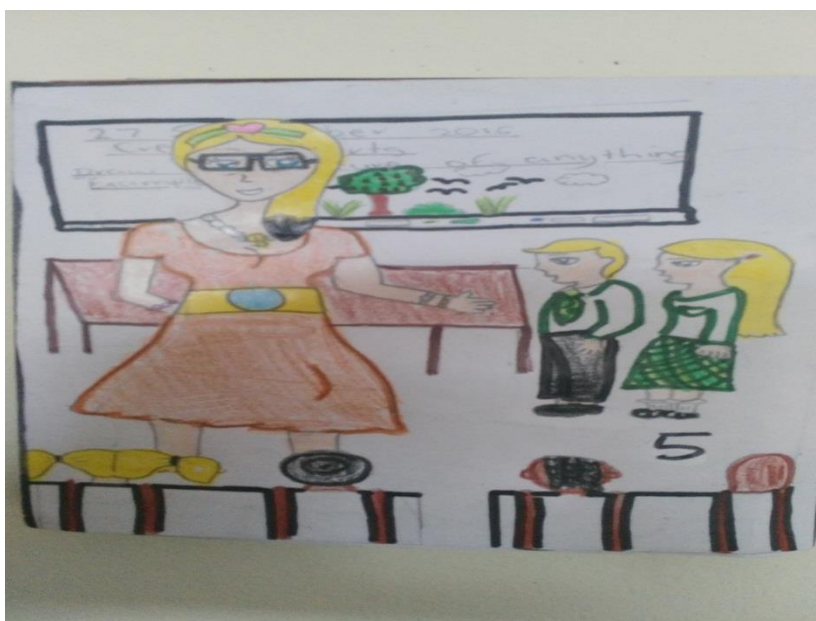


Figure 3.8. A memory drawing of a teacher who chose some learners over others.

The memory drawing in Figure 3.8 depicts my standard 3 teacher, Mrs Mtethe, who was always mean to me. Looking at this drawing reminds of how I developed low self-esteem in this class because of the negative utterances that came from Mrs Mtethe. She discouraged most of the learners in her class. Corporal punishment was the order of the day. I ended up having a negative attitude toward school because of Mrs Mtethe who would always label me “*idiot*” in front of all learners in class. Mrs Mtethe made me believe that I was not capable of doing anything right.

The image in Figure 3.8 also reminds me of the hurt I felt when Mrs Mtethe picked learners she liked in class. I used to marvel at those learners who were lucky to be loved by my class teacher. These learners used to sit next to Mrs Mtethe’s table. Moreover, Mrs Mtethe would call them her own children. Other learners in class, including me, would be called “*Stupid, good for nothing*” by Mrs Mtethe and we would be laughed at by her beloved children. Mrs Mtethe was a cruel teacher who disrespected most learners in her class.

Going to school that year felt like a nightmare. My standard 3 academic results went below average because Mrs Mtethe, always found something negative to say to me, by calling me “*Stupid, rubbish, moron, good for nothing, skinny tarred faced boy*”. I started to believe all the things she had to say to me as a 10 year-old. I am not sure whether my teacher knew my

name because she used to call me “*mnyama matiyela*” (which means “black tar” in English) because of my complexion. We could easily identify all those learners who were Mrs Mtethe’s favourites, and we hated them because they would scold and laugh at us every time she said something unbecoming to us.

I doubted myself for everything I had to say or do in Mrs Mtethe’s class. There was no room to make mistakes; you were not even allowed either to air your views or make suggestions in anything pertaining to subject matter. My self-esteem was at an all-time low, but I had to persevere because I would listen to an inner voice telling me the opposite of what Mrs Mtethe was always shoving into my ears during almost all of my standard 3 schooling. This inner voice was inspired by my Christian Education teacher, Miss Zulu, who would always remind us that we came to this world to manifest and showcase all the talents that our Maker has blessed us with. Those words stayed in my mind forever. Miss Zulu’s words would further tell us that we should always strive to do our best in whatever we did.

The presence of the refuse bin in my standard 3 class brought fear that was accompanied by hatred. Every time I look at a refuse bin, I think back to how, as a learner, my voice was never heard by my teacher, a person I admired the most. This has made me realise that teaching is not a profession to enrich oneself, rather it is a calling whereby one strives to shape, mould and brighten the future of another individual. As a teacher, I am a torch that defeats the dark and brings light that paves the way that leads the learner to the desired destination.

This memory-work has made me realise that as a teacher I could play an enormous role in learner failure as well as in learners displaying negative attitudes towards learning. As a teacher therefore, I should be encouraging and motivating learners to involve themselves in activities that develop them academically. In my experience, learners who display high academic performance tend to behave in an acceptable manner in school. In the same way, positive behaviour cannot be enforced on learners by intimidation and other means; however it can be achieved through dialogue, respect and understanding the background from which the learners come. I have also noticed that showing a little bit of love and care towards learners can go a long way in as far as fostering good behaviour, trust and responsibility on the side of the learners.

On a lighter note, during my conversation with my former primary school friend, Fortune, he reminded me that “*We as school boys had developed a skill of rolling the refuse bins by one hand to the marvel of girls and other boys who had not acquired the skill*”. This was rather a positive skill, which meant that we learners could bring out the positive out of an object that was used to bring out suffering and pain.

The meanest teacher in our school

Remembering the happy times we used to spend in the gardens also brings back unsupportive memories that could never escape my imagination. I remember Mr Ncube, who was our Mathematics and History teacher for standard 5. Every learner thought that he was the meanest teacher in our school. He required us to start school before the actual starting time, at 7 in the morning with a 10 minute Mathematics speed test. We would write 10 sums, and for each incorrect sum we would be slashed three strokes with a cane at our backs. Mathematics double periods would follow immediately after the normal start of school. Mr Ncube would then give us another 10 minute speed test. This time if we did not get all the sums correct, the boys would be instructed to get rid of the weeds in the gardens. When we were working in the gardens Mr Ncube would ring the bell once, and every learner would have to stop doing what he was doing. Mr Ncube would come out and inspect the gardens. If he found a single weed in the gardens we would be called into the assembly area. We would form lines behind the refuse bins and each of us would be made to put our head inside a bin whilst holding the handles. Teachers would then have a field day punishing us. I would even lose count of the number of strokes on my back.

During a recent discussion with my primary school friend Fortune, he reminded me of a boy, Mandla, who was caught eating carrots from the harvest of his garden. A special assembly was called where Mandla was told to eat a pile of carrots that filled a 25 litre bucket and to drink 2 litres of water. This was done in the presence of all learners and teachers. Mandla could not finish the carrots he was supposed to finish. Each teacher in the school caned Mandla for stealing until he eventually collapsed.

I remember how I would be fearful to raise my hand and answer a question in class even when I knew the answer. Rather, I would prefer to be punished because the trick would be if you did not know the answer you would get less punishment; but if you claimed to know it but got it wrong you would get double punishment. Looking back, I can see that we were

never encouraged to learn through making mistakes. This not only happening in Mr Ncube's class, but it was experienced by many learners in my senior primary school.

In my conversation with Fortune, he described Mr Ncube as:

A teacher that I will never forgive and forget in my life. He was so mean towards us. I remember the first day I was admitted at that school. I was coming from a farm school; I was given five sums to write for 10 minutes. I got all the sums wrong; I was then made to sing a simple song that went like this: Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes, knees and toes. The song would go along with the learner demonstration by touching the head, shoulders, knees and toes respectively. Every time you touched the knees and toes you got a stroke at the back. Mr Ncube would make me sing that song four times and each time I got to the knees and toes singing part he would beat me so hard at my buttocks. I was new at the school, 12 years old and the kind of humiliation I endured that day could never be explained. I was angry at the teacher who welcomed me with this kind of treatment. Moreover, the anger was aggravated by my class mates who showed lack of sympathy since they were laughing at me while I was crying.

I am a Mathematics teacher today. I vowed that I would never in my life dehumanise a learner the way I was when I was in primary school. If it was for me I would not have gone back to that school the next day; I was so fearful of teachers that I did not even want to talk or meet them at the corridors.

Fortune's experience that day was just one of many negative experiences that learners had to endure at the hands of Mr Ncube. Mr Ncube was the reason I hated History as a subject. Because there were not sufficient textbooks our teachers would use a chalkboard for drawings that we had to learn. I recall how, one Friday, Mr Ncube gave us homework to learn the map of the world using atlases. The next Monday he had drawn the world map on the chalk board with labels of continents and major mountains and seas. He then left out the very small areas that feature in the map for us to fill in. That day he instructed me to point out the Gulf of Mexico, which I did; but he then said that I had pointed out the wrong spot. When I tried to explain to him that I was sure I had pointed out the correct spot, he slapped me across the face. I fell with my head on the edge of the desk. The blood was oozing from a huge gash in my head and the scar is still a reminder of negative experiences we had to go through as primary school learners.

Sometimes we would be left with the feeling of helplessness towards the people we trusted the most. Many of my older schoolmates had to quit school because the abuse was unbearable. A sound teacher-learner relationship was non-existent. Most members of the community also embraced this kind of behaviour exhibited by teachers and it left me a very fearful young boy who was scared to make a mistake. Teachers then were regarded as the most important members of the society; therefore, any kind of discipline teachers meted out to learners would be accepted by the community. Moreover, teachers were also members of the very same community we lived in.

Recalling these unsupportive experiences has taught me that learners should not follow the school rules because of fear or intimidation from teachers; rather they should attempt to keep to the school rules because they have been discussed and agreed upon to get maximum cooperation. I realise now that the ramifications for breaking school rules should not always be punitive, instead they should be directly related to the learner's behaviour. For example, the punishment given to a learner for not completing his homework should not be combined with the one when he came late the previous day. Remembering my past experience has also taught me to learn to exhibit respect and refrain from being physically and verbally violent to learners as used to happen during my primary school era, because that will forever leave emotional scars for learners. Learners tend to love and respect a teacher who takes his time and listens to what they have to say and responds to them in a respectful and caring manner. Learners are also human; they feel the same pain that everyone feels. As teachers we should refrain from ill-treating learners because we will be perpetuating the same unwarranted behaviour our former primary teachers displayed to us.

When I asked Fortune, *"How would you define your former primary school days in terms of supportive and unsupportive experiences?"* he responded:

We grew up in a period where children's rights were not amplified as is the case today. Consequently, everything that was done at my former primary school was viewed as supportive but was actually unsupportive. The reason I say this was because of the excessive dependence on corporal punishment by the teachers without assessing the individuals' level of academic capabilities. This perpetuated a low self-esteem to most of us learners. Therefore, I can define my former primary school as a school where much unsupportive experiences were the order of the day, but no one was aware of this fact at the time. I

remember how we were kept straight and narrow even during sporting activities where one needed to be free and joyful. I recall being taught a particular way of cheering for our teams; if you expressed yourself differently, you were considered a deviant or rebel which was to be put in the narrow path. Indeed, the path was too narrow such that if one looks back and traces our former primary school mates from my neighbourhood, the majority of them dropped out of their primary schooling. However, one must also appreciate the dedication of teachers who came at 6:30 am for extra classes every day to ensure that we passed our standard 5 external examinations. These were men and women who sacrificed the comfort and warmth of their homes to be with us learners. In retrospect, one can conclude that it was out of love and ensuring that our ambitions should come to fruition against all odds.

In response to my question “Give an example of past supportive and unsupportive experiences of your former primary that changed your view of how schools should deal with behavior,” Fortune replied:

I have referred to punishment as an experience which was both supportive and unsupportive at that time [during our primary school years]. For contextual purposes, one must appreciate that during our primary school years there was minimal parental involvement. Many parents were illiterate, thus putting their trust to teachers to lead their children to academic excellence. There was a gulf between parents and teachers but the bridge was the respect which was accorded to teachers by our parents. The most vicious teacher was a hero to our parents. They would argue that a teacher would not beat you for nothing. The fear of getting beaten made us to excel in our studies because we had nowhere to hide. Therefore, corporal punishment became a supportive experience to transcend from one level of development to another; perhaps one can argue that it was the fear rather than corporal punishment. Equally so, corporal punishment became a source of conflict resolution as we grew older. We believed in it and we did not explore other alternative conflict resolution methods. Although I still believe that spanking cannot kill a child, but the use of corporal punishment in schools has changed my view drastically; more so when I look back and think of my primary school years where I was denied freedom to express myself and enjoy being at school. The learning environment was characterised by fear and we wanted to fulfill the dreams of both our teachers and parents. We were like objects and for us as learners was to comply.

Now that I am teacher myself, I believe that learning environment should be participatory with learners doing more and teachers guiding them towards their dreams. I believe that

learners' behaviour can drastically change for the better if they are allowed to be part of developing their own school rules.

Supportive and unsupportive high school experiences

My former high school biology teacher: The unique teacher

My high school life was the complete opposite to my primary school life. At high school I met new friends, the atmosphere was different and most teachers were friendly towards us as learners. Our high school had two standards, 9 and 10. There were 12 classes in standard 9, with 1052 learners altogether. There was only one Science class in each standard. In those days, teachers would be the ones to choose academic streams for learners and that would be based on learner academic achievement. I was one of the few learners who were chosen to be in a Science class. There was this perception that the Science class was the cleverest and most admirable class.

The memory drawing shown in Figure 3.9 reminds me of the happiest year of my schooling life, which was when I was doing standard 9 (now called grade 11). This drawing evokes memories of our Biology teacher, Mrs Mbhele, who was also our class teacher.

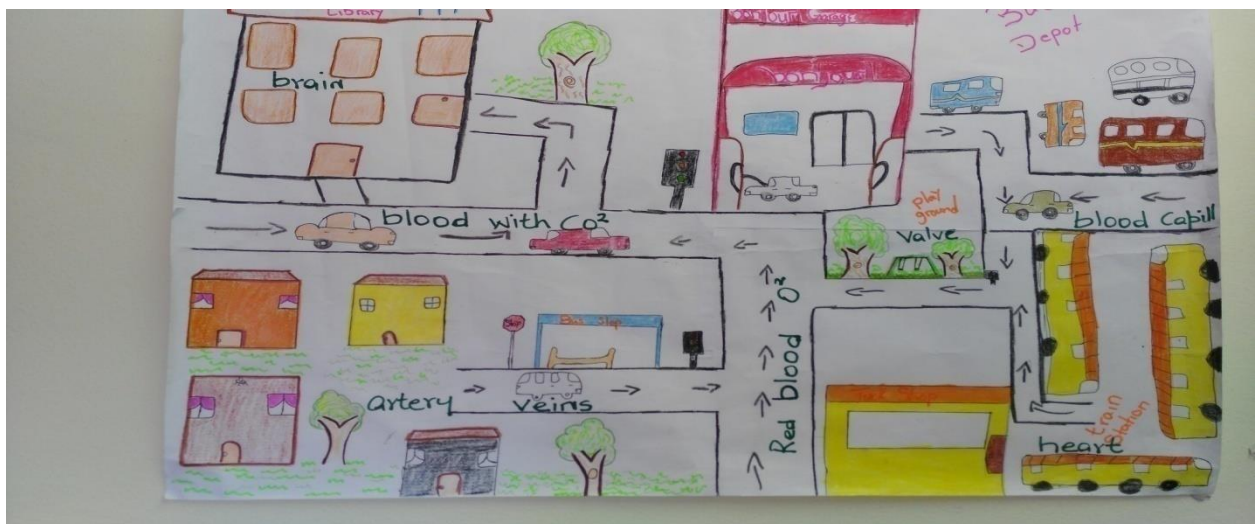


Figure 3.9. Innovation is the way to go in a modern class: A memory drawing of my township chart with biological terms and labels.

Mrs Mbhele taught us in a unique way; hence her classroom was always lively and attended by many learners. Mrs Mbhele would hardly ever use a textbook. She commanded a lot of respect from learners for coming to class without a textbook. The reason for that stemmed from the common strategy of a textbook method that most teachers used to follow when teaching us. Mrs Mbhele's teaching was different; she was very innovative, but also strict and consistent. She would make her subject (Biology) seem very easy with different kinds of approaches that kept us guessing as to how she would tackle a certain topic. I remember how one day she asked us to make drawings of anything that came into our minds. She further said that we should not label them. As a Science class, we would make certain that our drawings made sense. I remember that I had a healthy competition with my two friends with regards to academic attainment. We all worked hard on our drawings and submitted them to Mrs Mbhele. Later on she told us that she would use our drawings to teach us Biology. Everyone in the class was confused but curious at the same time.

One of my classmates had drawn a map of our township at the back of a large calendar. My friend's drawing was that of a big heart on an A3 piece of paper. Mrs Mbhele used both of their drawings to teach us about the heart and the flow of blood from the arteries to the veins and, ultimately, all parts of the body. I had drawn a picture of a skeleton on a large A2 piece of paper. Mrs Mbhele used to put us in groups; she would tell us that the reason for grouping us was mere competition. She therefore instructed the groups to make the skeleton alive by filling in what was missing. One group would be responsible for all the organs, while another would write the function of each organ until we had a complete human being with all parts of the body.

Mrs Mbhele ended up labeling all the drawings; the township drawing that my friend had brought was full of labels of how blood with oxygen is pumped from the heart through arteries to veins until it reaches the brain. Mrs Mbhele listed all Biological terms that she had written as labels as well as those we needed to know for that particular lesson. Mrs Mbhele taught us in a way that involved everyone in the class. For me, Figure 3.9. symbolises the importance of involving learners in stimulating their minds to give their best in whatever they do. We were quite amused by the way in which we got to remember the Biological terms and the functions of each, which Mrs Mbhele had written on the township map. This was because we were familiar with the location; the drawing had landmarks that we could easily relate to because it was our township map and the landmarks were familiar to us. For example, Mrs

Mbhele gave the trees drawn along the road some labels of bigger and smaller veins that transport blood to the body. Mrs Mbhele would ultimately ask any group to present its understanding of what we had learnt. Not a single learner in class wanted to let Mrs Mbhele down.

I remember that after each topic, our group, seven of us, including my two friends, would be the ones to volunteer to lead the lesson. That prompted Mrs Mbhele to enter the school in the Science Olympiad. A maximum of 12 learners were allowed to enter the competition. I, together with my friends, was chosen to participate in the competition. We suddenly became stars that brought some light in a dark tunnel. Every learner at school envied us.

In the end, we came second against 23 high schools that had entered the competition. We used objects such as buckets, pipes, water, a scooter motto, stoppers and a tap to demonstrate how water was cleaned and transported from the dams to our homes. This memory brings a sense of pride and fulfillment to me. This pride generates from the hard work and dedication that I put towards making certain we won the competition. I always want to emulate Mrs Mbhele in my teaching of Natural Sciences in grade 7 by giving learners an opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt and also the freedom to say what they feel about the lessons.



Figure 3.10. : A memory drawing of a very organised and inspirational teacher.

The image in Figure 3.10 depicts my Biology teacher, Mrs Mbhele, who was very dedicated to her school work. Mrs Mbhele always encouraged me to do my best in whatever I did because she said that I had potential to do well in my studies.

Now that I can have an influence as a deputy principal in making constructive changes in as far as positive behavior support in my school is concerned, I feel I can emulate Mrs Mbhele in fostering positive behaviour among learners by engaging them and drawing on their sociocultural backgrounds to develop a school culture that will be recognised and be accepted by all. From recalling Mrs Mbhele's teachings, I have realised that engaging learners in a positive way helps in curbing negative behaviour among learners.

Learners' power: Learners becoming a law unto themselves

I did my final year of school, standard 10(now grade 12), in the year 1986. During this time there was political unrest in South Africa (Clarke& Worger, 2016).This political unrest in South Africa, including our province of KwaZulu-Natal, was caused by conflict in the townships between two main political parties, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the African National Congress (ANC). Over and above that, African people were demanding the unbanning of some political parties as well as the release of their political leaders from prisons. The animosity between the IFP and the ANC resulted in schools being disrupted by the members who supported the two political parties. The intervention of the then government by sending soldiers to the townships to keep peace also exacerbated the level of violence. Members of our community believed that some soldiers joined forces with one of the political parties and killed innocent people.

My former high school is situated between a township that was believed to be the ANC stronghold, and an informal settlement that had the majority of IFP membership. The school had learners who came from both of these two areas. The majority of learners who attended my school came from the township because it was bigger than the informal settlement. Only African learners attended my school. We were taught by only African teachers as well.

Mr James was my class teacher in standard 10. He was teaching me Afrikaans Language. Afrikaans is the South African language that is spoken by the Afrikaans ethnic group that originated from the Dutch Settlers in the 1650s. In my experience, African people did not like to be taught in Afrikaans. The reason for that was that the language was associated with the apartheid system that was introduced by the then ruling White Afrikaans government to oppress African people of South Africa. Mr James was a very strict teacher. He was always waiting to close the gate for latecomers, which led to learners hating him. Moreover, Mr James was teaching Afrikaans, which was hated by most learners, including me.

I remember how one day learners gathered in the school hall to discuss the rumours we had heard that the IFP members were coming to attack learners in the school. The allegations were supported by the absence of learners from the informal settlement, which was an IFP stronghold. We therefore decided to collect stones from around the school and put them in the assembly area to protect ourselves from an imminent attack by IFP supporters. The male learners collected enough stones to protect all learners in the school. However, no attack took

place that day. I remember that the following morning when we came to school, Mr James instructed us (his form class) to get rid of the stones we had collected the previous day. My class followed the instruction. Once we had finished getting rid of the stones in the assembly area my class was summoned for an urgent Student Representative Council (SRC) meeting in the hall. The class was asked who had given us the instruction to remove the stones we had collected the previous day. We told the SRC members and the rest of learners who were in the hall that we had acted on Mr James' instructions. Mr James was called by the SRC to the hall to answer for himself, after which he was told to collect all the stones and put them back where he had found them. Mr James had to comply because of his fear of the learners. The political unrest in the townships around my school had infiltrated into the school such that teachers no longer commanded respect as they had done in the previous years. I remember how, while Mr James was collecting all the stones using a wheel barrow, boys would clap for him after he had dropped each load.

At home I was taught to respect adults, especially my teachers. I felt very bad to see Mr James being subjected to such humiliation. The level of misbehaviour and disrespect exhibited by learners was appalling. There was a total disregard for authority. Learners were a law unto themselves.

I remember how some learners would come to school at 9 am (one hour after the school had opened) in the morning during the winter season, and leave at 11:30 am. Learners would tell teachers that they could no longer administer corporal punishment to any learner. They threatened that a teacher who would be reported punishing a learner would be punished in the same way. Learners had started to be ungovernable in the school. We would have violent demonstrations in the school and as a result teachers were now scared of us learners. There was learner power versus teacher authority. Teachers could no longer exercise their authority the way they used to. In discussing this memory with my research supervisor and my critical friends, my supervisor asked if our teachers had any other strategies for classroom management. My response was that I could not recall any other classroom management strategy other than that of corporal punishment. My supervisor also asked me, "*When corporal punishment became a problem because of learner revolt, what happened to teachers because they did not have any other strategies?*" My response was that many teachers decided to abandon classrooms and stay in the staffroom because they did not have control of

classrooms anymore. If teachers happened to come to class, we learners would make sure we disrupted them in some way.

One of my critical friends commented that the issue of corporal punishment is still a problem today in the township and rural schools in particular. She explained that teachers get frustrated because they lack management skills with regards to learner behaviour. We agreed that it is possible to come up with positive behaviour support strategies in schools, but it takes time. Teachers need the correct approach to engage learners. My supervisor reminded us that proper classroom management planning for teachers is paramount.

Most learners at my school did not even pass standard 10 (the final year of school) because riots were the order of the day in my high school years (Clarke, & Worger, 2016). Some riots were demonstrations by learners fighting for free and equal education in apartheid South Africa. Riots were also prevalent in the township communities because of the political unrest where people were fighting for the release of political prisoners and the unbanning of some political parties.

I remember when one of the learners was set alight and lost his life in the assembly area by some learners in my school. This was a result of an earlier ambush of nine learners of my school by alleged IFP members on their way back home a day before. I was doing standard 10 then. For the next three months, teachers reported to the Education District Offices rather than coming to our school because they feared for their lives. The school was closed temporarily until learners came back to write our final examinations. I, together with my two friends, went to ask the principal of a finishing school in the city of Durban to join the school for the remainder of the year. Only seven learners managed to pass of more than 1000 that wrote the final examinations that year in my school. In listening to me tell this story, one of my critical friends commented that it called for learners that were disciplined and mature enough to survive my high school experiences.

Looking back, I can realise that it took an individual will to do what was right during my high school years. I could easily have succumbed to peer pressure and followed those who were taking advantage of the state of unrest in our townships that ended up affecting our education. Instead I decided to listen to advice from my grandmother who always told me about the importance of taking my studies seriously if I wanted to be prosperous in life. Furthermore,

my friends and some of the community members also played a crucial role in me focusing in my studies. My friends and I always had a common purpose in life, to be respectable citizens when we grew up. I now see the positive role that was played by my high school friends in my life. I grew up with my high school friends in the same neighbourhood. We would always encourage one another to do the right things to please our parents, teachers and ourselves. We were determined to be successful in life.

In my WhatsApp texting with my former high school friend, Mduduzi, he described our high school years as follows:

Teachers seldom attended capacity building workshops. They were not role models in the way they dressed and conducted themselves during lesson presentations. Morning devotions did not inspire us to focus on school work. In the mist of political unrest, the principal and staff failed to motivate us, hence the school was dysfunctional and that led to poor results in the school. The student representation council SRC was appointed by class teachers and most of them lacked leadership skills. These students were “politically aware” and respected by educators. They spent most of the time educating fellow students about the state of affairs of the country, thus abdicating their core duties. Many schools around mine had Student Christian Movement (SCM) which did not exist in my school due to lack of delegated duties by the principal. Ill-discipline of learners was handled by only the principal.

When I asked, “Give an example of how past supportive and unsupportive experiences of your former high school changed your view how schools should deal with behavior,” Mduduzi made mention of his environment as well as the lack of teacher competency as the major issues of his unsupportive experiences. Mduduzi stated that during our high school years:

Elders in my community used to teach us learners anti-government songs and slogans. Even in churches, priests would preach politics. We therefore would, on many occasions, go to school to hold meetings as learners of how we were going to fight the apartheid Education system. This was also exacerbated by the resignation of well experienced teachers in my school to join the liberation movements such as United Democratic Movement (UDM).

I remember how one of our teachers, Mr Thusi, told the class that he was leaving the teaching profession because what they were teaching would not get us anywhere. Mr Thusi further convinced us learners to make certain that we would fight for liberation first for it would

come with better education. At that time we were glad that there was no proper teaching and learning taking place and we seemed to like teachers such as Mr Thusi because most of us never liked to learn.



Figure 3.11 .A memory drawing of an inconsiderate and lazy teacher.

The image in Figure 3.11 reminds me of Miss Zuke who would come to the class and just sit on the chair. She taught us Physical Science in standard 9. She would come to class during her teaching period, sit on the chair and talk to us learners about anything either than the subject matter. She would at times come to the class and tell us her personal stories. Some learners thought that Miss Zuke was the most understanding and loving teacher at school because she allowed learners to ask her questions that were sexually oriented. We learners liked it when Miss Zuke did not teach us. I now see that she was either too lazy to teach us, or maybe she was not comfortable with the subject (Physical Science) that she was allocated to teach. When it was time for examinations she would come and tell the class what the Physical Science paper would look like. She would provide us learners with answers as well. We only realised that Miss Zuke had not done justice to her teaching when we had to write our final examinations. I liked this Physical Science teacher at that time, but later in life I realised that she had shortchanged us learners in terms of acquiring necessary knowledge and skills to pass standard 10 the following year.

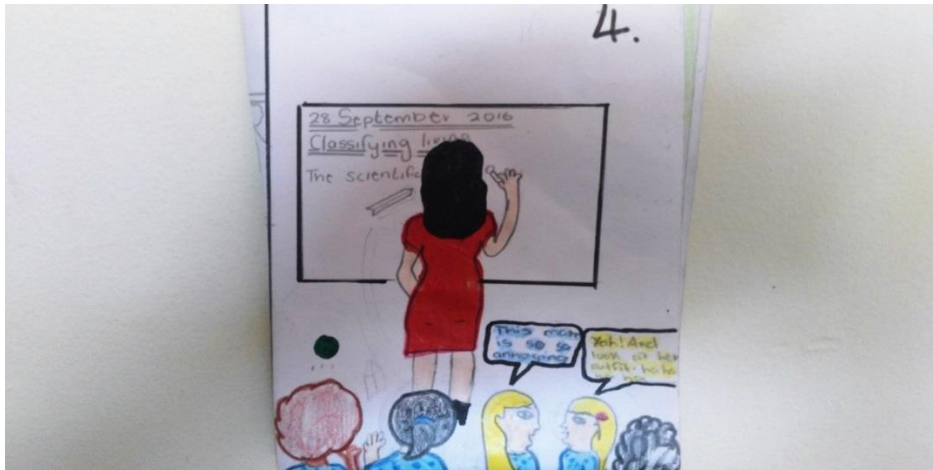


Figure 3.12.A memory drawing of disrespected teacher

The image in Figure 3.12 depicts Miss Mbatha who was a novice teacher when I was in standard 9. She joined the school during the times of riots in the townships that had escalated to the school. Miss Mbatha was full of energy. She loved to teach and would never miss her teaching periods. However, she did not get any respect from the learners because she was still very young and inexperienced. Miss Mbatha was the same age as some of the learners in my class. Learners did not take Miss Mbatha seriously whenever she was teaching. Learners would at times throw papers at her whilst she was writing on the board with her back facing the class. When Miss Mbatha asked about the learners who had thrown a paper at her, she would not get the answer. Learners had developed the tendency of protecting one another. Miss Mbatha would end up leaving the class in tears and we would be happy that we would not be taught for the remainder of the period.

Supportive experiences from my community: A father who brought confidence in me

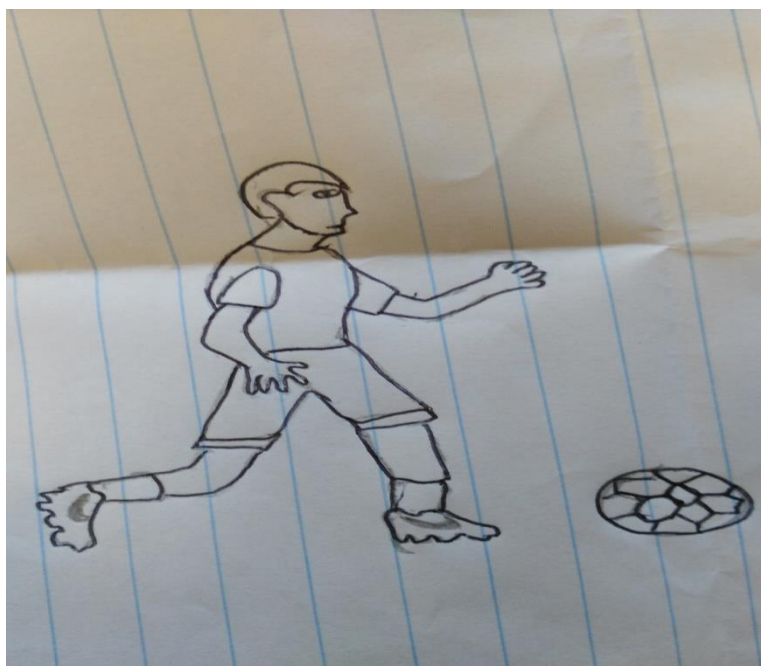


Figure 3.13. Captain my captain: A memory drawing of myself where I gained confidence through playing soccer.

This memory drawing (Figure 3.13.) brings back memories from my teenage years of one Mr Mabaso who was our neighbour. Mr Mabaso was a father to all the boys and girls of the area. He was a very successful business man. We all wished we could belong to the Mabaso family. Mr Mabaso's son was my best friend and we were of the same age group. Mr Mabaso was a strict man. He was very passionate about school. He would call all the boys of the area and tell us stories of the past. One striking story among many he told was how he wished he was our age so that he could attend school.

During our teenage years, many of us would do wrong things. It was during that stage where most boys began to smoke, drink alcohol, gamble and carry dangerous weapons such as knives, wherever they went. Mr Mabaso would drive his car around our area inviting all the boys to his home. During those meetings, he would talk to us about the importance of loving and behaving well in school and in the community. Most of us really never cared much about the stories he told about school. We would just enjoy the cold drinks he used to buy us when we were gathered there. Mr Mabaso would wake us in the morning and transport us to school without fail.

Mr Mabaso eventually opened an under 13 to 16 soccer team to play in the local football association. He made certain that all the players did go to school on a daily basis and were doing well there. It was a routine for us players to show him our quarterly school reports, for he insisted on us doing well in school. Most parents in the area adored Mr Mabaso because he was playing a role of a father figure to all the children in the area. My Zulu cultural heritage allows for any parent to raise any child around the community as theirs. Therefore Mr Mabaso was playing his role as a father. I was one of the boys who was privileged to be under his wing because I grew up without a father I could look up to all my life. Mr Mabaso was a source of inspiration, a father I never wanted to disappoint.

I chose to picture myself kicking a soccer ball in the memory drawing because playing soccer as a teenager brought some inspiration and motivation. I began to believe that I could do well in everything as long as I could put my mind to it. Soccer taught me to be disciplined, which resulted in me becoming a captain for my team for five years in a row. Being voted a captain by all players left me with a sense of pride and humbleness that was immeasurable. This drawing (Figure 3.13) symbolises the care that one has to show towards everything one does at all times.

Playing soccer was our life. We had to love schoolwork for us to be part of the soccer team and, unknowingly, this taught me to be focused, dedicated and to behave positively to both my peers and older people. Mr Mabaso believed in us; he would call and talk to me as if I were his own son. He would tell me that I needed to put my energies into my studies because life is tough without education. Unfortunately, some of the other boys in my age group did not take Mr Mabaso's advice. Most boys chose to go wayward and hence they found themselves on the wrong side of the law. Their actions prompted me to focus more on what I thought was right, which was doing well in school and playing soccer. I wanted to please both Mr Mabaso and my grandmother. Mr Mabaso was a tree whose branches stretched so wide, inviting everyone to draw some strength in and enjoy the shade it provided.

Positive attributes of my teaching experiences: Learning from those who had walked the walk

I started teaching in the year 1994 in a primary school at Inanda, north of Durban. I joined a staff of 32 in the school. The school is in a township and at that time it had enrolled more than 900 African learners. I was a form teacher for grade 5. The school management comprised the principal and the deputy principal only. Inanda primary school also senior had teachers who acted as heads of department (HoDs). There were two teachers who were acting HoDs for the intermediate and senior phases respectively. Mr Sikhosana, a post level one teacher, volunteered to become my mentor because we were of the same age group.

It was at Inanda primary school where I gained the experience I needed to become a better teacher. Being a novice teacher came with challenges that emanated from difficulties in keeping up with completion of lesson plans and the syllabus. I also lacked confidence to teach in the presence of other teachers and to maintain discipline in my class. My mentor teacher, Mr Sikhosana, helped in teaching me how to manage the class, arrange my work, and approach certain Natural Sciences topics, as well as about dressing in an appropriate manner.

I soon earned the respect of learners because I became the coach for school soccer teams for both boys and girls. I would always encourage my soccer players to be more disciplined, dedicated and to be more focused in whatever they did. I was able to win the school eight trophies for boys and girls soccer altogether in the eight years I was stationed at Inanda primary school.

My teaching however, started to blossom when I moved from Inanda primary school to Mkhumbane primary school in 2003 because I was deemed surplus to requirement at Inanda primary. I was deemed surplus at Inanda primary because of the school post provisional norm certificate provided by the Department of Education. A post provincial norm certificate is given to all schools every three year cycle. It is that certificate that determines the number of teachers that have to teach in that particular school based on the number of learners captured in the last year of the cycle.

I was very anxious upon finding out that I would be going to another school because I was now familiar with the Inanda primary school setting and the way we did things as a staff.

Umkhumbane primary school was the second school I worked at before I was appointed deputy principal in my current school in 2014. Umkhumbane primary school was different to Inanda primary school with regard to the composition of the teaching staff. My new school had teachers coming from diverse racial backgrounds. For example, there were Indian, Coloured and African teachers. However, the majority of learners were African, although there were a few Indian learners as well. The school is in the heart of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) housing schemes. RDP is a socio-economic policy framework implemented by the post-apartheid democratic government. The government introduced the RDP to address the backlog in housing to be provided to poor, mostly African people, who could not afford to apply for a bond in the banks because they were unemployed or earned little.

The principal of Umkhumbane school gave me a green light to consult him about anything that was on my mind, as long as it was for the benefit of the learners. I became the sport organiser and football coach for girls and boys in the school. There were elements of misbehaviour in as far as learners were concerned. It was mostly the boys in grades 6 and 7 that were displaying misbehaviour. I targeted boys from those two grades (6 and 7) as a core of my football teams. We would meet every Thursday for training and I used that opportunity to encourage them to do well on and off the field of play. For example, I would single out one good deed done by one player during instructional time. I would then present a certificate for good conduct in front of all the players. My doing so prompted all players to behave and conduct themselves in a respectable and acceptable manner at school. The level of learners who were misbehaving was dramatically reduced.

I remember in one of the parents meetings being thanked by parents for transforming their children into respectful, dedicated and well-mannered learners. Teachers would also come and report to me that most of the players had improved significantly in their academic attainment. I was therefore encouraged to get all learners in my school involved in diverse activities with the help of other teachers and some volunteers from the community.

In 2005 I was promoted to HoD of the intermediate and senior phase. My wish as a HoD was to inculcate a culture of reading in every learner in the school from the early years of schooling. I was also selected by the community members of my school as a coordinator of Cato Manor library that was attached to the school building. I therefore approached the

librarian with the idea of opening a reading club for all grades. Many learners took part in this initiative such that parents availed themselves of their services. Learners borrowed books from the library at the beginning of the week, read them and retold the stories to their groups. Books were not easily available to learners in their homes because most of the parents of these learners were unemployed, illiterate and could not afford to buy books. A learner who had borrowed the most books in a month would be given a gift of a new book by a librarian.

The Cato Manor library had an annual reading competition that involved five primary schools around the Cato Manor area. This reading competition was started because the library committee (that included me as the coordinator) felt that learners were under utilising library. My school was one of the five schools that always took part in the reading competition. Learners in my school were encouraged to take the reading competition seriously, thus enhancing their love for reading. This was evident because this school has won the reading competition since its commencement (see Figure 3.14). The reading competition also encouraged many learners to register and have library cards so that they could borrow books with ease.

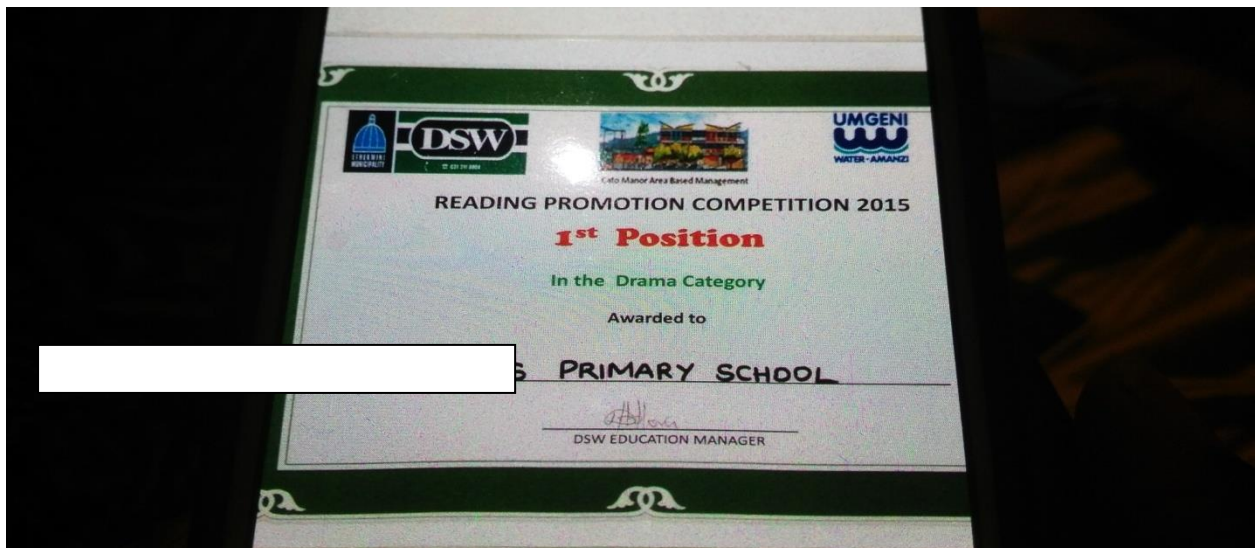


Figure 3.14. Driven by courage: A memory of a certificate awarded to a school for excelling in a reading competition.

In 2008 the Department of Basic Education introduced and invited primary and high schools to participate in a quiz competition. My school entered the competition. Each school selected two learners from the intermediate phase and two from the senior phases who were going to

be asked five sets of questions. Schools were then provided by the Department of Basic Education with a thick book named *My Country South Africa* about which questions were going to be asked. Each set of questions had 10 questions which a pair of learners had to answer in 10 seconds. One set of questions was focused on the National Flag. The second set was about the National Anthem. The third set for the intermediate phase was on the Provincial Coat of Arms, and the fourth set for the senior phase was on the National Coat of Arms. Another set of 10 questions was based on human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV and AIDS). The last set of questions was on general knowledge at the provincial and national levels for intermediate and senior phases respectively.



Figure 3.15. Hard work pays: A certificate awarded to the school for excelling in the quiz competition.

Schools would compete as clusters; that is, schools within the same area would compete against each other. The winning school would compete with schools within its circuit. If the school won it would go and compete at the district level. Ultimately, the winner at the district level would compete among other districts for a provincial level winner. When I was the quiz master in my school, we won the quiz competition for three years in a row from 2008 to 2010

in both the intermediate and senior phases. I have further won it four times in different years. I am a provincial champion for the quiz in the school I am stationed at currently. When I look at the certificate at Figure 3.15 I feel satisfied about the contribution I am making to promoting love for learning to learners as an experienced teacher. I also feel very proud that over the years of my teaching experience I have developed into a confident teacher who is always eager to learn new things. The quiz scoring grid shown in Figure 3.16 is a reminder that success always requires hard work.

kzn education
Department of Education
KwaZulu-Natal

QUIZ SCORING GRID
Intermediate

SCHOOL: GABVILLE PRIMARY Total: 37

| PROVINCIAL COAT OF ARMS | | NATIONAL FLAG | | NATIONAL ANTHEM | | HIV/AIDS | | CURRENT AFFAIRS | |
|-------------------------|------|---------------|------|-----------------|------|----------|------|-----------------|------|
| Question | Mark | Question | Mark | Question | Mark | Question | Mark | Question | Mark |
| 1 | ✓ | 11 | ✓ | 21 | ✓ | 31 | ✓ | 41 | X |
| 2 | ✓ | 12 | ✓ | 22 | X | 32 | ✓ | 42 | X |
| 3 | ✓ | 13 | ✓ | 23 | ✓ | 33 | ✓ | 43 | ✓ |
| 4 | X | 14 | ✓ | 24 | ✓ | 34 | ✓ | 44 | X |
| 5 | X | 15 | ✓ | 25 | ✓ | 35 | ✓ | 45 | ✓ |
| 6 | ✓ | 16 | ✓ | 26 | ✓ | 36 | ✓ | 46 | X |
| 7 | ✓ | 17 | ✓ | 27 | ✓ | 37 | X | 47 | X |
| 8 | ✓ | 18 | ✓ | 28 | ✓ | 38 | ✓ | 48 | X |
| 9 | X | 19 | ✓ | 29 | ✓ | 39 | ✓ | 49 | X |
| 10 | X | 20 | ✓ | 30 | ✓ | 40 | X | 50 | ✓ |

Quiz Master/Mistress: P. Nkomo Position: I

Figure 3.16. True champions: A certificate of a scoring grid for quiz competition.

When I look back, I recognise that my principal, colleagues and parents were the source of inspiration to aspire for recognition, to work hard and be counted among teachers who brought about positive change in the school. In 2012 the Department of Basic Education, Umlazi District had a function to recognise and commemorate 100 teachers who had excelled in various educational categories across all public schools under Umlazi District. I was also invited to that function and was given a certificate and a trophy (see Figure 3.17) for winning quiz competitions more than any other school. That gesture by the Department of Basic Education brought a feeling of confidence, cheerfulness and more energy to keep doing my best and not to settle for the second best.



Figure 3.17. Personal glory: A memory of a token awarded to me by the Department of Basic Education (Umlazi District) for winning the quiz competition three times in a row.

Consolidating my learning from recalling memories of supportive and unsupportive experiences

In this section I show concept maps that I made and presented to my supervisor and critical friends when I was consolidating my learning from my memory-work.

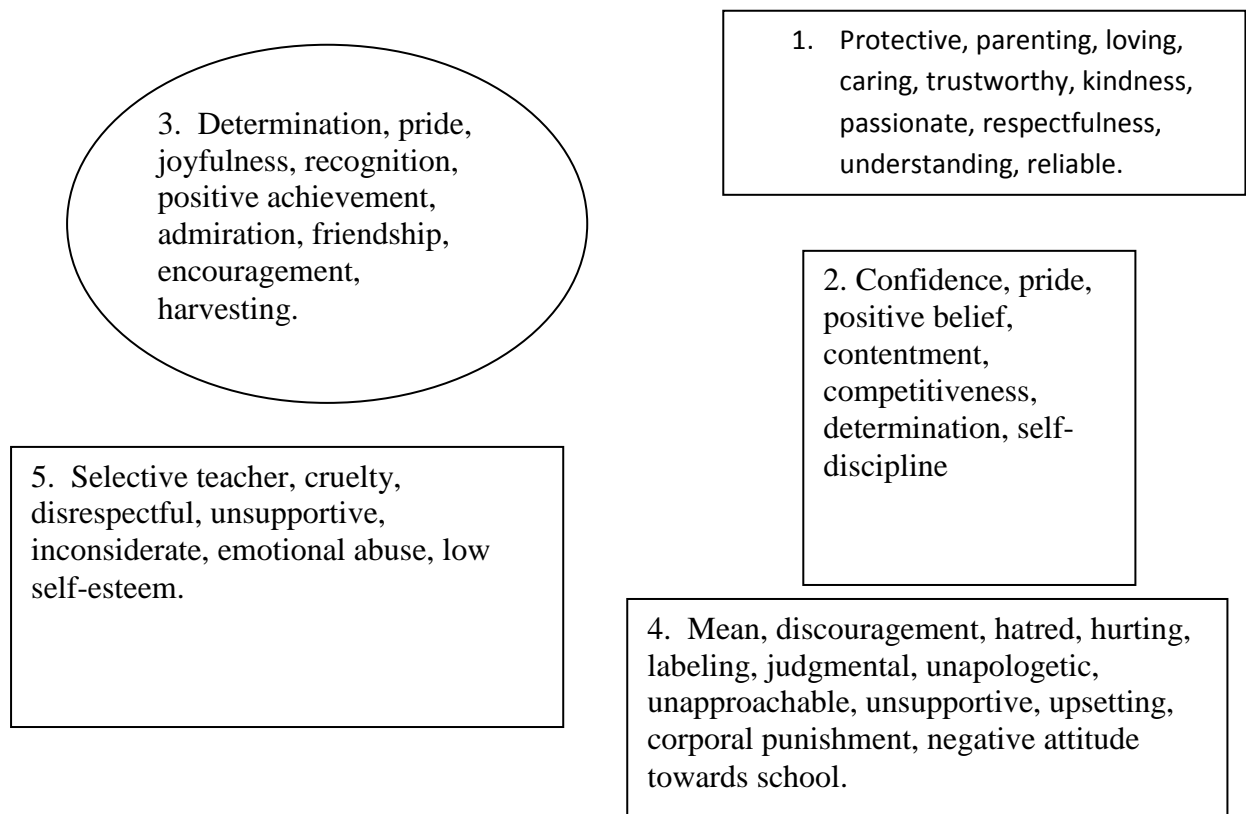


Figure 3.18 .A concept map of my learning from my primary school experiences

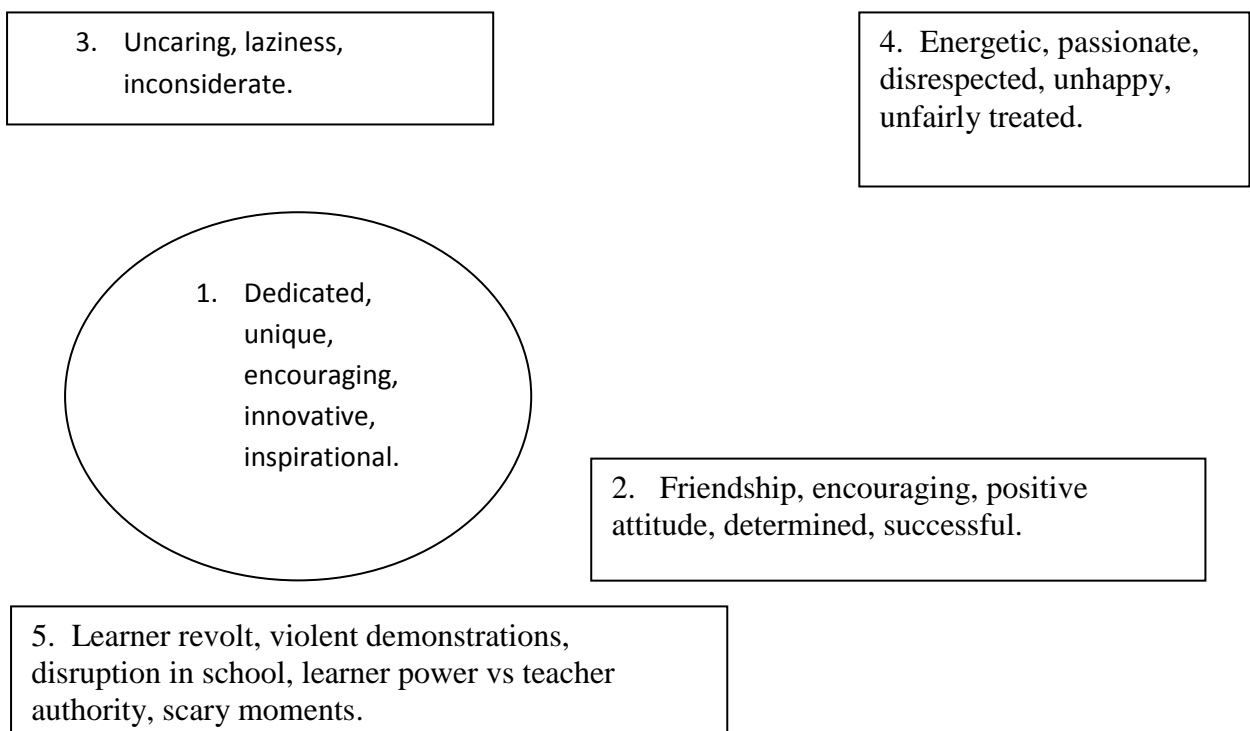


Figure 3.19 .A concept map of my learning from my high school experiences

In discussing the concept maps, my supervisor asked what I thought were the most important lessons I had learnt from my memory-work in terms of my research question: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* My response was that I had learnt that positive behaviour support requires respect, honesty, open mindedness, transparency and proper planning. I believe that if I cultivate all these qualities in myself I should be able to make a difference in terms of learner positive behavior support in my school. As a school manager I can set an example to maximise learner engagement and school academic achievement (Garner, 2011).

I also discovered that the sociocultural and political environment where learners come from can play a crucial role in the way learners conduct themselves in the school (Burke, 2002). This is because learning and development take place in socially and culturally shaped environments (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). And I realised that the views of learners should be considered very seriously for them to get the feeling that they are part of building the overall culture and ethos for the school (Garner, 2011).

Another key learning is that teachers' positive relationships with learners can be a decisive factor in learners' positive behavior (Lindo et al., 2014). As Burke (2002) explained, "a teacher wields considerable power in the creation of psychological and social milieu" (p 110). From remembering and reflecting on my past experiences, I saw how learners' problem behaviour in schools can be lessened when learners are actively engaged in learning. I also recognised that teachers should also encourage learners to voice their opinions to develop a culture of self-belief and confidence. It is of upmost importance for teachers to listen to their learners, engage them as fellow human beings and try to understand the way they view the world (Johnson, 2008). As Johnson (2008) emphasised, "listening, it would seem, is one of the most basic ways teachers convey their respect for their students as fellow human beings" (p. 392). Engaging in ongoing dialogues with learners can enhance a positive teacher-learner relationship and positive behaviour support (Northfield & Sherman, 2004). Additionally, I learnt that learners should be given leeway to make mistakes in their learning so they can learn from them and become responsible. And I saw how love that is displayed by teachers towards learners can motivate both learners and teachers to trust and respect one another. From recalling my own school days, I also understood how learners' negative attitudes towards teachers or learning can hinder their future endeavors. In order to cultivate sustainable positive behaviour support, teachers and learners must be able to work together to

develop a code of conduct around universal expectations that are related to being safe, cooperative, ready to learn, respectful and responsible.

In addition, I learnt that it is vital for learners, teachers and parents to learn from one another in creating a culture that would be embraced by every individual in the school. During discussions with my supervisor and my two critical friends it also came to light that the school community (learners, teachers and parents) can have a positive contribution towards developing a universal behavior policy that will infuse cultural values and human rights across multicultural schools. This can include “values [that are] shared by virtually all cultural groups (e.g., justice, equality, freedom, peace, compassion, and charity” (Banks et al., 2001, p. 200). To this end, it is imperative that we acquire knowledge about histories and cultures of the diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and language groups within our schools (Banks et al., 2001). Positive behaviour support should be culturally responsive to learners from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and language groups. Inviting and listening to multiple voices can assist school community members to understand and embrace other people’s culture through debates, dialogues and collaborative viewpoints (Pithouse-Morgan & Samaras, 2015).

Conclusion

In this chapter, Chapter Three, I recalled supportive memories of my grandmother and my Christian Education teacher when I was growing up. Thereafter, I narrated supportive and unsupportive stories of my former primary school and high experiences, with the help of my former primary school friend and high school friend. This was then followed by recounting my teaching experiences. I also recalled the role played by the community with regards to behaviour support. I then showed concept maps that I created to consolidate my learning from my memories of supportive and unsupportive experiences at primary school and high school. In response to my first research question, *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?*, my overall learning was that mutually respectful, trusting and empathetic relationships among learners, teachers, parents/guardians and communities are at the heart of positive behavior support in schools. And, as a school manager, I can model and cultivate such relationships within and outside of the school.

In the next chapter, Chapter Four, I describe how I engaged learner, teacher and parent participants in helping me to answer research question two of my self-study: *What I can learn about positive behaviour support from our school community?*

CHAPTER FOUR: LEARNING ABOUT POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

Introduction

In the previous chapter, Chapter Three, I responded to my first question: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* In answering this research question, I recollected and reflected on past supportive and unsupportive experiences. I learnt that mutually respectful, trusting and empathetic relationships among learners, teachers, parents/guardians and communities are at the heart of positive behavior support in schools. In my role as a school manager, I can set an example by nurturing such relationships within and outside of the school.

In this chapter, Chapter Four, I narrate how I engaged learner, teacher and parent participants to assist me to answer research question two of my self-study: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* I portray, exemplify and reflect on my learning through my exchanges with learner, teacher and parent participants. I then demonstrate how I created a chart and concept map to make visible and consolidate my learning and how I expanded this learning in conversation with my research supervisor and critical friends.

In narrating how the sessions with the participants unfolded, I have included excerpts from our audio-recorded group conversations. The language used in the sessions was predominantly English. The reason for that is most of the participants speak English as their mother tongue language and English is the medium of learning and teaching in the school. However, sometimes the isiZulu-speaking learners would prefer to express themselves in isiZulu. In those cases, I have provided an English translation. I have also used extracts from my reflective journal to illustrate my thoughts and feelings and to show how my learning evolved. In addition, I have incorporated photographs that I took of what was produced during the sessions, as well as photographs taken by the teacher participants.

Meeting the positive behaviour group participants for the first time (04/03/2016)

In my first meeting with the positive behaviour group comprising four learners, four teachers and two parent participants, I decided that I was going to introduce myself in a way that

would ease participants' nerves and anxieties. I chose to use a computer centre in the school for this first session because the centre was large and was not often used by learners and teachers. I set up three round tables with chairs for participants and me to sit on. There were six chairs at each table. When all participants had sat down anxiously waiting to find out what was going to happen next, I noticed that their seating arrangement was interesting. The learners had all decided to occupy chairs at the same table. The two parent participants sat together at another table with the two heads of department. This left the two post level one teacher participants at the last table.

I started by telling the participants my first name and my surname. According to my cultural heritage (Zulu culture) children are not allowed to call or know an adult's first name unless the adult is a biological parent. It is taken as a sign of disrespect if they do so. However, an adult is allowed to tell children his name if he wants them to be open and feel free to discuss private issues with him. I went on to tell participants about my place of birth, age, my siblings, the schools I attended, my immediate family, the schools I have taught at, my interests in life and more. I was interrupted by a parent participant who asked me the number of my years of service in the Department of Basic Education. I told everyone that I had been teaching for 22 years. She further asked if I still had the same passion as when I started teaching; I agreed that I did but also pointed out that things were no longer the same in as far as learner and teacher behaviour was concerned. For example, most school governance policies had since changed and so had the code of ethics for both learners and teachers. I then gave all participants some time to ask me questions about anything I had already told them. However, I could sense that learners were still not comfortable with being part of the session that involved parents, teachers and me. They were talking softly among themselves.

However, things started to "blossom up" when I told the participants that I was going to hand each one of them a card filled with all the details of another participant whom they were going to introduce. I got this idea from a teacher development workshop that was organised for senior management teams by the Department of Basic Education. Participants had already filled in their details on the cards (see Figure 4.1) prior to our session. The cards had the following personal details: name, surname, where they live, interests and more. The participant who had a card in his or her hand called out that name on the card. The one who was introduced stood next to the person who introduced him or her until he or she had finished. While the process of introduction was still in progress, I observed the excitement

and eagerness to find out more about each participant. At times, participants interjected to ask questions even before the person who was doing the introduction had finished. For example, a teacher participant, Miss Dlomo, had a card to introduce Tshinya, a learner participant who was standing next to her. As Miss Dlomo was about to start to talk, everyone's eyes were glued to both of them. She then started by saying: *"Ladies and gentlemen, beside me stands a young man by the name of Tshinya. His nickname is Muhongozi. For the benefit of those who do not understand Swahili, Muhongozi is 'priest' in English."* There was a bit of commotion for a moment whilst everyone was laughing at the nickname. Before Miss Dlomo could continue with the introduction, Mrs Singh was curious to know the origin of the nickname. Tshinya, with a big smile on his face, told us that he was named *"Muhongozi after my mom gave birth to me at the mission while she was attending church service."* We were pleased to know that. The room was now lively with all participants eager to be introduced, to be part of introducing each other and ask questions if need be.

ALL ABOUT MYSELF

Name : _____

Surname : _____

Nickname : _____

Members in the family : _____

Favorite food : _____

Favorite TV show : _____

Favorite music : _____

What are your hobbies : _____

Where do you see yourself in 10 years : _____

Figure 4.1. : The introductory card for the positive behaviour support group.

After the introduction process, I explained the reason why we were forming a positive behaviour group. I mentioned that the South African Schools Act of 1996 stipulated the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools. Moreover, as a school community comprising teachers, learners and parents, we needed to work together to contribute to formulating a code of conduct that would embrace our diverse sociocultural, economic and political backgrounds. As Luiselli, Putnam, Handler and Feinberg (2005), noted, teachers, school managers, learners and parents should all be included in a school-wide positive

behaviour support team. I also mentioned that every participant's views would be taken seriously and deliberated on if the need arose. I asked if there was anything that needed to be clarified before we continued and I further mentioned that some things would come to light as we progressed with the sessions. I emphasised that every participant present was important and that I was certain they would contribute positively to our learning about school-wide positive behaviour support.

Once all participants were settled I divided the big group into three smaller groups. There were separate groups for learner, parent and teacher participants. I gave each group a chart to write down a set of housekeeping rules to be agreed on and followed throughout the sessions we were going to have. I let each group decide on its own rules since I was going to have different sessions with each group. The facial expression from learner participants suggested that they did not understand what to write on the chart. I explained to learners that housekeeping rules are the agreed basic guidelines that everyone would be expected to adhere to whenever we met for sessions. Although I was moving from one group to the other, I spent a lot of time with learners. I did that because I thought that they would need more assistance from me than teachers or parents. All the three groups were discussing the rules to be written on the chart.

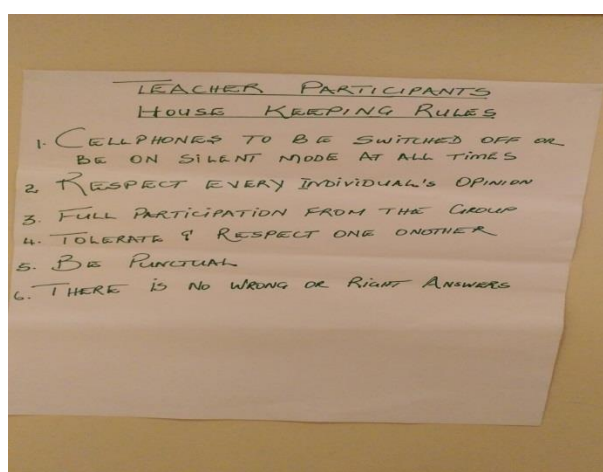


Figure 4.2. The housekeeping rules chart developed by teacher participants.

Table 4.1.
The housekeeping rules developed by teacher participants

1. Cell phones to be switched off or be on silent mode at all times
2. Respect every individual's opinion.
3. Full participation from the group.
4. Tolerate and respect one another.
5. Be punctual.
6. There is no wrong or right answers.

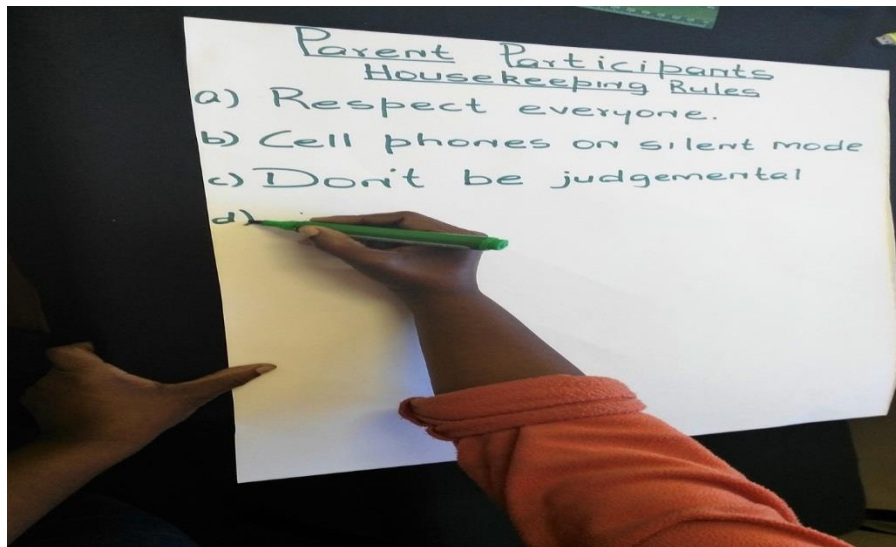


Figure 4.3. The housekeeping rules chart developed by parent participants.

Table 4.2.

The housekeeping rules developed by parent participants

- a) Respect everyone.
- b) Cell phones on silent mode.
- c) Do not be judgemental.
- d) Be punctual.
- e) Things discussed to be kept here.

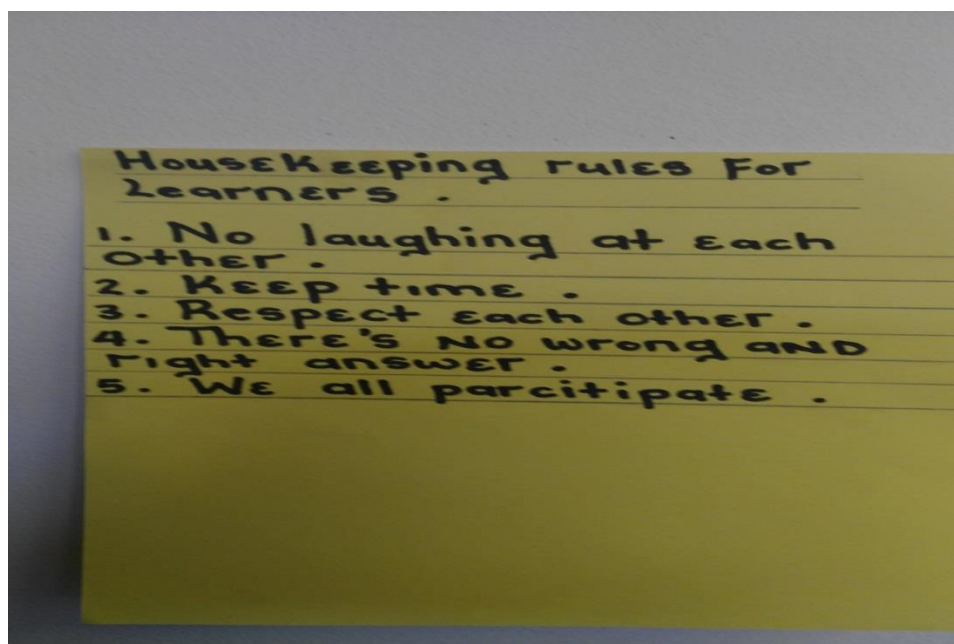


Figure 4.4. The housekeeping rules chart developed by learner participants.

Table 4.3.

The housekeeping rules developed by learner participants

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No laughing at each other. 2. Keep time. 3. Respect each other. 4. There is no wrong and right answer. 5. We all participate |
|---|

Reflective journal entry (04/03/2016)

I learnt a lot from the housekeeping rules written for teachers, parents and learners. My observation was that some of the rules that learners wrote were in line with the positive behaviour support that this study seeks to explore. For example, learners wrote that no learner should laugh at another learner, full participation at all times is also paramount; they should also respect each other. The word “respect” is one of the fundamental terms in as far as positive behaviour is concerned. Moreover, learners who are always engaged in an activity do not find time to misbehave because their focus is on what they are doing at that moment.

For the next hour I focused my attention on the learner participants. I gave each of the other two groups (parents and teachers) a set of questions that we were going to discuss in subsequent sessions (see Table 4.4 and Table 4.5).

Table 4.4.
A list of questions for teacher participants (Adapted from Deaton, 2012)

1. Please describe your teaching experience.
2. Tell me what you like and dislike about teaching as a career.
3. Tell me about the classroom management skills that you currently implement in your class to deal with learner behaviour.
4. Give an example of how previous teaching experiences have changed the way you deal with learner behaviour in your class.
5. Give me an example of the training that you received regarding learner behaviour support in your classroom.
6. How would you define positive behaviour support?
7. Tell me why you think you do or do not feel prepared to deal with learner behaviour in your classroom.
8. How do you feel about the role you play in learner behaviour support?

Table 4.5.
A list of questions for parent participants (Adapted from Deaton, 2012)

1. What do you understand by the term positive behaviour support?
2. What role, as a parent, you can play to reinforce positive behaviour in your child?
3. How would you define your child's upbringing in terms of behaviour?
4. Can you tell me why you think you should be part of your child's learning?

Parent and teacher participants were unsure about whether to discuss the questions as a group or to respond individually until a parent participant asked if it was compulsory to answer individually or if they were allowed to discuss the questions together and do the presentation afterwards. I told the two groups that they were free to discuss the questions together or write down the answers individually. They all opted for the latter.

I then gave learner participants chart paper, marker pens and a ruler. I asked them to draw and write down everything they liked and did not like about their school. Learners seemed to enjoy the activity because most of them wanted to take charge in the drawing. However, they reached consensus that Victoria was going to do the drawing and Alexandra the writing. They took that decision on their own.

While learners were still engaged in the drawing and writing activity, I went to the teacher participants to see how they were doing. There was some argument in relation to the question, “*Give me examples of the training that you received regarding learner behaviour support in your classroom*”. Although they had initially agreed that they were happy to answer the questions in isolation, they were now asking each other if anyone had undergone any kind of training on behaviour support. While it was not yet time to do the presentation concerning the questions, Mrs Singh was quick to make her feelings known:

I don't know about you, but I wish that our Department [of Basic Education] had spent a lot of time engaging schools like ours on positive learner behaviour. I am saying this because the first thing that comes to my mind when I think about discipline is corporal punishment. We teach learners the same way we were taught; even with learner behaviour. I still find it a challenge to change the way I have been dealing with learner discipline unless workshops with regards to positive learner behaviour are conducted.

I told them that we would talk about the issue when we met again to deliberate on the questions provided. From my reading (see Chapter One), I was aware that a key challenge we were facing was to build capacity to assist with the development of a school-wide positive behaviour support programme and to assist with problem solving to overcome implementation barriers (Lewis, Barrett, Sugai, & Horner, 2010).

As a group, learner participants discussed and decided to write about and draw the things they liked as well as those that they did not like about their school. From their discussion I gathered that learners appreciated the fact that their school has a computer room, a library, cleaners and more. The things learners did not like in their school included fighting, bullying, teasing, teachers administering corporal punishment, teachers displaying negative attitudes to learners and the other way around. I was surprised that learners would be brave enough to write about teachers exhibiting negative attitudes towards them. I had anticipated that learner participants might be scared to point out the incorrect things they are subjected to from the hands of teachers.

Learners spent the whole hour discussing what to write and draw on the charts. I then told them that in the next session they would be given the opportunity to talk about what they had

written down and drawn on their charts (see Figure 4.5 and Table 4.6). The first session therefore came to an end.

Reflective journal entry (04/03/2016)

This day went very well for me in particular. I had initially doubted the commitment of teachers and parents I had asked to participate in my study. I thought that they would not have enough time to share their experiences and opinions with us since they are adults and they have lots of things to do. Teacher participants showed more interest than I had expected; especially when I gave them the questions that they had to answer on their own. The reason for showing interest could have been that some of the questions affect them directly and they would want to know what to do if they were faced with similar challenges.

Session two for learner participants (10/03/2016)

This was the first session I had with learner participants separately. Because this was a small group, I decided to have the session in my office. Learners were pleased to have the session in my office because it is further from the classrooms where we could be disturbed by the noise coming from learners who were attending after school care. The office was also smaller than the computer centre where we had met our first session. Learners therefore shared the three chairs and a small table in my office. I sat on my chair facing the table and the chairs that the learners were sitting on. We started the session with biscuits and cold drinks. I then ask learners if they were ready to start after the snack. I asked them a question as a form of an ice-breaker, *“If you woke up tomorrow as an animal, what would you choose to be and why?”* (I got ideas for this ice-breaker and ones that I used in subsequent sessions from the internet). I gave the learners three minutes to think about the animal they would choose to be should they become animals the next day. I might have caught the learners by surprise because three of the four participants raised their hands for clarity. I then repeated the question. I further told them I would be the first one to play the game. They seemed pleased that I was going to start.

I told them that I would choose to be the jackal. My reason for choosing to become a jackal was because: *“It is a very clever animal. If you happen to read animal stories, jackal would be the animal that would solve problems of other animals. He would be a peace maker, an innovator and a spokesperson for all the animals. He could also be cunning and very tricky.”* I could see some smiles on learners’ faces when I described the jackal as one of the cleverest

animals in the animal kingdom. I told them that it was everyone's wish to be as clever as a jackal.

The learners all took turns to say which animal they would choose to become if they all woke up the following day as animals. Tshinya chose the lion, Victoria chose a cat, Alexandra opted for a peacock and Nokuzola chose to become an ant. It was very exciting to hear their reasons for selecting each of the animals they had chosen. Tshinya's reason to become a lion was based on the month of the year in which he was born, August. He stated, "*As a Leo I always favoured a lion*". (A Leo horoscope refers to a group of people born between 23 July and 22 August and it is represented by a lion). Tshinya went on to explain, "*A lion is a brave animal and he is feared by all living animals, including humans. I would definitely become a lion because it takes its own time before it charges on its enemies. It is actually the animals' king of kings.*" I could understand why Victoria chose to become a cat. She is a kind of a learner who is so fragile. She likes to be recognised and complemented at all times. Her reason for choosing a cat was: "*Cats are actually very clean, they do not mess everywhere. They are the most loved domestic animals on earth.*" As for Alexandra, she likes to be colourful. She said that being "*bright and colourful is what I always wanted to become in life.*" Nokuzola though gave the most interesting story for choosing the ant. She went on to say, "*An ant is one of the most underrated and smallest animals on earth.*" Everyone in the office was eager to know why she would opt for an ant. She elaborated:

Ants are workaholics like me. They also fall in the category of clever animals like yours Sir because during summer season they collect food and store it in their burrows. When winter comes their way, they sit in their burrows and enjoy the food they had collected during summer. I got this story from the Bible and I learnt a lesson that I should do my school work while there is still time for when examination comes I pass with ease.

I then took out the chart on which learner participants had written down what they liked and did not like about school (Figure 4.5). I reminded them that one of them would do the presentation on what they had written on the chart. I was interrupted by Nokuzola who stressed that there was more to talk about than what they had written on the chart. I asked for anyone to do the presentation. However, they said that they would feel more comfortable if they took turns because they were together whilst they were discussing about what was to be written. They said they would begin with what they did not like. I could see the excitement in

their faces as they were given the opportunity to talk about the things that directly affect them as learners. I reminded them of the time left since we had agreed that we would not spend more than an hour in a session when we were writing the housekeeping rules for learners.

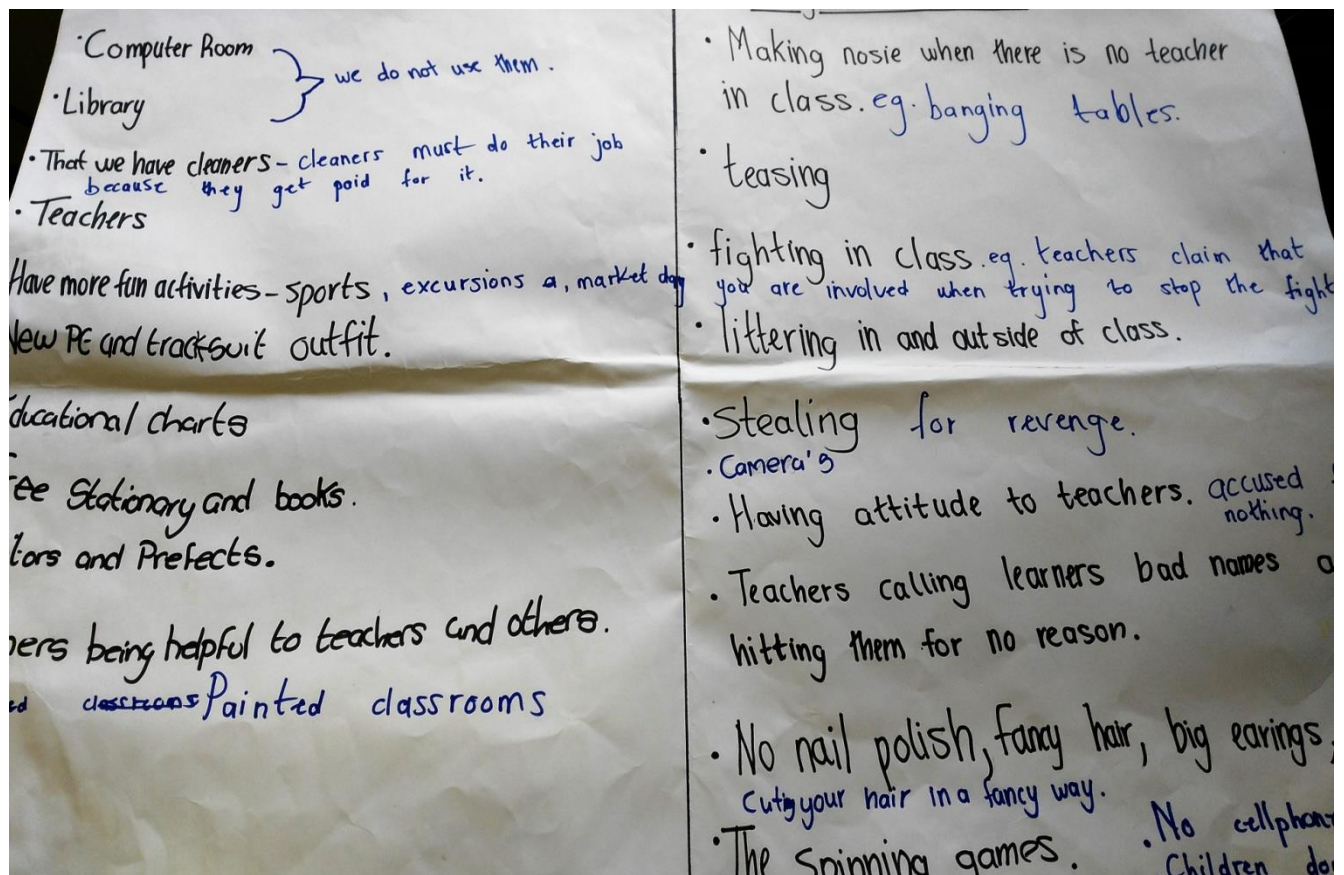


Figure 4.5. A chart where learner participants had written down about what they liked and did not like about their school.

Table 4.6.

What learners liked and did not like about their school

| Things we like | Things we do not like |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Room and library- we do not use them • That we have cleaners – cleaners must do their job because they get paid for it • Have more fun activities – sports, excursions, market day • New PE and tracksuit outfit • Educational charts • Free stationery and textbooks • Monitors and prefects • Learners being helpful to teachers and others • Painted classrooms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making noise when there is no teacher in the class, e.g. Banging tables • Teasing • Fighting in class e.g. Teacher claims that you are involved when trying to stop the fight • Littering in and outside the class • Stealing for revenge • Cameras • Having attitude to teachers. Accused nothing • Teacher calling learners bad names and hitting them for no reason • No nail polish, fancy hair, big earrings, lip stick. Cutting your hair in a fancy way • The spinning games. • No cell phones allowed • Children don't respect prefects |

Victoria sounded very angry when she mentioned, *“I hate it when a teacher punishes the whole class for the mistake of an individual learner. It happens on many occasions where teachers find it easy to do as they please without considering our feelings.”* Nokuzola was quick to add, *“Teachers also call us names. Teachers do not have any idea how embarrassing it is when they humiliate us in front of the class. Phela sesikhulile manje [We are now teenagers]. They cannot speak like they are speaking to babies.”* I asked them to give examples of what she was talking about. Nokuzola further said, *“Words like ‘stupid’ sir, ‘useless’, ‘good for nothing’ and more. We learners never give and show respect to teachers who speak anyhow to us. When we [learners] make mistakes, some teachers would remind us of the past mistakes we had done. We hate a teacher who does that because we feel that they should be treating us like their children.”*

I asked what they thought about if the learners were the ones that provoked the teacher until he or she talked in a manner that was unbecoming towards learners. Tshinya touched on the

element of learners who deliberately provoked teachers because they were seeking attention that they did not get from their homes: *“I am saying this because some learners are very rude and disrespectful to teachers. We always talk to them as prefects to behave well, but you could feel that what they do at school is the same thing they do at home.”*

The session went on longer than an hour. We had to stop there for that day and promised each other that we were going to meet the following day for the learners to finish saying what they did not like and also to highlight what they felt the school needed to reinforce.

Third session with learner participants (11/03/2016)

The next day, the learner participants came to me before the school had officially opened for a request to start the session as early as possible. They showed eagerness in voicing out what they had on their minds. However, I informed them that we were going to meet after school because I had teaching periods to honour and they also had to be in class the whole day.

Eventually, the time came for us to meet. I asked if we could first have an ice-breaker just like the previous sessions; learner participants were quick to say no. We used my office for the third session. Nokuzola was the first to say that she had forgotten to say that learners had developed a tendency of:

Protecting one another if a teacher wanted the name of a learner who had been misbehaving whilst the teacher was away. I remember one day my class mate [an African learner] using swear words [in IsiZulu] to a teacher [an Indian teacher] after she had called the learner ‘stupid’. All those who understood what the learner had said could not stop laughing. The teacher asks me what was the learner saying and I told her that the learner was calling the boy sitting next to him ‘stupid’ in IsiZulu.

When I asked if what she did, not telling the teacher the truth, was the right thing to do, Nokuzola was quick to say:

Yes sir I was wrong, but we feel that teachers do not have a right to mistreat us. I would have told her the truth if she did not call Musa a stupid. Musa may not be clever and may display some negative behaviour patterns at times, but he does not deserve to be called stupid.

This comment reminded me that “aggressive discipline strategies like class punishments, sarcasm and yelling in anger” tend to have a negative impact on learner behaviour, whereas

constructive discussions can have a positive effect on the construction of goodwill between learners and teachers (Roach & Lewis, 2011, p. 317)

After learner participants had stated what they did not like about their school, I asked if they could share what they liked about their school. I had to refer them back to the chart where they had drawn the things they liked. I was particularly interested in two sections of what learners had drawn on the chart (Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7). I therefore asked them to give reasons for drawing the image in Figure 4.6 where learners seemed to be enjoying extra-mural activities that the school offers.

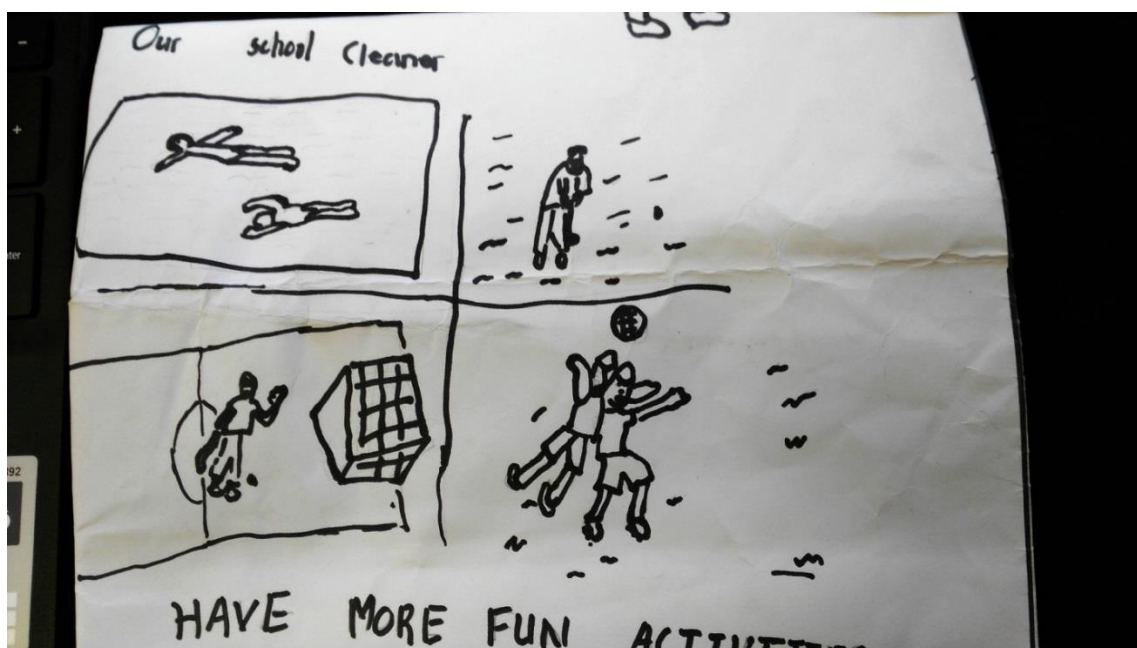


Figure 4.6.It is through sports where learners get recognised by teachers and other fellow learners.

My initial thought about the image shown in Figure 4.6 was that learners would say that they enjoy sports and co-curricular activities because that is the only time they have fun. However, I was amazed by how Victoria regarded the importance of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in our school. Victoria went to say: *"Sir, you would be amazed how playing sports bring out the best in us learners. Every one of us looks forward to inter-house competition"*. The inter-house competition is the competition that is organised by the school where learners are divided into four groups. We have the Leopards, the Panthers, the Cheetahs and the Tigers. Learners are allocated to a house by the school administration clerks on their first day of admission to school. Each teacher in the school, except for the principal

and the deputy principal, is allocated to a house as well. The school hires an athletic stadium for the four inter-house groups to compete in the track events.

Victoria explained, *“This is the only event that brings us closer to the teachers. During the inter-house competition we get to be cheered by our own teachers and even those that do not belong to our house”*. Alexandra was quick to intervene, *“What is more fascinating is that learners who steal the show are the ones who do not perform well in class”*. The learners all laughed as a sign of approval of what Alexandra was saying. Alexandra further reiterated, *“I am not trying to be rude Sir, but it is true. That means that our talents come in different forms”*. Tshinya added:

If you look at it, even sport requires people who are well disciplined. I remember last year where one of the boys in a 4 by 100m relay dropped a baton whilst he was leading the race, only for the group to be disqualified because he had not followed the rules.

I felt that we had dealt with this point for a long time. I therefore, asked learner participants if we could move on and talk about the second image (Figure 4.7) unless they still had something to add. We all agreed to move onto the image that depicts the teacher teaching in front of the class.



Figure 4.7.An ideal teacher for learners.

I then posed a question based on the image in Figure 4.7 to the learners: *“Can you describe your ideal teacher?”* Nokuzola had forgotten that we were actually in the office and not in

the classroom. She started to raise her hand to answer the question I had asked, but she immediately realised that she was allowed to talk without having to raise her hand. She then began to say:

My ideal teacher is the one who takes his time to listen to us. There are teachers here in my school who are very good listeners; who listen to our problems more than our parents do. I remember when I had a problem with my brother who used to beat me up whenever he came home high from Whoonga⁷.

Nokuzola further explained:

Every time he came home, he would terrorise my mother and me, and I would not get enough sleep. My brother's actions [terrorising Nokuzola and her mother] led to me coming late to school and also lose my focus during teaching and learning because I would sometimes be sleepy or thinking of what was awaiting of me when I got back home. I then approached Miss Ngcobo who is not even my class teacher. I narrated my problem to her. I went to Miss Ngcobo because she is a kind of a teacher who never judges us. Miss Ngcobo was able to help me by reporting the matter to the social workers. I am glad that my brother is now arrested for beating me, stealing from the house and many other crimes he had committed while he was under the influence of Whoonga.

I had momentarily forgotten that we were discussing about an ideal teacher when Nokuzola was narrating her story. Her story reminded me of how learner development can be hindered by being exposed to negative factors such as abuse and drugs and alcohol addiction and even though these negative experiences happen outside the school borders, the effects are felt in class (Burke, 2002). I could sense that other learner participants also felt sorry for Nokuzola. There was silence for a few minutes until I asked learners to take a small break and have some snacks.

After a short break, Alexandra made her feelings known as well:

For me Sir, my ideal teacher must first teach us well. She must also be a strict but fair teacher. A fair teacher is usually supportive and considerate. She has to have a good heart as well. My class teacher almost has all these qualities I have mentioned. There

⁷Whoonga is a drug made with a mixture of antiretrovirals, cocaine, heroin and cannabis. This drug is commonly used by the youth in the townships and is considered to be very toxic.

should not be much of a difference between the relationship we have with our parents and that of teachers. For me, I need a teacher who will laugh with me, give advice, sympathise and love me even when I am not performing very well at school.

This comment reminded me that we teachers should accept the responsibility to care for the learners as we would care for our own children (Northfield & Sherman, 2004).

The session ultimately came to an end. I thanked the learners for being honest in “*pouring out*” their thoughts in a pleasant and satisfactory way. I told them that I might call them anytime I needed to speak to them and likewise, they should also do the same with me. I asked learner participants to go and ask their classmates to discuss what they thought the punishment and rewards should be for the learners who misbehave and those who behave well. In so doing, I wanted to make sure that learners’ voice would be heard in our discussions and decision-making process with regard to positive behaviour support (Warren et al., 2006).

Reflective journal entry (12/03/2016).

After this session I had with learner participants I felt that it was imperative for me to reflect on the shared information and do thorough introspection. Before doing introspection, I wrote about my joy in noticing the level of:

honesty and freedom displayed by learners in dealing with sensitive and sometimes embarrassing issues that affect them directly”. I also wrote about the importance of “treating learners as our own children”. Learners are the best judges of our characters; I should always find time to listen to their problems, love them unconditionally, give them a fatherly support and treat them equally.

Fourth session with learner participants (15/03/2016)

We chose to use the computer centre for this session with learner participants. All learner participants came on time. I gave learners some snacks and cold drinks before we could start because I felt that they might be hungry since it was time for them to go back to their homes. I had already prepared four cards for a game called “*This or That*” as an ice-breaker. “*This or That*” is a game where one player takes a card and asks another player to choose between two

options, even if they do not like either option. We were sitting at a round table facing one another. Learners took turns asking their neighbours “*This or That*” questions. A player had to answer in five seconds.

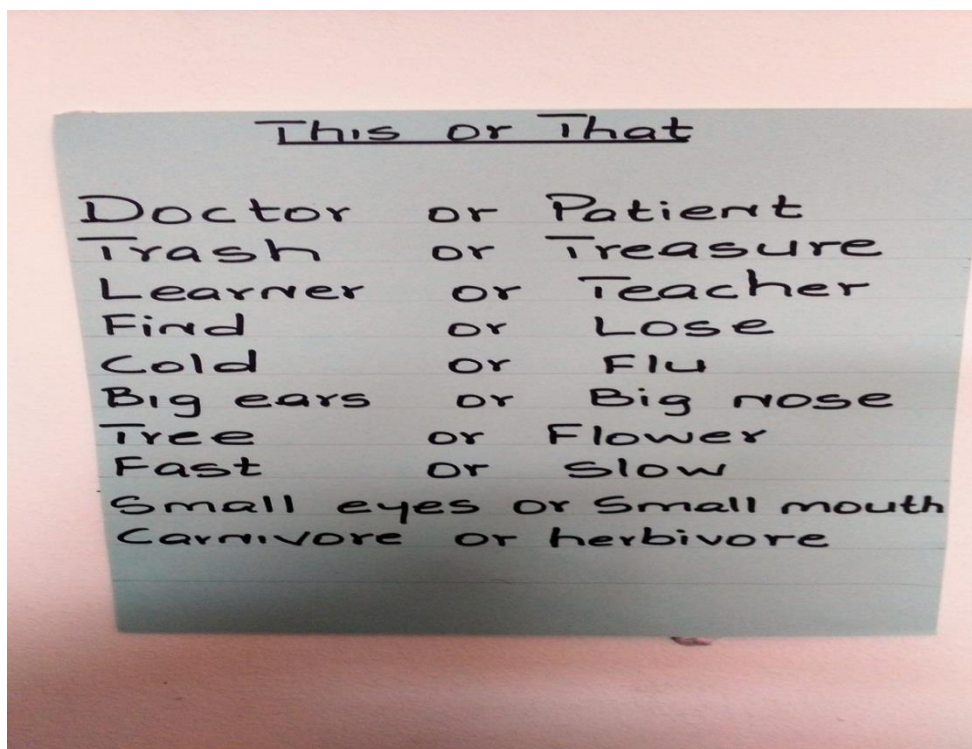


Figure 4.8. A tricky “*This or That*” game for learner participants

This was a very interesting ice-breaker because some learners were trying to be tricky every time they had to choose the answers for things they did not like. For example, when Victoria asked Nokuzola to choose, “*cold or flu*”, Nokuzola paused for few seconds and then she whispered “*This is not a fair play, why do I have to choose between things I hate the most? I do not like either of the two and please do not make me choose.*” We all laughed at Nokuzola because I had initially explained the rules of the game to them.

After every learner participant had had his or her turn to play the “*This or That*” game, I asked them to show me the chart where they had written the rewards for learner good behaviour and punishment for learner misbehaviour. Tshinya informed us that it would be proper if they started with the rewards for good behaviour. I thought that learner participants would come up with an endless list of things they would like the school to do to reward them for behaving in an acceptable manner. However, learner participants had come up with only five things they thought could be the rewards for all those learners who were acting

responsibly and behaving in accordance with the school expectations (see Figure 4.9 and Table 4.7).

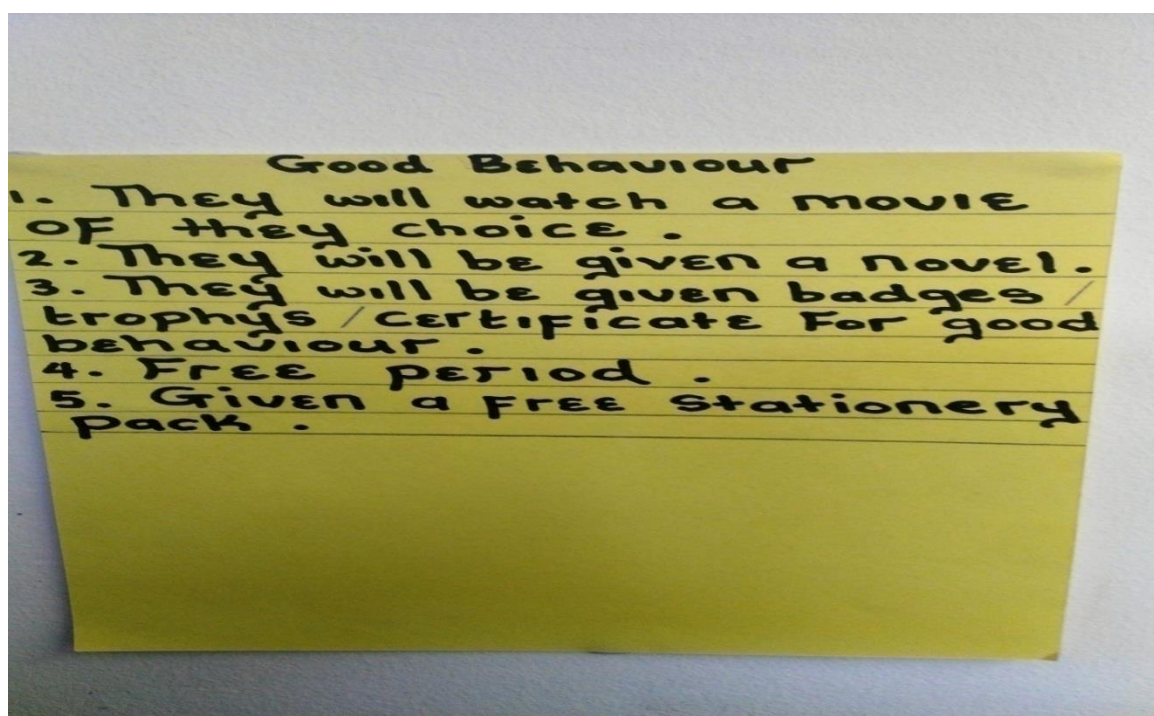


Figure 4.9. The chart developed by learners showing suggested rewards for good behaviour.

Table 4.7.

Learners' suggested rewards for good behaviour

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. They will watch a movie of their choice2. They will be given a novel3. They will be given badges/ trophies/ certificates for good behaviour4. Free period5. Given a free stationery pack |
|---|

After reading what learner participants had written down as the rewards for good behaviour I was astonished that learners could think of a book for a reward. I realised that, as Lewis (2001) advised, it is essential to give learners more responsibility to be involved in decision making and discussions regarding behaviour in their school. I then asked the learners the reason for including a book as a reward. I am saying this because I thought that the culture of reading among learners had vanished. Alexandra replied:

Sir, we love reading. As teenage learners we like those novels that are suitable for us teenagers. Sometimes teachers and parents at home are reluctant to give us the spot on advice on things pertaining to girls and boys of our age group. When we read these magazines and books that are suitable for teenagers we get a lot of information and learn from them tremendously.

I asked Alexandra to give one example of a book or a magazine for her age group that she had read and got good advice from.

Before Alexandra could talk, Nokuzola interjected:

I read in the Teen Magazine that girls and boys of the same age group as mine are likely to develop pimples in their faces. This happens because our hormones are over secreting because of the stage we are at. The article said we should not feel embarrassed if we noticed similar changes in our bodies because that shows that our hormones are functional.

Tshinya also came in to say:

That is why we mentioned the library as one of the things we like about our school. But I must also mention that the school should try and invest more in the books and magazines that we can read with ease.

I told them that I would raise that point when we met as school management and that maybe we could come up with a strategy that would help the school to get hold of the reading material they were talking about.

I then asked learner participants to elaborate more on reward number 3 where they had written: “*They will be given badges/ trophies/ certificates for good behaviour.*” Alexandra responded:

It would be lovely and fulfilling Sir if after recognising good behaviour you reward the learner with the certificate that the learner will take home and show his or her parents. I also feel that the school can buy trophies for all the learners who display positive behaviour and reward them during the parents’ day. It is a nice feeling to be given accolades in front of your parents and teachers. Most of us value your contribution and you are as important as our parents are in our lives.

I was so pleased to learn that learners regard us teachers as equally important as their parents in their lives.

The learner participants' next chart was that of measures they felt the school should take if a learner is exhibiting destructive behaviour consistently (Figure 4.10 and Table 4.8). After learner participants had stuck the chart on the wall I realised that they had thought carefully about what they had written down on the chart. I say this because each point they had written down made sense and was relevant to what they were writing about. I congratulated the learner participants for thinking about the points they had written on the chart. However, Victoria was quick to say, *"Had we not consulted the class about what to write Sir, I think we were going to have missed one or two points."* We all laughed, and I told them I thanked them anyway.

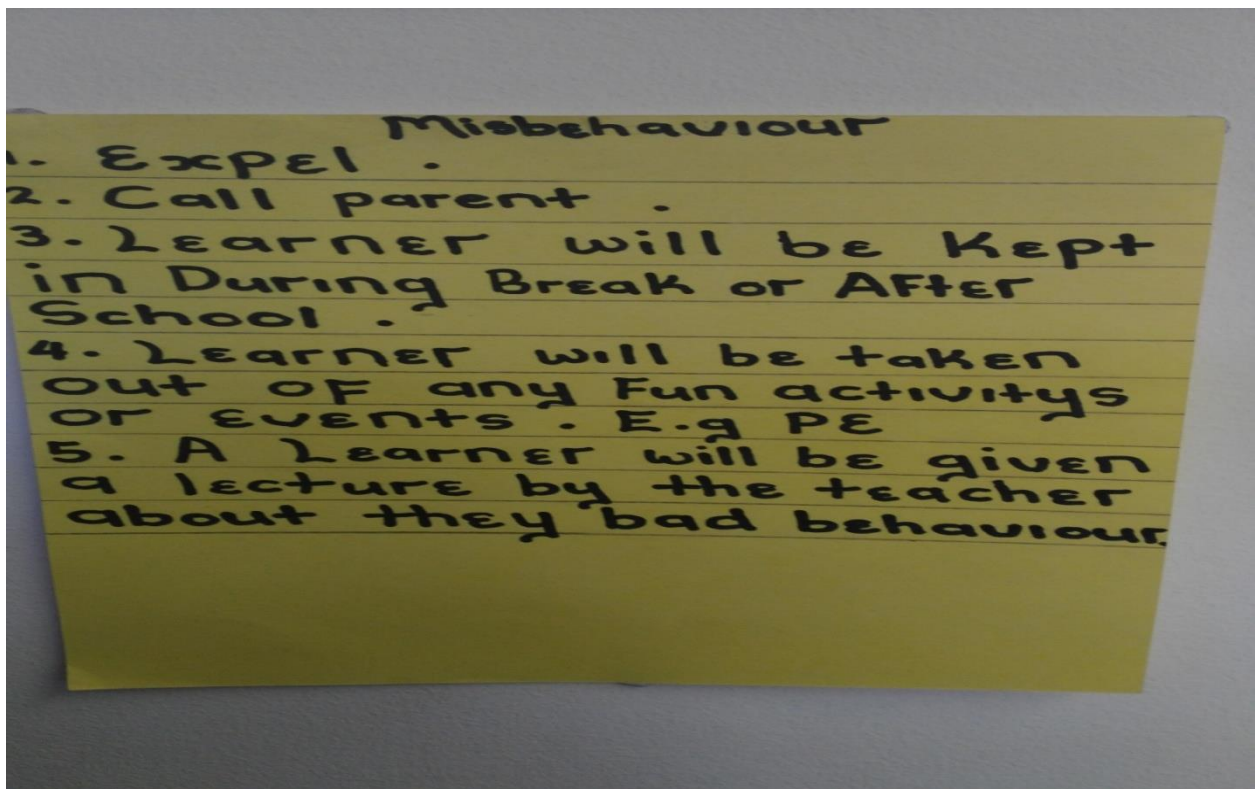


Figure 4.10. The chart developed by learners showing suggested consequences for misbehaviour.

Table 4.8.

Learners' suggested consequences for misbehaviour

| |
|---|
| 1. Expel |
| 2. Call parent |
| 3. Learner will be kept in during break or after school |
| 4. Learner will be taken out of any fun activities or events e.g. PE |
| 5. A learner will be given a lecture by the teacher about their bad behaviour |

I then asked learner participants to give me insight into what they meant by “Call parent.” Tshinya explained:

We debated this point at length with my class mates. Some of my class mates felt that if a learner is destructive, the school should deal with him, and not the parent. They further said that parents should not be bothered for what we do in the school because they have so many things to do. Most of my class mates were never pleased with that. One of my class mates who was against the school not to report the learner to parent for misbehaving said that a parent has every right to know the level of our behaviour in the school. We then ended up by writing down this point because the majority of us learners felt that it was important for a parent to know how we behave in school.

Before I could respond to what Tshinya had just said, Nokuzola made mention of the fourth point: “Learners will be taken out of any fun activities or events e.g. PE.” It was as if Nokuzola had read my mind because I was going to ask learner participants how they felt about writing down that point. Nokuzola went on to say:

Sir, I was one of the people who was never happy about missing out of fun because I had done something wrong. Every learner in the school loves fun and whenever there are fun activities such as the fun day we all look forward to participating. When one of my class mates mentioned that those are the results of misbehaving, a learner should accept it. I then realised it is indeed a very good punishment for any learner who is unruly.

Reflective journal entry (16/03/2016)

I was amazed by the higher level of thinking about this set of rules. I was taken aback by learners' genuine contribution towards formulating a school policy for positive learner

behaviour support. I was also surprised by the level of maturity from learner participants when we were deliberating on the rules they set for themselves. I say this because there were rules that some of them did not want written down, but because the majority had given them the valid reasons to do so, they decided to include them.

Second session with teacher participants (27/05/2016)

The second session with teacher participants did not start off very well. Some teachers did not keep up to housekeeping rule number 5, “be punctual”, and one of them did not come to school that day. The teacher participants had decided that we should hold our session in the computer centre. I started the session with an ice-breaker, asking teachers, “*If you could choose your age forever, what age would you choose and why?*” I had to wait for some time for any teacher to share with the rest of us the age he or she preferred. Miss Dlomo then stood up, greeted everyone and started saying:

I would choose age 40. They say life begins at 40 and I agree with that narrative. If I chose to be 40 years forever, that would mean I would neither be too young nor too old. Most women at the age of 40 are well established. They are usually married, living with their families [husbands and children], driving beautiful cars and are career driven. I also think that most people at the age of 40 are mature and are able to make sound decisions on their own. Thank you.

I felt that Miss Dlomo had given good reasons for why she had chosen age 40. I am saying this because while she was explaining the reasons for choosing age 40, other teacher participants were showing signs of approving of what Miss Dlomo was saying. For example, they would nod each time Miss Dlomo said something they approved of. I also was part of those who appreciated Miss Dlomo’s thoughts with regards to the choice of age.

The two other teacher participants stated that they would also have opted for age 40. However Mr Siphika informed everyone that he would choose age 3. We all began to laugh, even Mr Siphika himself. Mrs Singh could not wait to ask the reason why Mr Siphika chose the age 3. While there was still chaos in the room, Mr Siphika started to defend himself by saying:

Listen people, everyone loves children of that age. First of all, children of age 3 are always happy and who does not want to be happy forever? They are in a stage where

they get almost everything they want from their parents because they are precious. They are also innocent souls and I think I also would like to be that innocent child again.

I then had to remind teacher participants that it would be better if we started with the gist of what we were gathered for.

Once we had settled down I asked teacher participants to share what they had written down to answer the questions I had given them in session one. I had given teacher participants eight questions (see Table 4.4) to answer on their own.

Some of the questions were personal as these were questions where teachers had to describe their individual teaching experiences. All teacher participants had different teaching experiences. Mrs Singh is the most experienced of all teacher participants with 33 years of teaching experience. It was interesting to me how she viewed her encounters with learners over all the years she had worked as a teacher. She described her teaching experience as “*very challenging and frustrating*”. I asked the reasons for her being frustrated; she went on to give a number of reasons such as:

We are expected to provide quality education in overcrowded classrooms. What also makes me sick is this ever changing curriculum. I am in the twilight of my teaching career and the Department [of Basic Education] expects me to acquaint myself with the new curriculum. Besides the fact that I am now old; there is insufficient guidance given to educators in terms of learner behaviour. I have been frustrated with too much record keeping and marking of too many learners’ books and above that I have to supervise teachers under my department as HoD.

I asked if there was anyone who had something different from what Mrs Singh had shared with us. In contrast to what Mrs Singh had narrated, Miss Dlomo seemed to be enjoying her teaching profession. “*Every job comes with its own challenges*”, Miss Dlomo explained, “*and I like to be challenged. I cannot say that my experience as a teacher has not been challenging, but it is more exciting than any other thing. Personally, I have experienced many great moments in my career that I can be proud of*”. Upon my asking for an example of one moment where she was proud to be a teacher, Miss Dlomo paused for a while. I guess she was still thinking of that particular moment. She then shared with us what she remembered from her first year of teaching:

I was given a task to coach a netball team for my district [Umlazi district⁸]. I must say that it was an honour for me to be selected as a coach for girls under 15 for the district. I went on to become the champion of KwaZulu-Natal and that was my proud moment. Therefore, I think I have had memorable teaching experiences that I can write a book about.

We listened attentively to what Miss Dlomo was saying. I then asked about her experiences in the classroom with learners. She replied:

To be honest with you, there are some days where I question myself as to why I chose teaching as a career. This happens when learners seem not to be interested in learning; I then become very frustrated.

All teacher participants agreed that the behaviour of learners in the school was appalling. I learnt that most of the teacher participants did not actually have a clear alternative to handle learner behaviour in their classrooms. I am saying this because when I asked them the question: “*How do you feel about the role you play in learner behaviour support?*” they all agreed that they would like to play a significant role but they felt restricted. “*If you talk loudly [in a scolding voice] or reprimand a disruptive learner, he or she refuses to co-operate and becomes stubborn,*” Mr Siphika said. Mrs Singh further reiterated:

They [learners] feel this is abuse or showing no love, they cotton-on to the term abuse. Learners also misconstrue softness and love for weakness on the part of an educator. Learners take advantage and display bad behaviour.

Teacher participants agreed that they had to be stern at all times. Most importantly, they had to involve learners in activities that would “*cause them to demonstrate listening skills, such as participating in debates, story-telling and spelling bee activities and sport,*” Miss Dlomo said.

From this discussion, I realised that it would be prudent for us to work together to develop comprehensive expectations that would intensify the focus on positive social behaviour and make sure that learner behaviour is responded to in constructive ways (Anderson & Kincaid, 2005). I reminded the teacher participants that the reason we were gathered was to help formulate a positive behaviour support policy for our school. I also mentioned that some of the ideas they had put forward were going to form part of a school code of conduct for

⁸Umlazi district comprises more or less 500 schools.

learners. Teacher participants were pleased to learn that they were contributing to a positive behaviour support policy for the school and that they would have something official to refer to when they had to deal with learner behaviour. I then asked teacher participants: *“Tell me about classroom management skills that you currently implement to deal with learner behaviour”*. Miss Dlomo replied, *“I keep them gainfully occupied by giving them enrichment exercises for those high-flyers who complete their work before time expected”*. I requested Miss Dlomo to give an example of the enrichment exercises she gives to the high-flyers. Miss Dlomo mentioned word puzzles (see Figure 4.11), creative writing and problem solving sums as examples.

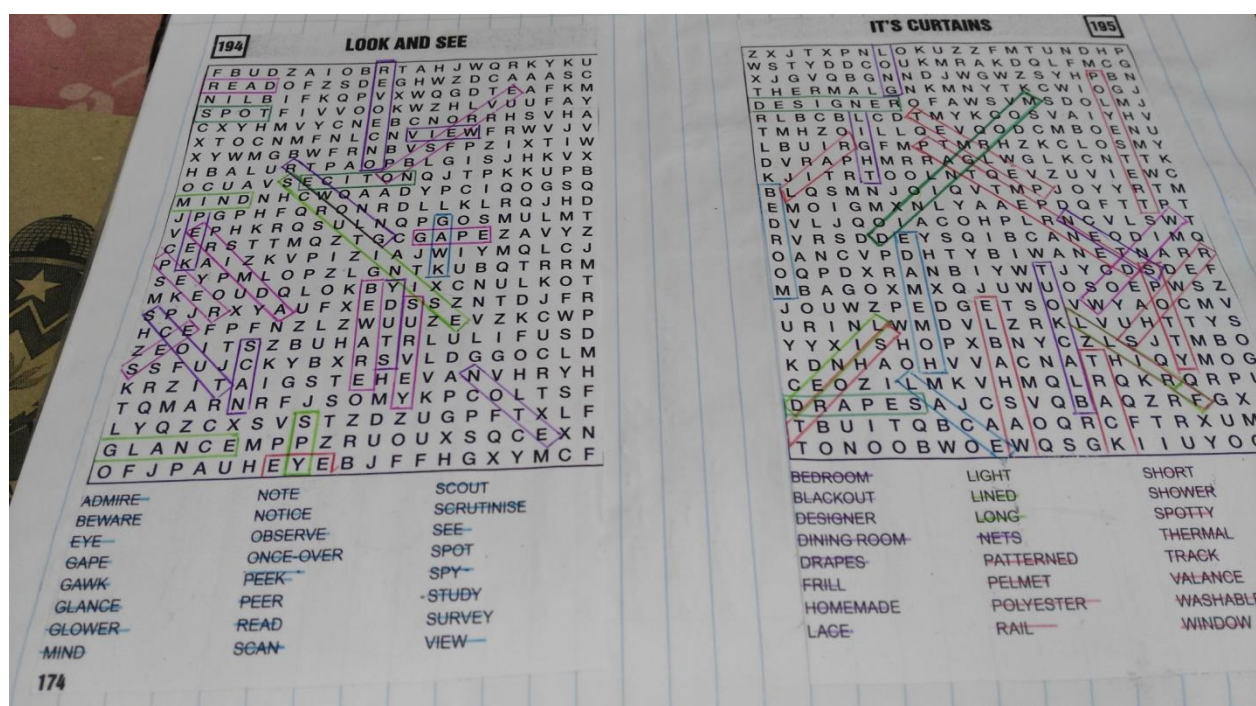


Figure 4.11. Word puzzles given to learners as enrichment.

Mr Siphika stepped in to say:

I give learners, especially those that are disruptive, responsibilities and chores to do. For example, to help keep the classroom clean, desks and chairs to be organised, elect them as monitors, engage them well in sport and above all counsel them on good behaviour.

“Keeping the learners occupied is the best medicine for me,” Mrs Singh said. She went on to acknowledge:

But to be honest, I do not always come to class prepared. I sometimes get overwhelmed with my work at home and fail to find time to prepare for the next day for my class. It becomes a problem for me because I am class based. However, I use my experience to cover-up for that mistake.

It had taken us 50 minutes to discuss the questions I had given teacher participants to answer on their own. I then reminded teacher participants that we were left with 10 minutes to finish our session. I asked teachers if there was anything they still wanted to share with us with regard to the questions I had given them. I was also aware that we did not talk about all the questions they had been given, although the teachers had attempted all of the eight questions I had given them.

I then asked the teacher participants to move around the school and take photographs with their cellular telephones of areas where learner misbehaviour usually occurred. After taking the photographs, teacher participants were expected to forward them to me electronically using WhatsApp so that we could talk about those areas where misbehaviour normally took place in the next session. Before the session came to an end, Mr Siphika pleaded with the rest of us to think about the measures we were going to take when we discussed the problem areas in the following session. I thanked him for reminding us that we needed to come up with solutions to decreasing learner misbehaviour in the school.

Reflective journal entry (27/05/2016)

Today I learnt a lot about teachers' challenges in their classrooms. As a deputy principal I always expect teachers to carry out their duties without any hiccups at all times. After this session I realised that teachers need all the support the management could give in helping them deal with all kinds of misbehaviour and how they could better manage their classrooms.

A separate session with Mr Pillay, a teacher participant (31/05/2016)

Since Mr Pillay was absent on the day that I met with other teacher participants I arranged to meet with him individually. I could not start with the ice-breaker because we did not have enough time. I began by asking Mr Pillay a question: *"Tell me what you like and dislike about teaching as a career."* With a little frown on his face suggesting that he was thinking deeply, Mr Pillay responded:

I have spent 32 wonderful years of teaching. My enjoyment comes from empowering learners in Maths and Science. I am a passionate educator who is highly motivated by how well my learners perform in their future learning and careers. Teaching is a stable job and the benefits are enormous.

Mr Pillay went on to say:

Teaching is continuously changing to benefit the needs of learners at all times. I therefore love changes because they bring about interesting challenges in the profession. I however dislike the slow progression of salaries as compared to those in the corporate world.

I appreciated the way Mr Pillay had answered the question. Mr Pillay is the kind of a person who says things the way he sees them.

I further asked Mr Pillay another question: “Give an example of how previous teaching experiences have changed the way you deal with learner behaviour in your class.” Mr Pillay reminded me that for some years he had not been allocated a class to be a form teacher but he also spelled out that, “I never felt like I never had a form class because every class I teach is my form class.” In responding to the question I had asked, Mr Pillay argued, “I found that learner behaviour is dependent on how well a teacher plans his lessons. I always keep learners interested at all times to sustain focus”. I asked Mr Pillay to give one example of how he kept learners focused at all times. Mr Pillay replied:

By making my lesson plans learner centred. They get so involved in sums in a way that sometimes they forget that they are learning because they become fully engaged in trying to solve Maths problems on their own. I have created a healthy competition within groups in my Maths class. All groups always give their best because I reward a group that had topped the other groups for two weeks in a row.

Going back to the question I had earlier asked, Mr Pillay further explained:

A lesson must be directed towards interaction between the teacher and the learners. Lessons must be a two way street, not just teacher centred. In my experience as a teacher I have learnt how learners think and learn through analysing learners’ errors both diagnostically and statistically. A key point that I always remind myself is that I should not delve on problematic learners and ignore those that are attentive during instructional times. I deal with problematic learners individually and remedy situations with positive sanctions.

I then thanked Mr Pillay for his contribution and I also told him that I might need him to clarify some points on what we had deliberated on.

Teacher participants' individual responses about the photographs showing where learner misbehaviour is prevalent

I could not convene a third session with the teacher participants because it was during the mid-year examination period. Teachers were busy with school based assessments for the grades. However, I was able to see the teacher participants individually for them to send and talk about the photographs of areas in which they felt misbehaviour was common in the school. It was fascinating to see that teachers spotted different areas where learner misbehaviour normally occurred. According to their photographs, one of the areas that had high levels of misbehaviour was the boys' and girls' toilets (see Figures 4.12. and 4.13). All the teacher participants who managed to take photographs of areas where there were high level of learners' misbehaviour took photographs of boys' and girls' toilets. All the teacher participants other than Mr Pillay sent photographs of areas where misbehaviour occurred.



Figure 4.12. A photograph of the girls' toilets, a main area of learner misbehaviour.

Learners in the junior primary (grade 1 to grade 3), intermediate phase (grade 4 to grade 6) and the senior (grade 7) phase use the toilets shown in Figure 4.12. After sending this photograph Mrs Singh later explained:

I always deal with cases of girls fighting, bullying and insulting one another. These fights normally begin in the toilets and continue to happen in the playgrounds and even in the classrooms.



Figure 4.13. A photograph of the boys' toilets: Serious misconduct happens here.

Mr Siphika sent the photograph shown in Figure 4.13 with a text message via WhatsApp



(Figure 4.14).

Figure 4.14. : A WhatsApp text message sent by Mr Siphika

In our discussion later on after he had sent a text message, Mr Siphika explained:

I have witnessed a number of misbehaving patterns from the boys in the toilets. In these toilets I once caught a number of grade 7 boys smoking glue. They could not deny it because I caught them red handed. Most grade 6 and grade 7 boys usually come to the toilets to misbehave. If you let them out of the class as a teacher, you need to make it a point that they come back to class as soon as possible. Boys have a tendency of taking money from other younger boys in the lower grades. They do not end there, they also make the younger boys fight each other.

I then asked Mr Siphika of the possible solution to curb these occurrences in the boys' and girls' toilets and other areas of concern. Mr Siphika's response was, *"We need prefects and ground duty teachers to monitor these areas vigilantly."* (Ground duty teachers refer to those teachers who monitor learners during lunch time). This comment reminded me that, as Lewis et al. (2010) stressed, to contribute to positive behaviour support, schools need to reinforce the visibility of teachers during break time, in playgrounds and after school when learners are waiting for their parents or guardians to fetch them.



Figure 4.15. A photograph of the school playground for all learners of all grades.

The photograph shown in Figure 4.15 is of the playground for learners of all grades in my school. In a face to face discussion Miss Dlomo explained:

The school is so compact such that there is not enough space for a proper playground to accommodate all learners. Learners do not have anywhere to play during break time or even before the school starts. The only open space for learners to play is the tarred parking space for teachers' cars. This is the area [shown in Figure 4.15] where misbehaviour patterns are displayed by mostly the boys from grades 6 and 7. For example, these boys steal other learners' lunch boxes and eat their food.

Reflective journal entry (10/06/2016)

I wonder if the management is doing enough to curb learner misbehaviour in the school. I feel that as school management we should remind teachers as well as the prefects to be

vigilant when they are monitoring learners in the playgrounds and the times at which they spend in the toilets.

A session with a parent participant, Mr Okeke (29/07/2016)

I had asked two parent participants to take part in my research. I had initially (in the first session) asked to meet both parent participants again on the same date we had agreed upon. However, only one parent, Mr Okeke, managed to come on the agreed date. Nevertheless, we decided that we would continue with our session as planned. We chose to use my office for the session.

To start, I asked Mr Okeke an ice-breaker question: *“Are you sunrise, daylight, or night? Please share why you picked your time of the day.”* After a moment Mr Okeke chose the sunrise. Upon asking him the reason for opting for sunrise, Mr Okeke explained:

Everyone looks forward to the beginning of the day. During this time of the day, our bodies are usually fresh for the new day. This is the time of the day where we witness the beauty of our star, the sun, as it emerges behind the ocean and giving us the warm reddish colour. This is the time of the day that gives us hope that everything will go well for us.

Mr Okeke was describing the time of the day with a passion. I could feel that he really enjoyed and looked forward to waking up and seeing the sunrise, which also suggests that he has to go out there and toil for his family.

I then reminded Mr Okeke of the questions I had given the parents in our first session. I further asked him the question, *“What do you understand about the term positive behaviour?”* Mr Okeke went on to say:

Positive behaviour is a means to assist a child to move towards her objectives of becoming a responsible, well nurtured and balanced adult. It enables the child to progress smoothly from one stage of development to another. However, this does include compliance to the wishes of adults around her. Mr Luthuli, I think positive behaviour is subjective in that it is mainly influenced by one’s upbringing, social and economic standard as well as family cultural and religious beliefs.

Since Mr Okeke is a Nigerian national, I was curious to learn more about what he could tell me about the way children are brought up in Nigeria. He was very quick to respond with a smile on his face:

Nigeria is a very big country with the population estimated at 150 million. We therefore have diverse ethnic groups (three major ones) as well as religious denominations. I belong to the Igbo ethnic group and am a Christian. I therefore raise my children based on the doctrines from the Bible.

I then asked Mr Okeke another question, “How then would you define your child’s upbringing in terms of behaviour?” To this he responded:

My child’s behaviour is largely influenced by family values and our religious beliefs. We believe that a child has to first fear God and then there is likelihood that she will also value life. Moreover, one of our values is to instil discipline where there is a need. Our family values are influenced by those of my religion and hence I expect my child to respect others. Therefore, she will grow to be a responsible citizen. However, we need to be cognisant of other influences around us which are contributing positively to her upbringing such as the school, the community she comes from and the friends she keeps. As long as these do not conflict with our family values, we adopt them for her benefit and her growth.

Mr Okeke then asked me if my family values were similar to or different from his. I told him that our family values seemed more or less the same. I replied:

Although I am a Zulu and you Igbo, I think our family values are somewhat the same because we are both Christians. Moreover, I am familiar with everything you have told me during our conversation and it forms part of the principles my family lives under.

I could feel that Mr Okeke was happy that, although he was far away from home, he could relate to some of the traditions, beliefs and values of his ethnic group back in Nigeria.

The agreed time to spend for the session with Mr Okeke was about to finish. I had one more question to ask Mr Okeke: “Why do you think you should be part of your child’s learning?” Mr Okeke iterated:

I regard my involvement in my child’s education as support and encouragement of my child. As a parent, I have expectations for my child’s future and she also has dreams

of her own. Therefore, it is imperative for me to constantly monitor her academic performance to ensure that her future career ambitions come to fruition. Also, my involvement will assist me to identify an illicit behaviour at early stages and deal with it accordingly. You also get to know teachers well and understand the type of people they are and what is expected from your child. In summary, being part of my child's learning is my tool to diagnose the values and mission of the school and ensure that my child behaves properly at all times.

I believed that Mr Okeke was truthful in all we had shared during this session. I then thanked him profusely for availing himself and sharing his ideas with me. I also informed him that I might need him some other day for further deliberations. My session with Mr Okeke thus came to an end.

Reflective journal entry (29/07/2016)

Meeting Mr Okeke was an eye opener for me. He made me realise that we may come from different countries and speak different languages, but the way we bring up our children is similar. I also learnt that culture and religion play a vital role and are influential in the way that we bring up children to become responsible citizens.

Communication with a parent participant, Mrs Moremi (20/08/2016)

Unfortunately I could not meet with Mrs Moremi, the other parent participant. She informed me that she had been transferred to another city that is further away from Durban and therefore could not make time for us to meet. Mrs Moremi was however able to send her responses via email to the questions I had given her in our first session. Mrs Moremi's response to the question, "What role as a parent you can play to reinforce positive behaviour in your child?" was:

As a parent I must enhance positive behaviour at home first. I praise my children for any positive action they have done and I ensure that my children know which action is being complimented. Equally so, as a parent I discourage any negative behaviour such as fighting, stealing and speaking ill about other people. I also understand that my children spend most of their time at school. Therefore, I make certain that I liaise with teachers at all times so that I can supplement what they are doing at school with regards to my children behaviours. This in my view creates synergy between home and school.

I had also asked the question: “*Why do you think you should be part of your child’s learning?*” Mrs Moremi explained:

Our children have been given too much power and rights that could easily destroy their future if they are not monitored closely. My role as a parent is to make certain that my children do not abuse the rights they have to do whatever pleases them at school. I always have good relationship with teachers of my children, and that prevent my children to find a gap of misbehaving whilst they are at school. I think it is very important for me to be part of my children’s learning because that will eliminate complacency from them and a culture of learning will be intrinsically reinforced.

Final session with learner and teacher participants (23/09/2016)

After reflecting on all the different sessions and interactions I had had with learner, teacher and parent participants and discussing my learning with my research supervisor and critical friends, I wrote down on a chart a set of rules with rewards(merits) and sanctions (demerits) that might be included in school code of conduct. Figure 4.16 and Table 4.9 show my suggestions for school rules and rewards merits and demerits that teachers and learners could chose to be included in the code of conduct for learners. I then engaged learner and teacher participants in choosing what they wanted to see in the school code of conduct for positive behaviour support. I asked the learners and teachers to visit my office and indicate with a tick those merits and demerits they wished to see included in the school code of conduct (see Figure 4.16). They visited my office individually. The reason why the parent participants could not partake in this activity was because at that time they were working far away from the city of Durban.

| Merit and Demerit Systems | | | |
|--|-----|--|-------|
| Merits | | Demerits | |
| Merits are awarded for the following: | | Demerits are given for the following: | |
| 1. Helpfulness or kindness. | | 1. Not following instruction | |
| 2. Honesty. | | 2. Disrespectfulness | |
| 3. Assisting at or after functions | | 3. Incorrect or untidy uniform. | |
| 4. Good or excellent work. | | 4. Disobeying minor school rules. | |
| 5. 5 star in any particular book. | | 5. Homework not done | |
| 6. Sports awards or good sportmanship | | 6. Dishonesty | |
| 7. 8% in class tests | | 7. Swearing | |
| 8. Others at teachers' or principal's discretion. | | 8. Fighting or bullying | |
| | | 9. Other at the discretion of teacher or principal. | |
| Merit | L T | Demerits | L T |
| Every 5 merits earn 10 point. | | When 5 demerits have been accumulated the learner will be restricted from sporting activities. | ----- |
| When 10 merits have been accumulated the learner will visit the principal to receive an award. | | When 15 demerits have been accumulated the learners parents will be called in for an interview with principal or teachers. | ----- |
| When 20 merits have been accumulated the learner may wear civvies the following Friday. | | When 25 demerits have been accumulated the learner will face disciplinary hearing. | ----- |
| When 50 merits have been accumulated the learner will receive free lunch from the tuck shop. | | Learners who have been restricted from sporting activities 3 or more times will not attend school tours. | ----- |
| Learners who have accumulated 75 merits will be invited to have tea and snack with the principal at the end of the term. They will also receive a novel. | | | |

Figure 4.16. The chart developed by me showing suggested merits and demerits for positive

behaviour support for learners.

Table 4.9.

Learners' and teachers' preferred merits and demerits for school code of conduct for learners

| Merit and demerit systems | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------|--|--|----------|--|---|--|----------|--|--|----------|--|
| Merits | | | | | | | Demerits | | | | | | |
| Merits are awarded for the following <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Helpfulness or kindness 2. Honesty 3. Assisting at or after functions 4. Good or excellent work 5. 5 stars in any particular book 6. Sports award or good sportsmanship 7. 80% in class tests 8. Others at teachers' or principal's discretion | | | | | | | Demerits are given for the following <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not following instructions 2. Disrespectfulness 3. Incorrect or untidy uniform 4. Disobeying minor school rules 5. Homework not done 6. Dishonest 7. Swearing 8. Fighting or bullying 9. Other at the discretion of teacher or principal | | | | | | |
| Merits | | learners | | | teachers | | Demerits | | learners | | | teachers | |
| Every 5 merits earn 10 points. | | | | | | | When 5 demerits have been accumulated the learner will be restricted from sporting activities. | | | | | | |
| When 10 merits have been accumulated the learner will visit the principal to receive an award. | | | | | | | When 15 demerits have been Accumulated the learners parents will be called in for an interview with principal and teachers. | | | | | | |
| When 20 merits have been accumulated the learner may wear civvies the following Friday. | | | | | | | When 25 demerits have been Accumulated the learner will face a disciplinary hearing. | | | | | | |
| When 50 merits have been accumulated the learner will receive free lunch from the tuck shop. | | | | | | | Learners who have been restricted from sporting activities 3 or more times will not attend school tours. | | | | | | |
| Learners who have accumulated 75 merits will be invited to have tea and snack with the principal at the end of the term. They will also receive a novel . | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

A few hours after I had displayed the chart shown in Figure 4.16 all the learners and teachers had placed their ticks against what they preferred to be included in the school code of conduct. I then called both learner and teacher participants together to show them the ticks they had put on the chart. I then told them that it looked as if I was going to recommend that all the rules, rewards and sanctions that were in the chart be included in the final draft of the school code of conduct. Learner participants seemed pleased to learn that most of the rules and rewards for positive behaviour came from them during my sessions with them. Alexandra said:

I wish the code of conduct could be implemented this year before we close so that I could accumulate more merits for myself. It is a pity we would not be here when this code of conduct come into effect next year [2017].

I felt sorry for all the learner participants because they were all in their last grade of their primary school years (grade 7). Miss Dlomo mentioned:

I am also looking forward to the code of conduct being implemented because we teachers have been not sure of what to do when a learner misbehaves. We also did not have anything in place to motivate learners with good behaviour.

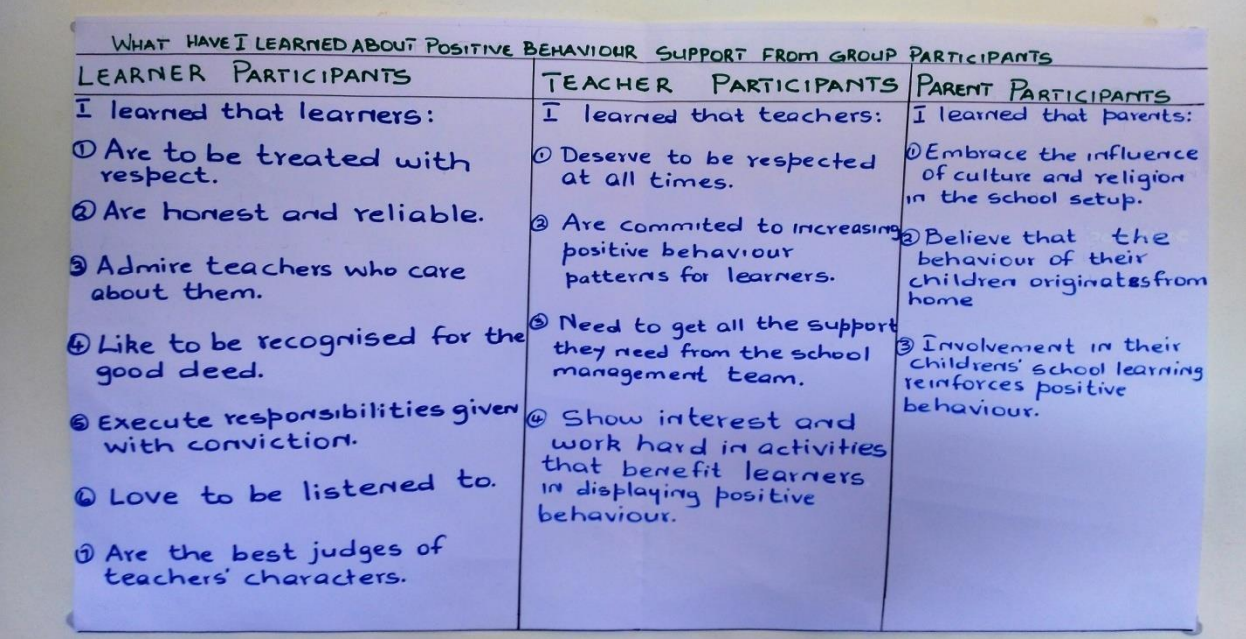
My observation was that learners and teachers were all in favour of the rules, which specified rewards for good behaviour as well as the consequences for destructive behaviour. As Turnbull et al. (2002) explained, teachers and learners need to work together to develop a code of conduct around universal expectations that are safe, cooperative, respectful and responsible.

Reflective journal entry (28/09/2016)

I observed the joyous feeling that was displayed by learner participants to see some rules, rewards for good behaviour and the results for learner misbehaviour being included in the recommendations for the school code of conduct. I could feel the level of self-confidence in learners for being involved and contributing positively in the formulation of the school positive behaviour support policy. I could also sense a sigh of relief from teachers since they would now have an idea of steps to take for every learner good deeds and or learner misbehaviour.

What I learnt about positive behaviour support from the group participants

After all the sessions with the participants were finished, I created a chart (Figure 4.17 and Table 4.10) to consolidate what I had learnt about positive behaviour support from learner, teacher and parent participants.



| WHAT HAVE I LEARNED ABOUT POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT FROM GROUP PARTICIPANTS | | |
|---|--|---|
| LEARNER PARTICIPANTS | TEACHER PARTICIPANTS | PARENT PARTICIPANTS |
| <p>I learned that learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">① Are to be treated with respect.② Are honest and reliable.③ Admire teachers who care about them.④ Like to be recognised for the good deed.⑤ Execute responsibilities given with conviction.⑥ Love to be listened to.⑦ Are the best judges of teachers' characters. | <p>I learned that teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">① Deserve to be respected at all times.② Are committed to increasing positive behaviour patterns for learners.③ Need to get all the support they need from the school management team.④ Show interest and work hard in activities that benefit learners in displaying positive behaviour. | <p>I learned that parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">① Embrace the influence of culture and religion in the school setup.② Believe that the behaviour of their children originates from home.③ Involvement in their children's school learning reinforces positive behaviour. |

Figure 4.17. What I learnt about positive behaviour support from group participants.

Table 4.10.

What I learnt about positive behaviour support from group participants

| What I learnt about positive behaviour support from group participants | | |
|--|---|---|
| Learner Participants | Teacher Participants | Parent Participants |
| <p>I learnt that learners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are to be treated with respect 2. Are honest and reliable 3. Admire teachers who care about them. 4. Like to be recognised for the good deed. 5. Execute responsibilities given with conviction. 6. Love to be listened to. 7. Are best judges of teachers' characters | <p>I learnt that teachers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deserve to be respected at all times. 2. Are committed to increasing positive behaviour patterns for learners. 3. Need to get all the support they need from the school management team 4. Show interest and work hard in activities that benefit learners in displaying positive behaviour. | <p>I learnt that parents:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embrace the influence of culture and religion in the school setup. 2. Believe that the behaviour of their children originates from home. 3. Involvement in their children's school learning reinforces positive behaviour. |

I then created a concept map to make visible and bring together my learning from engagement with the learners, teachers and parents (Figure 4.18).

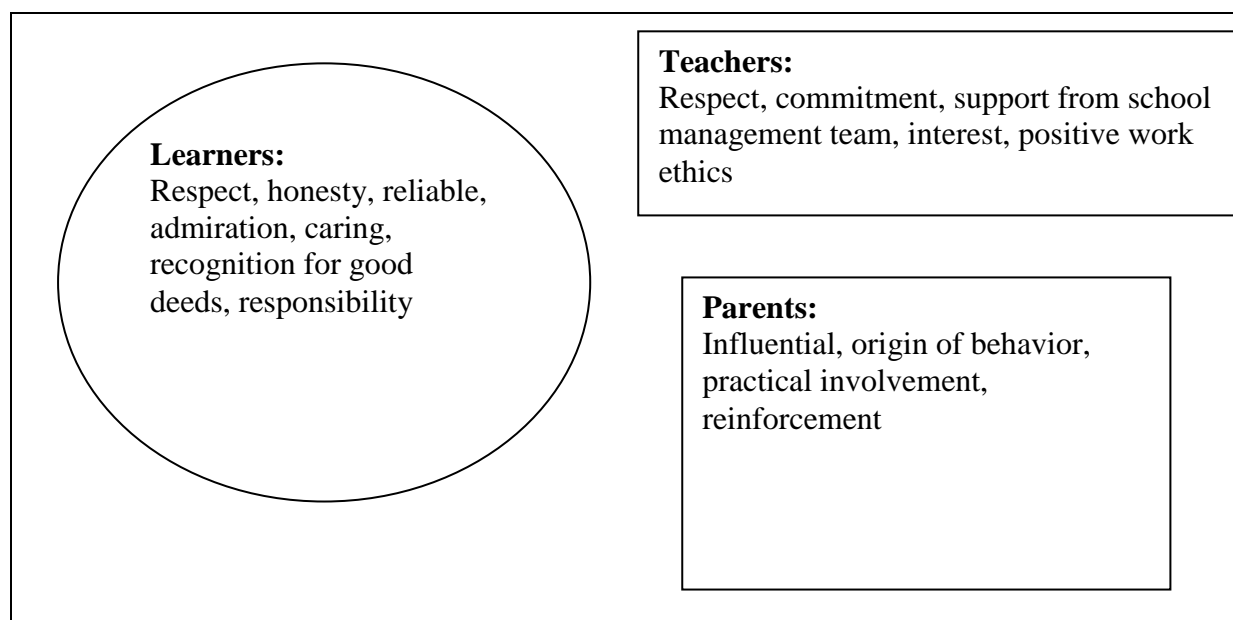


Figure 4.18. A concept map of what I learnt about positive behaviour support from group participants.

I presented the chart (see Figure 4.17 and Table 4.10) and concept map (see Figure 4.18) in a meeting with my research supervisor and two critical friends. I explained to them what I had

learnt about positive behaviour support from the group participants. I told them that I had learnt different things from the group participants that I believed could enhance school-wide learning in terms of positive behaviour support.

What I learnt about positive behaviour support from learner participants

In my engagement with learner participants, I learnt that learners like to be treated with respect. Learners give back respect to teachers if they see that teachers give them the kind of respect they deserve (Burke, 2002). I thought it was going to be a mammoth task to get the genuine learner perspective on the activities we did together in our sessions. However, I learnt that learners are very honest in whatever they say or do. As a teacher and deputy principal, I learnt that I should take my time and listen to the concerns of learners at all times, no matter how small I think they might be (Johnson, 2008). As Johnson pointed out, learners can benefit from “open and honest discussion with teachers about issues that affect them”. Learners also admire teachers and school managers who show love and care for them. All learners feel proud and happy when they get recognition for good deeds (Johnson, 2008). We teachers have to make certain that we commend learners’ good deeds openly. I also learnt that if teachers and the school management team give learners more responsibility, the level of positive behaviour could be increased (Garner, 2011). In addition, I saw how children can communicate effectively and express their thoughts, feelings and experiences through play and games (Wolpert-Gawron, 2016). I learnt that learners who participate in extra-curricular activities often develop a positive attitude towards their learning. I also learnt that a key source of knowledge for learners of all ages is their straightforward communication with other learners. And I became even more aware of how learners bring all their lived experiences when they get to school (McMurtry, 2015). As teachers and school managers we need to be aware of and responsive to what is happening in learners’ lives (Jairam, 2009). I learnt that as teachers we should always find ways to adjust to different teaching strategies that will accommodate learners who come from diverse racial, cultural ethnic and language groups (Banks et al., 2001). It is vital that we treat all learners as if they are our own children so we can give our all in as far as caring for them is concerned.

What I learnt about positive behaviour support from teacher participants

In almost all the sessions I had with teacher participants I learnt that teachers expect to be respected by learners, parents, and the school management team in particular. I saw teachers display high levels of commitment in activities that can contribute to a culture of teaching and learning, as well positive learner behaviour support (Weeks, 2012). As a deputy principal, I became aware that support from the school management team might be the key in teachers putting in extra effort in as far as encouraging learners as well as colleagues in promoting a constructive atmosphere that could set an encouraging tone for the smooth running of the school (Garner, 2011). I also realised that teachers should spend more time on learner engagement in learning activities that would ultimately reduce the level of behaviour problems in class (Deaton, 2012). Teachers also have a role to play in reducing anti-social behaviour by infusing relevant social skills in the subjects they teach to bring awareness to learners so they can be able to make correct decisions and sound judgements in their lives (Venter, 2010). It is of utmost importance for teachers to listen to their students, engage them as fellow human beings and try to understand the way they view the world (Wolpert-Gawron, 2016). It is paramount for teachers to be efficient in classroom management to help curb learner destructive behaviour (Deaton, 2012). It is imperative to not be aggressive in class as a teacher and to involve learners more in decision making for their own behaviour (Roache & Lewis, 2011).

What I learnt about positive behaviour support from parent participants

In my engagement with parent participants I learnt that learner behaviour is influenced by the home. A child who is encouraged to behave well at home seems more likely to display the same behaviour at school. I also realised that cultural and religious influences from home can play a vital role in curbing negative behaviour at home and in school (Banks et al., 2001). The involvement of parents in their children's education is paramount in increasing positive behaviour patterns among learners (Turnbull et al., 2002). When a parent shows interest in his or her child's education, learner positive behaviour support is more likely to be reinforced. Learners can acquire necessary social skills and socio-emotional support from their families and communities (Greene, 2013). And positive parent-teacher relationships can be a vehicle for changing learners' lives in a helpful way (Laskey, 2000). As Greene (2013) advised, "it is important that educators understand more fully who parents are, what parents are already doing to support their children, and develop models of parent involvement that are reciprocal and collaborative" (p. 1).

Discussion with my supervisor and my two Masters critical friends (20/10/2016)

In my interaction with my supervisor and my two critical friends, we agreed that for positive learner behaviour support to come to fruition there must be beneficial relationships between learners, teachers, and parents. I learnt that each component (learner, teacher, parent) is one piece that fits to complete the puzzle for learner positive behaviour support in the school community. We also shared that teachers should, at all times, come to class prepared to engage learners and keep learners occupied in the subject matter. Planning properly therefore is imperative for teachers because learners can easily get bored in the classroom and that could lead them to exhibiting negative behaviour.

One of my critical friends commented that it is important that parents show themselves during parent meetings. In her experience, learners whose parents are always in contact with the teachers tend to behave well. It also emerged in our conversation that parents should not be blamed entirely for not partaking in their children's' school activities. Parents need to be helped to get involved because maybe they lack confidence or they do not have a lot of education. It could be a frightening feeling for them to come to school and engage with teachers. Therefore teachers need to make it appealing for parents to get involved in their children's education.

In our discussion, my supervisor highlighted that as adults we still recognise teachers who were good to us and those that were not good to us. This means that learners do not forget past experiences no matter how young they are when those memories are formed. We also highlighted the point of teachers needing support from the school management team as very important. We agreed that very often everything gets blamed on teachers. The school management team sets the tone for the school and if the management team feels that it is not their responsibility to contribute to positive behaviour support then the teachers are going to feel discouraged and unsupported. We agreed in our discussion that the working environment become easier for teachers if the school management team is supportive. Teachers and the school management team must see each other working together as a team instead of blaming one another. In that way we would be able to solve more of the problems of behaviour in our schools.

At the end of our discussion, my supervisor asked me what I thought was the most important lesson I had learnt with regards to positive behaviour support. I responded that I had learnt to listen. Listening is a skill that I have taken for granted. I learnt that as a school manager I should listen attentively to issues that come before me and then act upon them decisively. There are so many issues that come to my office and need my immediate response. Therefore, if I take haphazard decisions I would be labelled an incompetent manager.

Conclusion

In this chapter, Chapter Four, I gave a detailed account of how I involved learners, teachers and parents to assist me to respond to the second research question of my self-study: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* I described, illustrated and deliberated on my learning through my interactions with learner, teacher and parent participants. I showed how I created a chart and concept map to consolidate my learning and how I extended this learning through discussion with my research supervisor and critical friends.

Through collaboration with teachers, parents, and learners, I have learned a number of valuable lessons that hold essential implications for the planning and implementation of school-wide positive behaviour support (Warren et al., 2003). My key learning from this chapter was again about the importance of sound relationships with and among teachers, learners, and parents. These relationships should help to establish trust. I also learnt that open dialogues and discussions about the ways in which teachers, parents and learners relate to one another can promote the type of relationships that create a supportive, acceptable milieu. As a school manager, I should first act as a role model in building productive relationships with parents, teachers and learners. The management should be central in supporting and involving teachers, parents and learners in planning and decision making regarding behaviour support in the school.

In the next chapter, Chapter Five, I provide an overall review of my self-study dissertation. I then explain how my study has influenced me personally and professionally. Lastly, I draw up a plan of what I would like to explore in my future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of my self-study research was to learn about stimulating school-wide learner positive behaviour support in a primary school as a deputy principal. I hoped that my research could contribute to the formulation of a positive behaviour support system that would embrace the diverse cultural and racial backgrounds within the school community with the help of learner, parent and teacher participants. From my reading on positive behaviour support, I was aware that when more effective systems are in place, the number of destructive behaviours that happen due to limited or poorly designed rules, routines, and or physical arrangements are more likely to be minimised through prevention (Scott, 2001).

I anticipated that researching on the topic of stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in my school would yield some helpful results in as far as positive learner behaviour support was concerned. My interest in pursuing this self-study research was stimulated by the negative behaviour that was displayed by learners in the school on daily basis. I was inundated with learners that were brought to my office for different kinds of misbehaviour. My reading made me aware that I was not alone in these concerns. Lohrmann, Forman, Martin and Palmieri (2008) affirmed that worries related to destructive behaviour in schools have resulted in an extended awareness of the need for preventative and proactive school-wide strategies for positive behaviour support. Likewise, Skiba and Sprague (2008) suggested that unruly learner behaviour tops the list of teachers' and parents' worries about education.

I was concerned that my school did not have a clear code of conduct that was supportive for learners. Therefore, I felt that as a deputy principal I would not perform my duties with conviction if I did not deal with positive learner behaviour support for the benefit of both learners and teachers in my school. I felt that the misbehaviour of learners also had a negative impact on learner academic attainment. Learners were performing below average in subjects such as English and Mathematics based on the Department of Basic Education's Annual National Assessments. Warren et al. (2006) affirmed that many schools face the strenuous responsibility of educating learners whose behaviour is a serious deterrent to their own learning as well as others. I therefore anticipated that this study would assist me to formulate approaches for stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support for my school that could ultimately aid in improving learner behaviour and academic success. I also hoped that by

going public with my learning about positive behaviour support I could assist other school managers who face similar problems, as well as the Department of Basic Education.

In the previous chapter, Chapter Four, I gave an in depth account of how I engaged learners, teachers and parents to help me answer question two of my self-study research: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* I explained how I learnt about the importance of sound relationships with and among teachers, learners, and parents and that, as a school manager, I should serve as a role model in cultivating supportive relationships with parents, teachers and learners.

In this chapter, the concluding chapter, I offer a review of my self-study dissertation. I then explain how my study has influenced me personally and professionally. Next, I consider my methodological learning. Lastly, I explain what I plan to do differently in the future as a result of this study.

Review of the dissertation

In Chapter One, I explained the focus of my study, which was on stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in the primary school where I am deputy principal. I also clarified that the main purpose of my self-study was to learn about strengthening school-wide positive behaviour support in an effort to work towards formulating a positive behaviour support system that would embrace various cultural and racial backgrounds in my school community with the help of selected learner, teacher and parent participants. Next, I presented background information to put my study into context as regards the recent history of education in South Africa. I also gave further details about my rationale for the research. I then listed the two questions that guided my research: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* And *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* I expanded on how these two research questions assisted me to understand my past supportive and unsupportive experiences, as well as to learn about positive behaviour support by engaging with a positive behaviour support group in my school. I further explained how I took a sociocultural theoretical perspective where I focused on learning through interaction with cultural and social surroundings. I drew on my reading to make clear my understanding of the key concepts of positive behaviour support and school-wide learning. Finally, I gave a brief introduction to the self-study methodological approach that directed this study.

In Chapter Two, I gave an account of my self-study research process, drawing on diverse researchers to explain how I had used self-study methodology and memory-work, arts-based and collective self-study methods in my research. This was followed by a description of the location of my study. I clarified that I was the main participant in my study. I described how my former primary school and high school friends assisted me in responding to question one of my study: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences*. I also explained that a group of four learner, four teacher and two parent participants helped me to respond to the second question, “*What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community*”. Furthermore, I described how my two critical friends (my fellow Master’s students) played a pivotal role in ensuring that my study was well structured and had value by promoting discussions, sharing ideas and helping me to solve problems that I encountered during my research. I also gave details of how I used six main research practices to generate data: 1) taking photographs (I took photographs of my former primary school and I also asked teachers at my school to take photographs); 2) social networking (using WhatsApp and e-mail) and audio-recorded discussions with my former school friends; 3) audio recordings and minutes of positive behaviour support group meetings; 3) my memory drawings and learners’ drawings; 5) my reflective journal writing and 6) my artefact retrieval. I spelled out how I attended to ethical issues and validity. I explained how I consolidated my learning through concept mapping. Also, I shared and reflected on how I encountered some research challenges along my study. In conclusion, I put forward my most important learning about carrying out self-study research. Through self-study, I have discovered that when I understand myself better, I can be a better teacher and school manager.

Chapter Three was aimed at answering question one of my self-study research: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences?* I illustrated how I used artefacts, photographs and memory drawings to evoke powerful memories of my grandmother, my Christian Education teacher, my community, my primary and high school days and my teaching career. I also showed how discussions with my former school friends, as well as my research supervisor and critical friends enriched my learning. I then showed concept maps that I had produced to make visible my learning from recollecting supportive and unsupportive memories. To end, I concluded that mutually respectful, trusting and empathetic relationships among learners, teachers, parents/guardians

and communities must be central to increasing behaviour support opportunities for all learners in their classrooms.

Chapter Four portrayed deliberations with learner, teacher and parent participants in response to question two of my self-study research: *What can I learn about positive behaviour support from members of our school community?* I depicted and reflected on my learning through my interactions with learner, teacher and parent participants. I then showed how I made a chart and concept map to represent my learning from the learners, teachers and parents in relation to positive behaviour support in my school. I ended the chapter by again highlighting the importance of sound, trusting relationships with and among teachers, learners, and parents. I argued that open dialogues and discussions about the ways in which teachers, parents and learners relate to one another can promote the type of relationships that create a positive school environment. Most importantly, as a school manager, I should be the first to set an example in building fruitful relationships with parents, teachers and learners. I and the rest of the school management team have a central role to play involving and listening to teachers, parents and learners in planning and decision making concerning positive behaviour support in the school.

Personal-professional learning

What I have learned about my research topic

When I writing the review of my dissertation, I noticed that this self-study has influenced me in a positive way with regards to school-wide positive behaviour support. I had initially thought that parent participants would have little interest in contributing in this research topic that did not have a direct impact on them. However, the responses and input I received from the parent participants were overwhelming, genuine and relevant to the topic. I now have a clear understanding that learners whose parents always come to enquire about their children's education are likely to behave better than those learners whose parents are reluctant to meet with teachers. I also now know that there should be a positive relation between learners, teachers and parents for the school to function at its optimum level. As Sullivan, Johnson, Lucas and Baak (2015) stressed, schools should involve all members of the community to foster a sense of acceptance. I have learned that engaging learners, teachers and parents in decision making could bear pleasant outcomes in as far as parent participation in their children's achievement and behaviour is concerned. My self-study research enabled me to

learn from learners, teachers and parents about constructing a culture of teaching and learning in the school that would embrace all.

In addition, I saw the importance of involving learners in dealing with and helping to solve behaviour problems amongst themselves. I learned that learners who are involved in making decisions pertaining to positive behaviour support are more likely to understand the effects of their behaviour on others (Lewis, 2001). I can now see that the more learners adhere to rules they have set for themselves, the more incidents of consistent late coming, bullying and unwarranted behaviour in class might be reduced.

The relationship between teachers and learners is also crucial to the learning and socio-emotional success of learners throughout their schooling (Lindo et al, 2014). Northfield and Sherman (2004) demonstrated that teachers ought to safeguard that regular, caring relationships within the classroom community reinforce learners' socio-emotional development and positive behaviour. Hamre and Pianta (2001) also suggested that the connection between teachers and learners in school is an important factor in learners' school performance. Through interactions and discussions with my research supervisor and my two critical friends I have learned that learners can be respectful, well behaved and achieve more academically than they thought they could if a teacher believes in and is supportive of his or her learners. And when learners recognise teachers as competent, caring and respectful, classroom behaviour is upgraded (Way, 2011). I now know that learners are likely to be honest and reliable if teachers exhibit same kind of trust and honesty towards them as well.

My educational outlook

Doing this self-study research has changed my educational outlook in many ways. As a professional teacher I have learned that education system is ever evolving and therefore we teachers need to develop ourselves to be relevant in relation to today's teaching and learning and classroom management. As Austin and Senese (2004) pointed out, "teaching pushes teachers to learn more about themselves and others so that they can structure the environment for students' optimum learning" (p. 1243). Likewise, Greenlee and Ogletree (1993) argued that we teachers who wish to assist in building an educational environment that will help in educating all types of learners must concentrate on enhancing our attitudes so that the job of educating learners and working towards making life better for learners will be the priority of our nation.

By interacting with a group of teachers in my study I realised that the formation of teaching groups could also assist teachers to discuss and share teaching strategies and how to better manage their classrooms (Easton, 2008). I learned that teachers can learn from one another and thus improve teachers' professional lives as they can make meaningful changes in their teaching and classroom management. Northfield and Sherman (2004) explained that not only do such cooperative deliberations enhance confidence and communication, but the real talking through of ideas will also develop the critical thinking ability we pretend to value. I have also realised that teachers can feel restricted and disheartened by frequent changes to the curriculum policy; as a school manager I should support them in coming up with innovative ways to enhance methods of teaching and classroom management in the school. Garner (2011) pointed out that "the underpinning feature of a positive school atmosphere is good leadership" (p. 8). He further went on to say, "this is characterised by an ability to communicate a positive vision, which is coherent and consistent and where all staff feel able to contribute to moulding the school's positive ethos". One of the offshoots of my research is that I have advocated for the creation of subject and other committees that were non-existent in the school. These committees were created to close the gap and bring along working harmony between the school management and the teachers. These committees were also created to assist the newly appointed teachers to familiarise themselves with the daily requirements of the expected tasks that they had to perform.

My educational practice

This self-study research has made me realise that changing my educational practice could assist me to manage my school better by focusing on sound working relationships. I developed the motto in Figure 5.1 as a reminder that as a manager I always need to lead from the front by displaying and cultivating sound working relationships with colleagues, learners and parents, as well as other education stakeholders. I have begun to make it a norm to practice one of the concepts highlighted in Figure 5.1 every time I am at my workplace and it is working in my favour as a manager.

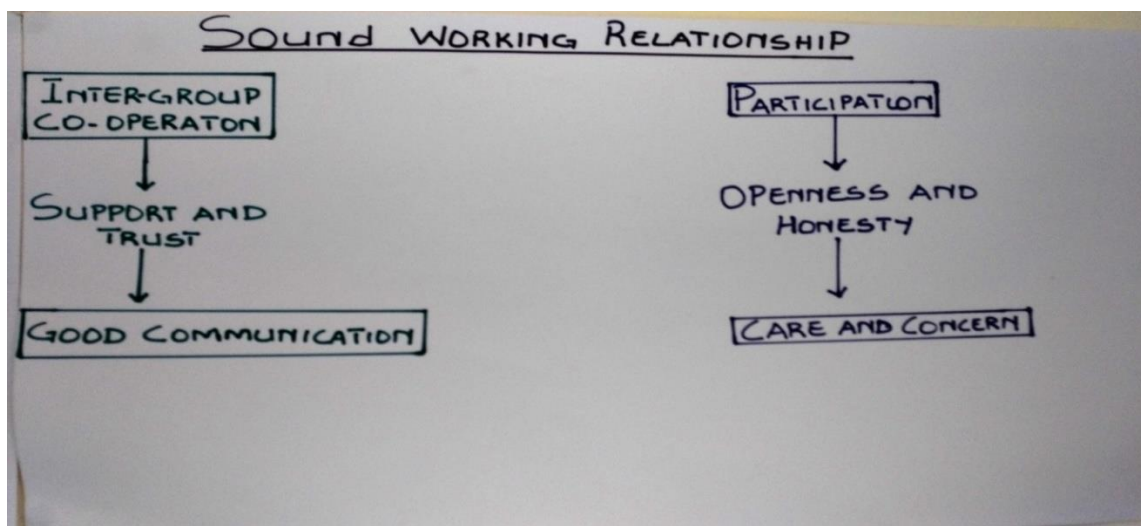


Figure 5.1. The motto that stimulates my positive contribution to the school's working relationships.

I now know that learners have to be respected and appreciated all the time. Learners tend to open up and give back the respect that you show to them as adults. Learners want to be listened to; they feel part of the school setup when they are given the platform to air their views (Wolpert-Gawron, 2016). Listening is one of the most fundamental strategies teachers communicate their respect for their learners as fellow human being (Johnson, 2008).

I work with teachers and learners who come from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds. I adopted on sociocultural theoretical perspective (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996) for my study. I learned how a sociocultural perspective on learning is centred on how people gather and construct knowledge in connection to their cultural and social environments. This theoretical perspective assisted me to better appreciate learners' diverse cultural heritages and their ways of doing things so that I could understand and embrace their uniqueness. As Sullivan et al. (2015) maintained, schools must value learners' uniqueness and build a sense of belonging. Learning at school should be related to the environment and the contexts from which the learners come. This sociocultural perspective has given me the platform to interact with and learn more from the parents' ways of living in heterogeneous communities. My interaction with parents, as well as my recollections of the positive influence of family and community members on my own behaviour and growth as a learner, has made me more conscious of that the influence of the communities where learners come from can play a pivotal role in curbing learner destructive behaviour in the school.

Doing this self-study research has enabled me to learn various ways of dealing with learners, teachers and parents who come from different backgrounds. For example, recently an isiZulu teacher gave a Coloured learner a mark of zero for a formal assessment activity. The parents of the learner came to school to report the matter to me as I am in charge of the academics in school. There was an altercation between the teacher and the parents of the learner about the issue. After listening to what both parties had to say, I told them we were all here to guide, assist and nurture the child to be a responsible and respected citizen of her community in the future and therefore we should not blame one another. We came to an amicable solution that the learner would redo all the activities she had not done to date so that she could get the required mark for IsiZulu.

Impact on learners and teachers

I have observed that this self-study research has had a positive impact on learners and teachers in my school. I now am able to work more closely with learners than before. Learners are able to express their emotions and frustrations to me because they know that they will be listened to and be given leeway to discuss solutions to problems. Way (2011) observed that learners who perceive school authority as genuinely interested in their wellbeing will be less likely to misbehave.

Furthermore, most learners in the grade that I teach, grade 6, have now taken on more responsibility by, for example, taking charge of their own behaviour. Roache and Lewis (2011) advised that learners will behave well in a school where teachers stress cooperation, mutual goal setting and shared responsibility. In every encounter with these learners I now encourage them to influence others to copy all the positive things they are currently doing. Because of these learners showing positive behaviour patterns, some of them have been nominated as prefects elect for the forthcoming year, 2017.

I am privileged as a school manager to interact with teachers on issues that are of concern to them on a daily basis. Some of the teachers' concerns are personal and some are school related. I have noticed that teachers are now demonstrating more trust in me than before. For example, a novice teacher recently submitted her final year examination paper for moderation to me. I asked her to give it to her Head of Department, but she insisted that she preferred that I did the moderation because I always talk encouragingly to her.

What do I now know about myself?

Ever since I embarked on my research I have discovered new things about myself that I did not know I was capable of. Based on what I have observed and what I have been told by learners, teachers and parents about myself, I have realised that I can have a positive influence on people I come into contact with.

I am able to give learners time to interact and in the process they are free to express themselves with regards to any issue that are of concern to them. Wolpert-Gawron (2015) pointed out that learners are involved in learning when they are taught by teachers who actually connect with the learners and make the whole school feel like a family. I now know that listening carefully to anything that needs my attention or intervention is paramount.

My core business as a school manager is to ensure that a culture of teaching and learning is maintained at all times. Teachers have a significant role to play to keep the school functional. I now understand that teachers need to be given full support by the school management for them to perform to their optimum level. Oosthuizen, Wolhuter and du Toit (2003) stressed that “educational structures must be permeated by love, understanding and righteousness” (p. 460). I now can share new learning and teaching, behaviour support, and classroom management strategies with colleagues that could pave the way to promoting high academic attainment for learners.

Methodological learning

I chose self-study methodology for my research. My choice was influenced by self-study researchers such as Bullock (2009), who claimed that “self-study offers research that puts us back in touch with who we are, what we do and how we change – to consciously be working on ourselves so that we are agents in our daily lives”(p. 1243). Likewise, Dinkelman (2003) described self-study as research that is developed and started by teachers at a grass-root level because they are inquisitive about something in their own practice and wish to study it systematically. Self-study methodology therefore enabled me to reflect on and understand myself first through memory-work and self-inquiry before I could make a meaningful contribution that would impact on others.

The use of a self-study research methodology has empowered me to better understand and reflect on my managerial practice. I have learned to take positive school decisions through

collaborative discussions involving teachers, learners and parents. My interaction with learners, teachers and parents has improved because I now involve them more in activities that will enhance learner and teacher development. I have also learned that critical friends have been a catalyst for providing me with the professional development experience that is envisaged in my leadership position in the school.

In terms of my data generation practices, writing in a reflective journal has assisted me to reflect, correct and never to repeat the mistakes I made along my research journey. Taking a sociocultural theoretical perspective reminded me that we discover new things through mistakes we make every day. I also learned that the use of audio recording affords one an opportunity to reflect on what one had said and make amends or improvement in the future. Moreover, I now know that learners can tell constructive stories through drawing. They are able to narrate their stories without any fear or doubt.

The advice I would give to other students interested in using a self-study methodology would be to grab the opportunity with both hands, for it changes the way you perceive yourself and others. This methodology allows one to reflect on one's own learning with regards to one's research interests. I would advise the prospective students embarking on self-study methodology that they could break the chain concerning the stereotypical way in which the Department of Basic Education requires teachers to adhere to the curriculum. This methodology will help teachers to acknowledge that their role is not only to impart knowledge to learners, but also to learn every time they come into contact with learners and colleagues. Self-study would allow interested students an opportunity to interact and share valuable teaching ideas and experiences with their colleagues that could change their educational outlook.

I would also advise students always to consider the sociocultural backgrounds of the participants they are working with. Students should have a will to learn and understand their participants' values, beliefs and habits to build collegial relationships. I would therefore advise students to learn more about the communities where their participants come from.

Moving forward

This self-study has assisted me to be an agent of change in my school by supporting positive learner behaviour, which might in turn increase learner academic performance. This study has

afforded me a glimpse of hope that learner positive behaviour support in my school can be accomplished. I have also realised that wayward behaviour is not just a problem for my school, but it is a global one. My self-study research has given me courage to further explore school-wide positive behaviour support for learners.

The first thing I plan to do differently in the future as consequences of this study is to encourage teachers to plan for classroom management in a similar way to which they do lesson planning. And I intend to encourage teachers to re-arrange their classroom seating to allow collaborative learning where learners are central to their own learning. I anticipate that doing so could help teachers to curb destructive behaviour in their classrooms and eventually the whole school. I would also like to organise team building for staff that would enhance teachers' relationships with each other and increase their teaching morale. Furthermore, I plan to make it my responsibility to mentor novice teachers on how to maintain and overcome classroom misbehaviour. In future I would like to explore the role I can play to mentor novice teachers in my school. Questions I would like to explore are: *What can I learn from mentoring a novice teacher?* and *How can I improve novice teachers' images of teaching?*

In my quest for promoting positive behaviour support within my school community, I intend to invite learners once a term to share the joys and frustrations they encounter at their homes and in their school. I also plan to organise a parent evening to acquaint parents with the teachers of their children. In looking beyond my immediate school community to my neighbouring schools, I plan to invite deputy principals of the nearby schools to share ideas on school-wide positive behaviour support.

Conclusion

The purpose of my self-study research study was to learn about formulating a positive behaviour support system that would be inclusive of diverse cultural and racial backgrounds within the school. To achieve this purpose, I sought the help of learners, parents and teachers. Engaging myself in self-study research has been an eye opener for me in that my teaching and school management practice has been enhanced by remembering and reflecting on my past experiences and by learning through interactions with learners, parents and teachers in my school. LaBoskey (2004) stated that self-study research involves learning from experience so that teachers can make a positive difference for themselves and their learners.

Through this study I have learnt that it is a core part of my role as a deputy principal to ensure that on-going caring relationships within the school community support and promote the socio-emotional advancement of learners.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

43 Archie Gwillam Crescent Hillary

: Durban

: 4094

The Principal

I, Khulekani Luthuli, am a Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa. I am currently engaged in a research study on “Stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a multicultural school: a deputy principal self-study.” The research objectives are: 1.To learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences? 2. To initiate a school-wide committee to formulate strategies for positive behaviour support?

As part of my research I would like to involve three post level one teachers, each teacher from each phase, two heads of departments, one from foundation and one from intermediate and senior phases and four grade six learners from your school in discussions to formulating strategies for a positive behaviour support. These could be a three session discussions and will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete. The data generated from the discussions will not be used for any other purposes either than research purposes. May you kindly allow me to conduct my research using the teachers from your school?

I would like to give an undertaking that the name of the school and participants in the study will be kept anonymous. Moreover, the research will only be conducted during participants after hours using one of the rooms in your school.

I can be contacted at: Email: mshibek@gmail.com; Tel: 031 309 7139

My supervisor is Dr Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan who is located in Education Studies on Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email: Pithousemorgan@ukzn.ac.za; Tel: 031-260 3460

The contact person in the research office is: Mr Premlall Mohum- senior administrator office. Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za ; tel-031-260 4557

I thank you in advance for your on-going support and co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Khulekani Luthuli

DECLARATION

I

.....
..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project: Stimulating school-wide behaviour support in a primary school. A deputy principal's self-study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to:

Do your research study using selected teachers, learners, school governing body parent component as well as the school premises outside instructional time and during weekends or holidays.

Signature of participant _____

Date

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF LEARNER

43 Archie Gwillam Crescent Hillary

: Durban

: 4094

Mr/ Madam

I, Khulekani Luthuli, am a Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am currently engaged in a research study on “Stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a multicultural school: a deputy principal self-study.” The research objectives are: To learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences? 2. To initiate a school-wide committee to formulate strategies for positive behaviour support?

To gather information for my study I selected your child/ward to be part of discussions to formulating strategies for a positive behaviour support for the school. These meetings will be four sessions of discussion, presentation, as well as drawing activities and will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete, after which I shall drive the child back home. The data generated from discussions will not be used for any other purposes either than research purposes. If the participation awakens any feelings of discomfort for your child, I will make made an arrangement for your child to see a psychologist. May you kindly allow me to conduct my research using your child?

The name of the school and participants in the study will be kept anonymous. Any information given by your child will not be used against him/her. Your child’s involvement

will be purely for academic purposes, and there are no financial benefits involved. Moreover, the research will only be conducted after hours using one of the rooms in the school.

I can be contacted at: Email: mshibek@gmail.com; Tel: 031 309 7139

My supervisor is Dr Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan who is located in Education Studies on Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email: Pithousemorgan@ukzn.ac.za; Tel: 031-260 3460

The contact person in the research office is: Mr Premlall Mohum- senior administrator office. Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za ; tel-031-260 4557

I thank you in advance for your on-going support and co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Khulekani Luthuli

DECLARATION

I

.....
..... (full names of parent/guardian) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project: Stimulating school-wide behaviour support in a primary school. A deputy principal's self-study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-Record my child/ward's contributions to group discussions: YES/NO

Use of my child/ward's drawings: YES/NO

Signature of parent/guardian _____

Date -----

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO FORMER PRIMARY AND HIGH SCHOOL FRIENDS

43 Archie Gwillam Crescent Hillary

: Durban

: 4094

Dear friend

I, Khulekani Luthuli, am a Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus, South Africa. I am currently engaged in a research study on “Stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a multicultural school: a deputy principal self-study.” The research objectives are: 1. To learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experience? 2. To initiate a school-wide committee to formulate strategies for positive behaviour support?

To gather information for my study, I have selected you in assisting me uncover past supportive and unsupportive experiences of our former primary and high school for a positive behaviour support. Sharing our past supportive and unsupportive memories through photographs of former primary and high school will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete. Moreover, we shall also make use of WhatsApp, e-mailing and audio recording in gathering information. The data collected will not be used for any other purposes either than research purposes and will also be stored in a secure storage and will be destroyed after five years. If your participation in the study awakens any feelings of discomfort, I will make an arrangement to visit a psychologist. Your involvement in this study is purely for academic purposes only, and there are no financial benefits involved. May you kindly allow me to conduct my research using you to assist me evoke my past supportive and unsupportive primary school memories?

I would like to give an undertaking that your name in the study will be kept anonymous. Moreover, the research will only be conducted during agreed free times in any convenient venue of your choice.

I can be contacted at: Email: mshibek@gmail.com; Tel: 031 309 7139

My supervisor is Dr Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan who is located in Education Studies on Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email: Pithousemorgan@ukzn.ac.za; Tel: 031-260 3460

The contact person in the research office is: Mr Premlall Mohum- senior administrator office. Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za ; tel-031-260 4557

I thank you in advance for your on-going support and co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Khulekani Luthuli

DECLARATION

I

.....
..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project: Stimulating school-wide behaviour support in a primary school. A deputy principal's self-study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to:

WhatsApp my friends YES/NO

Audio-record my focus discussions with friends YES/ NO

E-mailing my friends YES/NO

Signature of participant _____

date _____

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO THE FORMER PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

43 Archie Gwillam Crescent Hillary

: Durban

: 4094

The Principal

Dear Sir

I, Khulekani Luthuli, am a Masters student at UKZN. I am currently engaged in a research study on “Stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a multicultural school: a deputy principal self-study.” 1. To learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experience? 2. To initiate a school-wide committee to formulate strategies for positive behaviour support?

As part of my research I would like to take photographs of certain areas of your school to help me evoke past supportive and unsupportive experiences. The photographs will be used for data generation with friends from my former school. The data will not be used for any other purposes either than research purposes. No people will be featured in the photographs and there will be no details that can be used to identify the name of the school. May you kindly allow me to take photographs in some certain areas of your school?

I would like to give an undertaking that the name of the school in the study will be kept anonymous.

I can be contacted at: Email: mshibek@gmail.com; Tel: 031 309 7139

My supervisor is Dr Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan who is located in Education Studies on Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email: Pithousemorgan@ukzn.ac.za; Tel: 031-260 3460

The contact person in the research office is: Mr Premlall Mohum- senior administrator office. Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za ; tel-031-260 4557

Yours Faithfully

Khulekani Luthuli

DECLARATION

I

.....
..... (full names of principal) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project: Stimulating school-wide behaviour support in a primary school. A deputy principal's self-study.

I understand that I am at liberty to not allow the researcher to take photographs at certain areas of the school, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to:

Allow Khulekani Luthuli to take photographs in his former primary school.

Signature of principal _____

Date _____

APPENDIX E
LETTER TO THE PARENT PARTICIPANTS

43 Archie Gwillam Crescent Hillary

: Durban

: 4094

Dear Sir/ Madam

I, Khulekani Luthuli, am a Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am currently engaged in a research study on “Stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a multicultural school: a deputy principal self-study.” The research objectives are: To learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences? 2. To initiate a school-wide committee to formulate strategies for positive behaviour support?

To gather information for my study I selected you to be part of discussions to formulating strategies for a positive behaviour support for the school. These meetings will be four sessions of discussion, presentation activities and will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete, after which I shall drive you back home. The data generated from discussions will not be used for any other purposes either than research purposes. If your participation in the study awakens any feelings of discomfort, I will make an arrangement to visit a psychologist. May you kindly allow me to conduct my research using you?

The name of the school and participants in the study will be kept anonymous. Any information given by you will not be used against you. Your involvement will be purely for

academic purposes, and there are no financial benefits involved. Moreover, the research will only be conducted during participants after hours using one of the rooms in the school.

I can be contacted at: Email: mshibek@gmail.com; Tel: 031 309 7139

My supervisor is Dr Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan who is located in Education Studies on Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email: Pithousemorgan@ukzn.ac.za; Tel: 031-260 3460

The contact person in the research office is: Mr Premlall Mohum- senior administrator office. Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za ; tel-031-260 4557

I thank you in advance for your on-going support and co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Khulekani Luthuli

DECLARATION

I

.....
..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project: Stimulating school-wide behaviour support in a primary school. A deputy principal's self-study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Audio-record my focus discussions and presentations with focus group | YES/ NO |
|--|---------|

Signature of participant _____

Date

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO THE TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

43 Archie Gwillam Crescent Hillary

: Durban

: 4094

Dear Sir/ Madam

I, Khulekani Luthuli, am a Masters student at University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood campus. I am currently engaged in a research study on “Stimulating school-wide positive behaviour support in a multicultural school: a deputy principal self-study.” The research objectives are: To learn about positive behaviour support by remembering supportive and unsupportive experiences? 2. How can I initiate a school-wide committee to formulate strategies for positive behaviour support?

To gather information for my study I selected you to be part of discussions to formulating strategies for a positive behaviour support for the school. These meetings will be four sessions of discussion, presentation as well as taking photograph activities and will take about 45 minutes to one hour to complete. The data generated from discussions will not be used for any other purposes either than

If your participation in the study awakens any feelings of discomfort, I will make an arrangement to visit a psychologist. May you kindly allow me to conduct my research using you as a participant?

The name of the school and participants in the study will be kept anonymous. Any information given by you will not be used against you. Your involvement will be purely for

academic purposes, and there are no financial benefits involved. Moreover, the research will only be conducted during participants after hours using one of the rooms in the school.

I can be contacted at: Email: mshibek@gmail.com; Tel: 031 309 7139

My supervisor is Dr Kathleen Pithouse-Morgan who is located in Education Studies on Edgewood campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Email: Pithousemorgan@ukzn.ac.za; Tel: 031-260 3460

The contact person in the research office is: Mr Premlall Mohum- senior administrator office. Email: mohunp@ukzn.ac.za ; tel-031-260 4557

I thank you in advance for your on-going support and co-operation.

Yours Faithfully

Khulekani Luthuli

DECLARATION

I

.....
..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project: Stimulating school-wide behaviour support in a primary school. A deputy principal's self-study.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I hereby provide consent to:

Use photographs for research purposes with focus group YES/NO

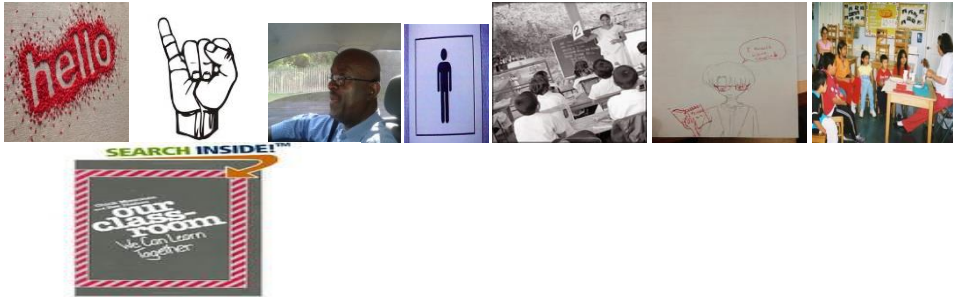
Audio-record my focus discussions and presentations with focus group YES/ NO

Signature of participant _____

Date

APPENDIX G

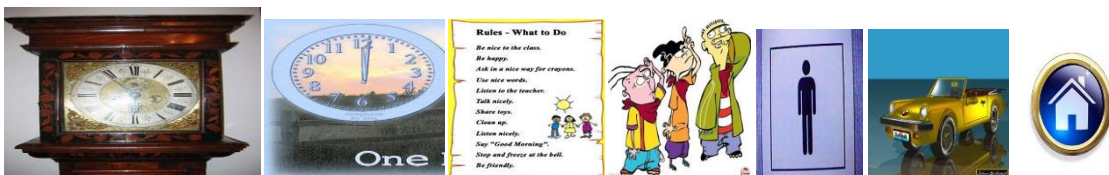
LETTER TO LEARNER PARTICIPANTS



Hello I am Mr Luthuli. I have selected you to be part of discussions to formulate plans for a positive



behaviour support for the school. These meetings will be four sessions of discussion, presentation activities and



will take 45 minutes to one hour to complete, after which I shall drive you back home.



APPENDIX H

The table below is the reflection of my research journey with learner, teacher and parent participants

| A summary of sessions held with research participants | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Positive Behaviour Group | | | |
| SESSION AND DATES | ICE BREAKER | RESEARCH ACTIVITY | GROUP ACTIVITY |
| Session One 04/03/2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction and getting acquainted with positive behaviour group. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explained the reason for formulating a positive behaviour group. Further, we wrote and agreed the set of rules for the group. Issued teacher and parent participants a set of questions each group, to be discussed and reported in session two. Learner participants wrote and drew what they liked and did not like about their school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introductory activity Drawing up set of housekeeping rules Writing and drawing on charts provided |
| Session Two | | LEARNER PARTICIPANTS | |
| 10/03/2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you woke up tomorrow as an animal, what would you choose to be and why? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a form of a presentation, tell us why you had drawn what you drew and give reasons Why you did not like what you had drawn and give reasons? Discuss and write about what you liked to be included in the | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner participants stated the name of animal they chose to be and further gave reason for choosing it Learners helped one another in coming up with what they liked and did not like about their school. |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | | <p>school rules.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw some rewards for positive behaviour. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners discussed and later wrote about what they would like to be included in the school rules. |
| Session Three 11/03/2016 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why you did not like what you had drawn and give reasons? • Discuss and write about what you liked to be included in the school rules. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners helped one another in coming up with what they liked and did not like about their school. • Learners discussed and later wrote about what they would like to be included in the school rules. |
| Session Four 15/03/2016 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the presentation of rewards for good learner behaviour as well as punitive measures for learner misbehaviour. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners did presentation for the rewards of learner good behaviour and the punishment learner misbehaviour. |
| Session Two | | TEACHER PARTICIPANTS | |
| 27/05/2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you could choose your age forever, what age would you choose and why? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I asked teacher participants to take out the questions I had given them in session 1, where they had to discuss about their teaching experiences and identify similarities and differences of their experiences. • I asked teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants chose the age they preferred forever and further told the group the reason they chose that age. • Teacher participants were given time to discuss what they had each written down and further reported back. • Teachers moved |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | to take photographs of areas in the school where misbehaviour usually occurred. | around the school taking photographs with their cellular telephones of areas where misbehaviour happened often. |
| Session with Mr Pillay 31/05 2016 | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I asked Mr Pillay to take out the questions I had given them in session 1, where they had to discuss about their teaching experiences and identify similarities and differences of their experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Pillay was given time to answer some questions he was provided in session 1 |
| Session Two | | PARENT PARTICIPANTS | |
| 03/08/2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you sunrise, daylight, twilight, or night? Please share why you picked your time of the day. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I asked parent participants to take out the questions I had given them in session 1, where questions like, how they understand positive behaviour support would be discussed and reported. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent participants chose the time of the day they preferred and shared with the group the reason they chose it Each parent reported to what they had written as responses to the questions provided. |
| Final Session | | LEARNER AND TEACHER PARTICIPANTS | |
| 23/09/2016 | | I asked learner and teacher participants to choose the rules, rewards for good behaviour as well as the consequences for destructive behaviour on the chart displayed in my office in a form of a tick. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each learner and parent participant chose the rules, rewards for good behaviour and the result for learner misbehaviour. |