

***LEARNER`S PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANAGEMENT TOOL IN
SCHOOL CLASSROOMS THABO MOFUTSANYANA DISTRICT, FREE STATE
PROVINCE***

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements for
the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NOVEMBER 2013

STUDENT NUMBER: 0876-796-3

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that:

LEARNER`S PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANAGEMENT TOOL IN SCHOOL CLASSROOMS THABO MOFUTSANYANA IN FREE STATE PROVINCE

is my own work and that all sources that I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

MM MABEA

DATE

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of dear departed mother, Anna M. Mabea whom I miss every day. To her I am forever grateful for having brought me up to become what I am today.

My heartfelt gratitude is due to my family: my wife Berlina Mabea, my son Tshepo Mabea, and my daughter Itumeleng Mabea, for their unstinting encouragement and loyal support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could not have written this dissertation without the help of the people who supported me. In particular, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the following persons:

- My promoter, Dr Jabulani Nyoni, for his generous support, guidance, motivation, encouragement, and painstaking supervision of this study,
- Dr Natte Beneke, Dr Michael Makoelle and Mr SA Xekiso who constantly provided moral support for this study,
- Mr JS Matla, Mr GJ Radebe, Mr AS Jekemba and Mr TK for their contribution as critical friends to the study,
- The Free State Department of Education for granting me permission to conduct this study in the province,
- Principals, teachers and learners who without reservation, participated in this research project,
- The staff of Ikaheng-Zakheni Secondary School, who stood behind their former colleague, shared their views and provided moral support,
- My late mother, Anna Motshedisi Mabea for my upbringing, guidance, and motivation,
- Mr David Mbongo, Mrs Pontsho Mokoro and Mrs Corne De Beer, who constantly assisted me with my typing and the use of the computer. You have been my source of inspiration.
- My brother Andrew Litaba Mabea and my sister Dolly Hilda Thobela, for their unselfish support,
- My friends Clement Masitha Mofokeng, Koos Lefu Mofokeng and Andries Nkosana Mkhwanazi for their moral support,
- The Reverends Abram Hlalele, TF Theletsane and Samson Mbuyiswa Nhlapo for their spiritual encouragement,
- The Almighty God for the strength, vision and courage He has bestowed upon me.

It has become obvious that a worldwide awareness of the quality of children's behaviour and therefore also of learner-behaviour exist (Lewis, 2001:307). Moreover, according to Lee and Powell (2005:83), the whole of America has turned concerned interest towards the dilemmas that are associated with the troublesome behaviour of young people at schools.

The purpose of this non-experimental, descriptive survey was to react to Gossen (in Lee & Powell, 2005:85) who advocates the restructuring of school discipline to create an atmosphere that would support learners in re-adjusting their behaviour. As a result, the main aim of this study is to examine how learner discipline can be managed in Thabo Mofutsanyana District as informed by the literature study and empirical survey. This aim is conceptualised into objectives and was achieved by investigating the nature of learner discipline, investigated how learner discipline in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District was managed. A quantitative method of gathering data was used in this study. According to Leedy and Omrod (2005:950, quantitative research methods are those that seek to objectively measure the variables of interest. To qualify and quantify the effects of learner's perception on behavioural choices, this study offers a guide to the data collection and analysis, which provides useful information that is relevant to pre-service and practicing educators. For the purpose of this research, structured questionnaire was selected as a research tool. Tuckman (2008:230) explains the fact that questionnaires are used by researchers to convert information directly given by people into data.

The findings suggest that classroom management has an impact on how learners learn and how educators manage learning in a classroom situation. Findings also suggested that by means of a classroom policy, an educator can use rules and procedures to regulate all aspects of the classroom environment and all the actions and behaviour within the classroom. Also, findings confirm that the following issues are pivotal to schools when developing classroom policy: a good classroom policy must clearly reflect the objectives (long-term) and aims (short-term) for which the class is striving, the policy should also be consistent, be acceptable to the majority, facilitate decision-making about certain matters and make provision for the class rules and procedure. In conclusion, an overview of the challenges identified by this research project, as well as the aspects in need of further research, is highlighted.

**LEARNER`S PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANAGEMENT TOOL IN
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PROVINCE.**

KEY CONCEPTS

Classroom discipline, Learner, Learner perception, Parent, Classroom management, Code of conduct, Detention, Suspension.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GCC	Guidelines for Code of Conduct
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NEL	National Educational Longitudinal
OFSTED	Office for the Standard in Education
DOE	Department of Education
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
LRC	Learner Representative Council
SGB	School Governing Body
CRCM	Culturally Responsive Classroom Management
CBA	Curriculum Based Assessment
PDS	Professional Development School
GDOE	Gauteng Department of Education
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Children
HOD	Head of Department
MEC	Member of Executive Council
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom

LIST OF ANNEXURE

- A Research application letter
- B Research registration letter
- C District notification letter
- D Letter to principals
- E Letter to parents
- F Consent forms
- G Learner questionnaire

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

It has become obvious that a worldwide awareness of the quality of children's behaviour and therefore also of learner-behaviour exists (Lewis, 2001: 307). Moreover, according to Lee and Powell (2005: 83), the whole of America has turned concerned interest towards the dilemmas that are associated with the troublesome behaviour of young people at schools.

Lewis (2001: 307) quotes several authors (Osborne, 1995; Kennedy, 1996, and Anderson, Avery, Pederson, Smith & Sullivan, Blackmore, Pearl & Knight, 1998) who have become part of the debate calling on schools to turn their focus to promoting learners' pro-social behaviour. This in turn could lead to producing more responsible citizens. This plea is supported in South Africa by the Guidelines for the consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners (SA, 1998: Item 14, hereafter Guidelines for Codes of Conduct), which calls for schools to concentrate on turning out worthy and responsible citizens.

Gossen (in Lee & Powell, 2005: 85) pleads for the restructuring of school discipline so that schools can produce circumstances for learners to adjust their behaviour. This could help schools to get to solutions and to put together a sense of community among learners. Learners need to be supported on their pathway to developing the values of behaving fairly and thoughtfully towards other people; especially educators and fellow-learners-by (1) providing chances for them to form part of the decision-making process and (2) logical consequences at the appropriate moments. Romi, Lewis and Katz (2009: 439-440) refer to previous research done by Lewis (2001: 86) which came to the conclusion that learners act more responsibly when (1) they are part of the decision-making process, (2) when their educators give them hints that are not rigidly directed, (3) when they know their positive behaviour will be recognized, (4) when they are allowed in discussions concerning their misconduct, and (5) when they are invited to suggest ways in which to behave smarter.

According to Tidwell, Flannery and Lewis-Palmer (2003: 19), at most public schools in the USA, disciplinary structures have been designed to respond to learners' negative behaviour instead of aiming at preventing such behaviour. The same authors point out that all schools need to implement a selection of disciplinary practices, aiming at creating and maintaining secure learning environments that would lead to quality teaching/learning sites (Tidwell et al., 2003: 19).

1.2. PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this non-experimental, descriptive survey study was to react to Gossen (in Lee & Powell, 2005:85) who advocates the restructuring of school discipline to create an atmosphere that would support learners in re-adjusting their behaviour. This effort would relate classroom discipline, as the independent variable and learner's perceptions, as the dependent variable; controlling for learners at Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

The independent variable, "classroom discipline" was defined as the order that has led to the education of all learners with no unruly behaviour and /or transgression in classrooms, aiming at teaching and leading learners to develop self-discipline (SA, 1998: item 7.1). The dependent variable, learner's perceptions in Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District, refers to the way in which learners view school discipline. This includes learner's opinion of the rules and the way in which they assess their position or power in the school environment.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

In trying to understand how learners can be involved in establishing classroom rules that are intended to foster and nurture good classroom behaviour, the following research question and sub-question were used;

1.3.1 Primary research question

What are the learner's perceptions of drafting and implementing of class rules?

1.3.2 Secondary research questions

How do educators manage classroom discipline?

- (a) How learners' views are considered when classroom rules developing classroom rules?
- (b) What processes are followed when developing classroom rules?
- (c) What monitoring mechanisms are in place to manage the implementation processes of classroom rules?
- (d) To what extent do classroom rules promote learners' rights?

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The following concepts will be central to this study and conceptual analysis of them will be made:

Classroom discipline – This refers to the order that leads to the education of learners with no bad behaviour and/or transgression in the classroom, aiming at teaching and leading learners to develop self-discipline (Guidelines for Code of Conduct, SA, 1998: item 7.1). This would imply an atmosphere in classrooms that invites openness and that is conducive to learning.

Learner – A person gaining knowledge or skills at site (Schools Act, 84/1996: sec.1).

Successful Public School – This type of schooling will be defined as settings that smooth the progress of useful education and learning (Guidelines for Code of Conduct, SA, 1998, item 1.1)

Quantitative Research – The aspect of something that can be measured in numbers, amount, size or weight (Creswell 2009: 4). It is a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables, so that variables can be measured typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedure.

Learner perception- Refers to the way in which learners view school discipline. This include learners' opinions of the rules and the way in which they assess their position or power in the school environment

Parent –The South African Schools Act (SA, 1996b: 4) defines the concept 'parent' as:" (1) the parent or guardian of a learner (2) the person legally entitled to custody of a learner (3) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to in 1 and 2 towards the learner's education at school."

Classroom management – Is the way in which teachers keep order daily and adhere to published rules while conducting lessons.

Detention- the Oxford Dictionary (2002: 280) describes detention as the detaining of a person (i.e. the learner) in order to punish.

Suspension – It can be defined as the temporary refusal by a school governing body to admit a learner to a school and/or its hostel (Oosthuizen, 2003: 82).

Code of conduct – Visser (1999: 147) defines a code of conduct as a document providing a legal basis for the identification and elimination of those forms of conduct that threaten the learning process.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Cryer (1996: 45) defines research methods as methods to gather and process data. Cohen and Manion (in Brazelle, 2004: 4), explain research in the following way:

Research is best conceived as the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data.

A quantitative method of gathering data was used in this study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 95), quantitative research methods are those that seek to objectively measure the variables of interest. In using a quantitative research method, the researcher does not want to influence the outcome of the research. A sample or specific number of variables was

selected and the research was conducted using the said sample. The results, in the form of data are numerically presented and it was taken that those results were representative of the population represented by the sample, (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005: 95-96).

This study employed the following research process:

1.5.1 Empirical Research

(a) Aim

An empirical investigation was conducted to gather information to establish how classroom discipline is currently managed at schools. A quantitative approach was used to gather information in this regard. According to Stubbs (2005) this entails incorporating a statistical element designed to quantify the extent to which a target group is aware of, thinks, believes or is inclined to behave in a certain way. Statistics in this research was used to quantify the research population's responses to the subject of inquiry. Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 94) state that quantitative research is used to answer questions about relationships among measurable variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena and seeks explanations and predictions that will generalise to other persons or places. In this study, the quantitative approach was used to determine the perceptions of learners about classroom discipline.

(b) Measuring instrument

Information gathered from the literature study was used to develop and design questionnaires to gather information from the study population about learner's perceptions about classroom discipline in the Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

(c) Population and sampling

Mertens (1998: 253) defines sampling as the method used to select a given number of people (or things) from a population. It is important to be cautious in selecting a sample because the

type of sample selected determines or influences the quality of the responses. It is necessary to have a sample because quite often it is not possible to collect data from everyone in the research population (Mertens, 1998: 253).

The study population comprised all learners in the Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District. The research was conducted amongst learners. Thabo Mofutsanyana District is divided into 4 clusters, viz, Bethlehem, Harrismith, Phuthaditjhaba and Reitz. The Reitz cluster was decided upon as the area in which the research was conducted because it was accessible to the researcher. The research was conducted in both secondary and primary schools, and in 17 of the total of 31 schools in the Reitz cluster. The Reitz cluster is made up of schools in the following towns:

Petrus Steyn = 3	Lindley = 3	Arlington = 2
Reitz = 5	Vrede = 2	Memel = 2

For the purpose of this study, simple random sampling was used because it was a technique that gave each member of the population an equal and independent chance of being selected. The latter was done to avoid bias and to achieve valid results. The Reitz cluster had 31 schools. 13 of those schools are secondary, while 18 are primary schools. The research was mainly confined to urban schools. The following were randomly selected samples:

- 8 secondary schools representing 61, 5 percent of the secondary schools in the cluster,
- 8 primary schools representing 50 percent of the primary schools in the cluster and
- learners from the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) per school to complete the questionnaires.

A total of 35 questionnaires were issued for the purpose of this study.

(d) Pilot survey

The questionnaire was pre-tested with a selected number (10) of the respondents from the study population in the adjacent Reitz cluster. The aim of the pilot study was to test the questionnaire's measurement qualities, appropriateness and clarity. This also served to determine its validity.

(e) Research Design

As part of this descriptive quantitative research, the researcher used non-experimental descriptive survey research, as supported by Maree and Pietersen (2007b: 152), and Creswell (2009: 12). As pointed out by Maree (2007b: 152), the term non-experimental indicated that the researcher plans not to manipulate any of the data and this type of research was generally accompanied by a survey. Survey research, according to Creswell (2009: 12), provided a numeric description of trends, characteristics, attitudes or opinions by studying a sample of a specific population. Maree and Pietersen (2007a: 155) support making use of a non-experimental descriptive survey research design for this research by indicating survey research as an everyday technique to get hold of the required information.

(f) Research Paradigm

For the sake of this research, the researcher made use of a positivist research paradigm. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007: 50) and Neuman (2011: 95), this paradigm supported quantitative research. Moreover, as pointed out by Neuman (2011: 95), researchers who choose this paradigm, generally pick surveys and/or statistics as well.

A positivist worldview holds that facts are inflexible and objective (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 7) However, two points of disapproval concerning choosing such a research paradigm are that (1) it trims life in general down to measurable terms instead of allowing for inner experience and (2) it ignores the individual's specific viewpoint (Cohen et al. ,2007: 17) Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 94-95) point out that authors sometimes refer to positivism as the traditional approach, its most important intention would be letting research participants

answer questions that could support the explaining connections that exist between measurable variables.

In general, a positivism researcher gathers data in numeric format: the researcher did this during the course of the research. The abovementioned points of disapproval did not hamper this research: (1) this research was not aimed at discovering inner experience, but was aimed at determining the participating learner's responses to carefully worded questionnaire items in order to get a complete picture of public school learners' views in this regard, (2) this research was not aimed at determining individual responses.

For the purpose of this research, I followed a positivist research paradigm, since the aim was to determine the participating learners' views on managing discipline in a classroom context.

(g) Limitations connected to conducting survey research

Babbie and Mouton (2001: 263) make the reader aware of several limitations that are connected to conducting research. The following are some of the examples:

- Standardized questionnaires frequently end up with items that signify the least familiar characteristics when determining participants' feelings and perceptions. The researcher will focus on determining the responses of the participating learners to statements that reflect the most generally accepted features of classroom discipline.
- The researcher may fail to recognize that which is most fitting to all participants. He will work closely with his supervisor to concentrate on including those aspects most fitting to all the learner participants.
- Surveys are rigid in more than one manner. The researcher will work closely with his supervisor and consult with other experts in the field as critical readers of the questionnaire to combat this possible shortcoming.

(h) Participants Selection

The researcher used the technique of non-probability sampling strategy and convenience sampling. The researcher's choice of the non-probability sampling strategy is supported by Neuman (2011: 242) as he (the researcher) took into consideration the limited availability of money and time at their disposal. Moreover, Neuman (2011: 242) referred to convenience sampling as also named accidental, availability and /or haphazard sampling: the point then being to select participants who are easily available. Convenience sampling was therefore used since the participants for this research were learners at the researchers' respective cluster. The participants were learners at the public schools in Thabo Mofutsanyana district (Reitz cluster).

(i) Data Collection Method

The researcher used a self-administered questionnaire to get hold of the data from the research participants (Creswell, 2009: 146). The plan was to use close-ended questions (Maree & Pietersen, 2007a: 161) in order to make sure that the research participants felt comfortable within the boundaries of the topic under examination..

This closed-ended questionnaire item was developed according to a Likert scale, with the best indicator of using a four-point scale: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly agree. The choice of a Likert scale in this questionnaire was motivated by the researcher's intention to determine the learners' perceptions with reference to classroom discipline as indicator of successful public school.

1.5. 2 The questionnaire as a research tool

A questionnaire is a self-reporting instrument used for gathering data about the variables of interest to the research and consists of a number of questions that a respondent reads and answers. Tuckman (2008: 230) explains the fact that questionnaires are used by researchers to convert information directly given by people into data. A questionnaire has both advantages and disadvantages. These aspects will be discussed below:

Advantages of a questionnaire

The following are some of the advantages of the questionnaire as discussed by Tuckman (2008: 216)

- (a) Anybody can administer it on behalf of the researcher.
- (b) It is relatively easy to plan, construct and administer.
- (c) It can be distributed to respondents with financial and time cost-effectiveness and has a wide coverage.
- (d) It reaches people who would be difficult to reach, thus obtaining a broad spectrum of views.
- (e) The questionnaire enhances progress in many areas of educational research and brings to light much information that would otherwise be lost.
- (f) Due to its impersonal nature, the questionnaire may elicit more candid and objective (and thus more valid) responses.

Anonymity of respondents is assured since respondents are not required to expose their identities, addresses and institutions.

Disadvantages of a questionnaire

According to Tuckman (2008: 216), questionnaires also have the following disadvantages:

- (a) Questionnaire might be interpreted and understood differently by respondents.
- (b) Respondents might have little interest in a particular problem and therefore might answer the questionnaire indiscriminately.
- (c) Questionnaires that do not probe deeply enough do not reveal a true picture of opinions and feelings.
- (d) As the motivation of the respondents is difficult to check, misleading responses might be received.
- (e) It is difficult to determine who really completed the questionnaire.

In this research care was taken to combat the above disadvantages.

1.5.3 The construction of the questionnaire

Questionnaire items must be constructed carefully in order to measure a specific aspect of the study's objectives. A total of 35 questions were used in this questionnaire to formulate items relating to the following:

- (a) Biographic information (Section A)
- (b) Classroom rules (Section B)
- (c) Parental/Caregiver support (Section C)
- (d) Respect and rights (Section D)
- (e) Tasks and responsibilities (Section E)
- (f) Punishment (Section

In formulating the questions, the language proficiency of the sample was taken into account. The ranking scale used required respondents to indicate their answer on a four-point Likert-type scale as follows: 1= Strongly agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 4= Strongly disagree.

In constructing and formatting the questionnaires, guidelines provided by authors on research designs were considered and used to finalise the questionnaires (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 190, Delport, 2002: 176, McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 258). The questionnaire was subject to a process of administration, which included the pilot survey, finalisation and distribution.

(j) Data collection process

The data collection process took place as follows:

I applied for the necessary permission to conduct this research. A literature review was conducted in order to develop the necessary questionnaire. The researcher conducted the quantitative phase of the research by handing out the questionnaires.

(k) Role of the researcher

I remained as objective as possible, as I was not taking part in the research on the ground, but merely facilitating the process. This was done by not assisting the participants (learners) in their responses, thus participants expressed their own views without being told how to respond.

Moreover, I also used the questionnaires as a quantitative research instrument. The questionnaire was used for this study because of the quest for objectivity and the desire to minimize bias and distortion.

(l) Data analysis and interpretation

As supported by Creswell (2009: 151-152), in order to analyse the data that was obtain, the researcher used descriptive statistics. Pietersen and Maree (2007b: 183) stated that the term descriptive statistics can be seen to be a joint name referring to several statistical techniques, aimed at ordering and abridging data in a meaningfully way.

Frequencies, meaning and percentages were calculated for the different responses to all items on the questionnaire. All the frequencies of the participants, concerning all the various categories on the questionnaires were shown together,(Pietersen and Maree (2007b: 187). In general, a mean was regarded as the most accepted measure of location and it was used to compute the mathematical average of the values of the participants' responses (Pietersen & Maree,2007b: 187). Since the researcher did not plan to go beyond presenting a summary of and describing the data, no inferential statistics was necessary (Pietersen & Maree, 2007c: 198).

(m) Quality Criteria

In order to ensure the quality of this research, the researcher took care of the most important criteria of reliability and validity as they were to become applicable to the quantitative research.

According to Creswell (2009: 149-150), reliability can be described as (1) the regularity with which a measuring instrument offers certain outcomes when nothing measured has changed and (2) indicating if there was uniformity during the administering of the research instrument.

The researcher conducted a pilot study before the actual research was completed.

(n) Validity of the researcher design

In this research, the researcher needed to make sure that the research met the terms concerning relevant validity criteria that point to the quantitative research design that was followed. The following criteria, identified by Creswell (2009:162-164), described as possible threats, were taken into consideration with reference to the validity: Statistical Conclusion Validity. According to Creswell (2009:162-164), statistical conclusion validity can be described as the risks that occur when researchers draw wrong conclusions from the data, because of (1) insufficient statistical control, or (2) abuse of numerical statements.

Under the guidance of the supervisor, the researcher made use of valid statistical test in order to ensure that the data gathered by the self-developed questionnaires are captured and interpreted correctly.

(o) Reliability and validity of the measuring instrument

Pietersen and Maree (2007a: 215) define reliability as pointing to the ability of an instrument to generate similar findings even when it is used repeatedly in different situations. Pietersen and Maree (2007a: 216-217), further describe the validity of a measuring instrument as the point to which the instrument measures what it intends measuring.

1.6 RELIABILITY

Internal reliability, or sometimes known as internal consistency, is measured when researchers calculate Cornbrash alpha. This Cornbrash alpha was linked to the inter-item correlation: as indicated by Pietersen and Maree (2007b: 216). High inter-correlation between

the questionnaire items would imply that the Cornbrash alpha will be near to one. However, low concentration between these items would imply that the items do not correlate well. Thus, the Cornbrash alpha will be near to zero. According to Pietersen and Maree (2007b: 216), the following Cornbrash alpha coefficient findings are a sound indication to researchers concerning the type of reliability that they should use:

0.90-high reliability

0.80-moderate reliability

0.70-low reliability

Yet, in more modern terms, Simon (2008) mentions the possibility of the wider range of 0.6-0.9 as indicating that a Cornbrash alpha complies with reliability criteria.

The researcher asked the Statistical Consultation Services to calculate the relevant Cornbrash alphas. This ensured the reliability of the research instrument.

1.7 VALIDITY

Face validity: According to Pietersen and Maree (2007a: 217), this type of validity indicates the degree to which a research instrument appears to be valid when looking at it. The question thus is, does it measure what the researcher wants it to measure? In this research the researcher once again used his supervisor to ensure face validity. Content validity: This points towards the degree to which the research instrument includes the entire content of the construct(s) that the researcher intends to measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2007: 217).

The self-developed questionnaire reflected various parts of the content domain, as informed by doing the relevant literature review in Chapter Two of this document. The supervisor guided the researcher in making sure that the necessary content was included in the questionnaire.

Construct validity: Pietersen and Maree (2007: 217) mention this type of validity as necessary for standardization: it is all about to what extent different questionnaire items measure the constructs that are included in an instrument. The items in the self-developed questionnaire will be verified by the researcher's supervisor, to determine whether he measures the constructs/in question.

Criterion validity: This type of validity is seen as the final test that measures if the instrument measures what the researcher intends to measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2007:217). For this, the researcher needs access to the scores of an existing instrument. Since the researcher used a self-developed questionnaire; no access to the score of an existing instrument was possible.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

I applied for ethical research permission from the University of South Africa. Relevant letters of consent were developed for handing to the research participants, asking them to indicate their willingness to take part in the study (for learners) or give permission for minors to take part in the study (caregivers and school authorities). There were three types of letters: (1) one addressed to the parents/caregivers of the under aged learners, (2) one addressed to the learners and,(3) one addressed to the principals at the participating schools. I also applied for ethical research permission from the Free State Department of Education.

1.9 LIMITATIONS

Even though the test-retest survey method and comparative analysis used during piloting increased reliability and validity, the existing turnover and absence rate of the student population in the participating schools may cause general findings to vary. Relying on learners' truthfulness and guardian permission made this research vulnerable to faulty responses from participating learners. Because of the random sampling of the learners' population, the results may not be generalizable to age groups other than that of Nketoana Cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District learners to other educational institutions, or outside the district. Though the Thabo Mofutsanyana District is the largest, the cluster cannot represent every learning environment in the district or elsewhere. These findings may only offer general behavioural trends, as applicable to the participating schools. Finally, the reliability of the survey, discipline record analysis, and survey instruments used in this study limited the validity of the study because of the potential bias in the creation, implementation, and assessment of data.

1.10 DELIMITATIONS

This study was confined to surveying a random selection of the roughly 600 learners from both primary and secondary schools in the Nketoana Cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District. It focuses solely on (a) what are the views of learners regarding classroom discipline in public school? (b) How do educators manage classroom discipline? (c) How learners' views are considered when classroom rules are developed? (d) What procedure is followed when developing classroom classroom rules? (e) What monitoring mechanisms are in place to manage classroom discipline? The focus of this study may represent only a small portion of the causes contributing to learners' perception and will leave room for further research.

1.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presented an orientation to the study by outlining the research problem, aim and method. The next chapter presents the literature review on the nature of learner's perceptions of discipline in the classrooms.

1.12 PROJECTIONS OF THE NEXT CHAPTER

Offering a more extensive explanation and description of learners' views of the discipline policies and the way in which those views influence learner behavioural choices drove this study. The results of this study highlight strategies for preventing particular behaviours while addressing the cause of misbehaviour and the way in which learners' beliefs influence behaviour by examining opinion surveys and reported discipline data. In the following chapter, the existing pool of related literature is explored using the independent variables:

1. Theoretical Framework
2. The main aim of the Study Global trends on discipline as a management tool
3. Discipline as a management tool in school classrooms
4. Classroom management in schools
5. Factors affecting learners' views
6. Disciplinary problems in South African Schools

7. Discipline measures
8. Causes of learner misbehaviour
9. Disciplinary policy and procedures
10. Perceived effectiveness of disciplinary plans
11. Parental involvement as a disciplinary measure
12. The current legislative framework
13. Education law provision regulating learner discipline

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was based on a literature review which included primary and secondary sources to expose accumulated knowledge in the stated field of interest (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1999: 67). For educators dealing with learners who have chronic discipline issues, the problem is that current discipline plans offer methods for preventing particular behaviours but do not address the cause of misbehaviour or the way in which learners' perceptions influence behaviour. To prevent or minimize noncompliance, educators must consider the origin of disobedience from the learners' perspective to understand why behaviours occur. Addressing learner beliefs and opinions allows for observation of specific teacher behaviours and their effect on learner behaviour.

Hart (1998: 1) regards a literature review as important because it helps the researcher to acquire an understanding of the topic, of what has already been done on it, how it has been researched and what the key issues are. A literature review can be defined as the perusal of all available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which are informative on the topic, and can be used as evidence to prove or disprove any argument, on the research topic. Hart (1998:13) further indicates that these sources could be written to fulfil certain aims or express areas for further study on the research being proposed. Hart (1998: 27) mentions the following purposes of a literature review: (a) discovering important variables relevant to the topic (b) synthesizing and gaining a new perspective (c) identifying relationships between ideas and practices (d) establishing the context of the problems (e) enhancing and acquiring the subject vocabulary and (f) understanding the structure of the subject.

Bruce, (cited in Burton, 2000: 426), indicates the following questions as important for researchers to ask when they conduct literature review (1) What is the present state of my list references? Is it up to date, is it adequate? (2) What literature searches have I understand? (3)

What have I read recently? (4) What have I learnt from the literature, have I changed my area of focus? (5) Is what I have read going to influence my research in any way?

In this chapter, the following were explored issues that influence classroom both locally and globally.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research is framed by the view that, regardless of the community served, or the type of people who attend the school, the system of discipline is the creation of the staff of the school. It holds further that discipline impacts strongly on the quality of education offered and received. How behaviour and discipline at school are managed is not depended on the environment from which the pupils come, but rather on the management skills present at the school. This then impacts on the quality of education offered.

Many schools have identified lack of discipline as a very serious problem hampering effective teaching and learning. Many reasons advancing this argument have been advocated. Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 44) indicate that lack of discipline and misbehaviour are some of the key factors of school life and as such, in many schools discipline is a major problem. In this regard, Public Agenda (2004: 1) points out that many learners lose many critical opportunities for learning because of the behaviour of a few persistent troublemakers and educators say that misbehaving learners are quick to point out that they have rights and that their parents can sue the schools.

Hymowitz (2000) points out that today school principals lack the tools needed for dealing even with the unruliest of kids whereas formerly they would expel such kids permanently or send them to special schools for the hard-to-discipline. It is notable that such schools have vanished and the education laws also do not allow for any permanent expulsion and thus at best, a school can only manage to transfer a learner offender elsewhere in the same district (Hymowitz, 2000). It can be asserted that this certainly is not a solution to the indiscipline problem. It is rather a transference of a problem elsewhere with a hope that the affected learner will somehow be influenced by a different environment to behave properly.

Christie, Petrie and Christie (1999: 6) cite the challenge of managing discipline in schools as being intensified by the growing presence of learners with emotional and behavioural disorders displayed through aggressive behavioural responses to social problems. Christie et al (1999: 6) posit that learner misbehaviour might be caused by, inter alia, psychological problems associated with adolescence and difficulties with peer group interactions. These authors cite both family and school as causing most indiscipline problems of learners and point out that factors likely to lead to learners “ antisocial and aggressive behaviour include unemployment and poor access to economic resources, high incidences of alcohol abuse, low expectation by parents, little positive parent involvement with the child’s school, high levels of family stress and conflict, punitive disciplinary practices including corporal punishment and a high incidence of domestic violence”.

School influences on learner indiscipline include educators with punitive attitudes, rules that are loosely enforced and perceived as unfair and unclear, ambiguous responses to learner misbehaviour and learners’ low levels of belief in conventional social rules as well as a lack of resources needed for effective teaching and learning (Christie et al., 1996: 6).

The foregoing exposition of possible causes of learner indiscipline indicates clearly the challenge faced by schools regarding learner discipline. It is also clear that these problems are situated in various areas of learners’ lives, that is, at home, at school and in the community where they live. It is however, an undeniable fact that poor discipline or lack thereof can be a major influence to effective teaching and learning. In fact, Kant and March (2004: 3) opine that school discipline has two main goals namely, ensuring the safety of staff and learners and creating an environment conducive to learning. Therefore effective school discipline strategies seek to encourage responsible behaviour and to provide all learners with a satisfying school experience as well as to discourage misconduct.

It is for this reason that an understanding of the essential nature of school discipline needs to be advocated. To achieve this, this study begins with an exposition of discipline globally, and in South African Schools.

2.3 THE MAIN AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study is to examine how learner discipline can be managed in Thabo Mofutsanyana District as informed by the literature study and empirical survey. This aim is conceptualised into objectives and will be achieved by investigating the nature of learner discipline, investigate how learner discipline in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District is currently managed and recommending how learner discipline in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District can be better managed.

2.4 GLOBAL TRENDS OF DISCIPLINE AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL

Globalisation is a worldwide phenomenon that poses enormous challenges in the world of work, of which schools are no exception. As a result of globalisation, the world has become small, interconnected and interdependent. The interconnectedness and interdependence of the world poses a number of immeasurable challenges for South African schools today. Therefore, a new paradigm in viewing education is eminently important to improve the South African schools.

Globalisation is used to describe the most critical features, developments and processes making the world increasingly interdependent and integrated. As a concept and new paradigm, globalisation presents worldwide hope for economic growth and development for competitive edge. This worldwide phenomenon poses enormous challenges in the new world of work, of which schools are no exceptions. The shrinking of the world has resulted in a global village which poses further challenges for schools today (Lemmer & Badenhorst, 1997:421). Organisations such as schools are challenged to train and develop educators, so that they can effectively perform their tasks to gain a competitive edge within a highly competitive and fast-changing world (Rhinesmith, 1995: 37). Furthermore, technological innovations such as internet and e-learning have shaped the world to become a smaller place to live in. Continuous learning and cutting edge performance have become a key to a knowledgeable society and the creation of learning communities by offering a sound body of knowledge that enhances learner capacity and high performance.

In view of the above, Pike (2000: 65) asserts that educational practices within an educational system should be viewed as interdependent and part of a global system. Schools are therefore an interacting set of components that includes learners, educators, teaching context, student learning processes, learning outcomes, institutions, staff developers, administrators, politicians and any identifiable component that affects learning (Letseka, 1995: 394). This underscores the importance to think globally in order to reconceptualise the existing classroom management practices in South African schools. Consequently, schools can be regarded as dynamic and complex systems.

2.4.1 Classroom discipline as a management tool in the United States of America

Disciplinary problems have been consistently ranked as one of the biggest concerns facing America's schools (Fitzsimmons, 1998, Killion, 1998, Skiba & Peterson, 2000). The 35th Annual Fallup Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Towards The Public Schools has repeatedly documented "lack of discipline" as one of the most critical problems facing American Schools. Parents, learners, and educators across the country are disturbed about so much disorder and danger in schools and the high incident of classroom disruptions that result in millions of learners' suspension annually (Harvard Education Letter, 1987, Skiba & Peterson, 2000, Townsend, 2000).

According to Levin and Nolan (1996), a disciplinary problem exists when a student's behaviour interferes with the teaching process and the ability of others in a classroom to learn. It also exists when behaviour is psychologically or physically unsafe and when a student destroys property (Levin & Nolan, 1996). Learners typically receive exclusionary punishments for aggressive behaviours, such as fighting, profane language, or disrespect of authority, and for passive behaviours, such as truancy or lack of interaction. Wilcox et al., (1998: 18) described aggressive learners as living "in a world in which interactions are based on hostile intent". They would rather force someone to comply to their will than maintain a positive relationship.

Discipline has become such an issue in American schools that it is to blame for sizeable segment of lost instructional time (Cotton, 2001). In 1998, the National PTA stated that,

“discipline should be a positive way of helping and guiding children to achieve self-control” (Marshall, 1998: 38). Simultaneously, however, there are numerous schools that report safe and orderly classrooms. As the literature points out, these safe, orderly, and efficient schools did not occur by accident. They are a result of intensive, structured, and comprehensive school-level disciplinary practices.

A number of factors offer confirmation of the need for school-wide prevention and support strategies including traditional disciplinary practices that are ineffective, and educational groupings that are poorly conceptualized and supported. On the other hand, expansions in early detection and early intervention have amplified schools’ potential to meet the need for more effective approaches.

After the horrendous mass murder at Columbine High School in Colorado, there continued to be copycat attempts in various parts of America. In Michigan, a 6-year-old child shot and killed a 6-year-old classmate. Even deaf learners were influenced. One deaf student was arrested for making bombs in his dormitory (Jankowski, 2002: 6). Negative, undisciplined behaviours are exhibited by children in American schools on a daily basis. The nation has been beset with these problems since the establishment of formal schooling. Even during colonial times, which predates compulsory education in the United States, rules and regulations were established for the deployment of disciplinary actions in school settings.

In a report written by Paul E. Barton, Richard J. Coley, and Harry Wenglinsky of the Educational Testing Service Policy Information Centre in October, 1998 based on data gathered by two programs operated by the National Centre for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and the National Educational Longitudinal (NEL) study of 1988, showed that indiscipline in schools was everybody’s problem.

(a) Approaches used to alleviate disorder in schools

i. Corporal punishment

Corporal punishment, as described by Dayton, (1994) is a method of discipline in which a supervising adult deliberately inflicts pain upon a child in response to a child's unacceptable behaviour and/or inappropriate language. The immediate aims of such punishment are usually to halt the offence, prevent its recurrence and set an example for others. The purported long-term goal is to change the child's behaviour and to make it more consistent with the adult's expectations (Andero & Steward, 2002: 1).

Throughout the history of education in the United States corporal punishment was the most common form of discipline used in schools. Numerous adults, including educators, embraced the old adage "spare rod and spoil the child" and thereby believed paddling was a viable method of disciplining children in school and correcting their misbehaviour in general. This belief reinforced the importance of early training in forming a person's lifelong character (Andero & Steward, 2002). It was commonly understood that during school hours teachers do the role of a substitute parent to the learners assigned to them. William Heard Kilpatrick (1969), when describing discipline in Dutch schools of New Netherlands, noted that the method of choice was corporal punishment. He further noted that the plank (a stout wooden paddle) and the rode (a bundle of switches) were the only acceptable instruments used to mete out the punishment in a reasonable measure.

Opponents of corporal punishment made their concerns known. Over a period of twenty to thirty years there emerged a growing outcry condemning such practices in schools in the United States (Andero & Steward, 2002). Parents upset by use of corporal punishment often have sought remedy for their children through the courts. In the 1977, the U.S Supreme Court ruled that paddling was not cruel and unusual punishment, nevertheless it did establish the right of learners to due process in disciplinary matters in schools (Sealy, 2001). Periodically, the debate concerning the use of corporal punishment re-emerges. Proponents of corporal punishment lament the banning of corporal punishment. They felt the ban is directly responsible for the decline of civility in schools, giving way to defiance, chaos, threats, cursing, and assaults. It has been said that "all these behaviours have risen from rare to

frequent in many schools since the elimination of corporal punishment” (Mason & Rosenbaum, 2005: 38). Their opinion was that “corporal punishment was violence against children and has no place in a public school” (Mason & Rosenbaum, 2005: 38).

(ii) Causes and contributors of disruption

Researchers have attacked the problem of ill-discipline in the U.S from various perspectives. Although no definitive answers were found, research has highlighted areas of possible causes or at least contributing factors. It suggests several possibilities about the cause(s) of ill-discipline in schools.

Home Environment/ Parenting is Lacking

“Parents have an important role in the educational process” (Becker, 1984) and how they execute their roll makes a difference in the lives of their children”. According to Plevyak & Heaston (2001: 3) “Research indicates that children whose parents are involved in schools have less behavioural problems, increased achievement, and lower dropout rates”.

Some researchers noted the breakdown in the family structure as a cause or contributing cause to the indiscipline evidenced in schools. Traditional families, or those composed of mother, father, and child, represent a much smaller proportion of American households today than in the past. Nearly half of all American children under the age of 18 will be raised in single parent homes, arising from a divorce or separation at one time in their lives as expressed in the Statistical Abstract of the United States of 1991 (Schneider & Coleman, 1993). The growth of single parent homes, usually headed by the mother, may reduce the time and opportunity for parents to actively participate in their children’s school.

Schneider & Coleman, (1993: 3) “Arguably, the rise in the number of working mothers has also decreased the amount of time mothers can spend with their children, thus leaving supervision to other child care institutions”. Some children may experience this shift at a very early age; even prior to their first birthday. “Oftentimes the values adopted in these child care facilities and the children who attend them may be in direct conflict with those

reinforced in the home” (Schneider & Coleman 1993: 3) This can lead to children having to adapt to confusing changes, differing values and practices from that of their home environment at very young ages and without the wherewithal to reasonably address the issues/differences with either their parents or caretakers.

Upon reaching school age, these children, once again, may encounter varying values and expectations. Principals, teachers and other school personnel may expect and/ or insist on behaviours that differed from what they had become accustomed to at home or in the dwellings of their care takers. The values inculcated from their parents, their caretakers and the school/teachers may pose a great challenge to their perceptions of appropriate behaviour.

“Receiving different messages about what constitutes good behaviour at school, how to treat teachers and peers, and why schooling is important; many children find they have to cope with these contradictions in values by themselves” (Schneider & Coleman, 1993:3).

Households where the fathers are absent in the home present other problems as well. Many children are raised in households in which their fathers are not present. This lack of paternal presence can be unsettling and impact the children’s development negatively. The father’s authority and involvement in raising his children is also a great buffer against a life of crime. The scholarly evidence, in short, suggests that at least at the heart of the explosion of crime in America is the loss of capacity of the fathers and mothers to be responsible and caring to the children they bring into the world. This loss of guidance has broad social consequences for the children (Fagan, 1995: 2)

The increase of single parent homes may also be a contributor to the poor parent participation in meetings and events in their children’s schools. “The turnout at some parent-teacher conferences can be just as paltry” (Morse, 2001: 1), which tend to have a larger number of attendants than parent meetings. In a poll conducted by Public Agenda, a non-profit research organization, 70% of parents said they had not volunteered to tutor or coach in the past two years, and 60% said they had not attended a single community event held at their child’s school. (Morse, 2001: 3). A technology consultant at Conway Middle School in Louisville, Kentucky sums up parent involvement/interest by noting that, “It’s very popular to say we

have a problem in education, but it's not very popular to say we have a parent problem" (Morse, 2001: 4).

It is also purported that the occurrences of violence in the home is the cause of misbehaviours at school. The violence they see, hear or that which is directed at them causes the children to act out. Children who have learned to successfully use negative and aggressive means to control/manipulate those in their home environment to obtain desired things or action, will tend to apply the same coercive methods; whining, yelling, hitting, threatening, on others outside their home. Therefore, it is not surprising that they used these methods when dealing with their teachers and among their peers at schools, as well (Gresham, et al., 2003).

(iii) School Culture, Climate and Environment

The elements that make up the school climate are complex, ranging from the quality of interactions in the teachers' lounge to the noise levels in hallways and cafeterias, from the physical structure of the building to the physical comfort levels (involving such factors as heating, cooling, and lighting) of the individuals and how safe they feel. Even the size of the school and the opportunities for learners and teachers to interact in small groups, both formally and informally, add to or detract from the learning environment (Freiberg, 1998: 4).

According to the researcher Brenda Geiger, educators such as Dreikurs (1968) and Glasser (1986) believe some of the discipline problems exhibited in schools is the result of learners' frustration and their perceived lack of opportunity to meet their basic needs because of the restrictiveness of the classroom. They expressed the ideas that "learners may feel pleasure or frustration depending on whether they will be empowered to meet their needs for fun and freedom (Glasser, 1986), and belonging (Dreikurs, 1968)" (Geiger, 2000:1).

Gary D Gottfredson and Denise C. Gottfredson, researchers from Johns Hopkins University, examined data from over 600 of the nation's secondary schools (as cited in Gaustad, 1989). Their research revealed that certain schools with the same characteristics were associated with disciplinary problems. According to Gaustad (1989), these characteristics included schools which exhibited: unclear rules or rules that were perceived as unfairly or

inconsistently enforced; learners who did not believe in the rules; teachers and administrators who were unfamiliar with the rules or disagreed on the proper responses to student misconduct. Gaustad (1989), further asserts that these are schools where teachers-administration cooperation was poor or the administration inactive; where teachers tended to have punitive attitude; where misconduct was ignored; and where schools were large or lacked adequate resources for teaching.

Mayer (1995) also identified factors that may be contributors to the expressed antisocial behaviours of some learners which are not too dissimilar from those stated above. Mayer's list includes: the heavy reliance on a punitive approach to discipline and control of learners, inconsistent application of action, lack of agreement of regulatory policies, poor academic achievement of learners the lack understanding of disparities of cultural and ethnicity among other aspects of school life (Mayer, 2001).

(iv) Teachers' inefficiencies

Clewett (1988) strongly suggested that we look at discipline as something we must teach the learners with instructions pertaining to the appropriateness of the responses to given situations rather than take punitive action. Everston and Wade (1989) demonstrated in their study on stability and variability of classroom instruction in two junior high school English classes, that a teacher's style of teaching may influence the behaviours of the learners. Children who were in the class of a teacher whose instructional style was defined as stable showed less off-task behaviour than those children in the class of the teacher whose instructional style was defined as variable.

(Geiger, 2000) has also suggested that learners' misbehaviours may be the result of their teacher's variability in instructional methods. She also submits that the student's perceptions of their own academic abilities and the internal needs of some learners at a given time, as well as the distractions they are subjected to by other learners may play a part in subsequent misbehaviours.

Noguera (1996) points out a wide divide between experienced teachers and learners, germane to many municipal schools, may be a contributor to violence in schools. According to Noguera (1996), stereotypes held by many teachers and administrators based on the learners' community, environs and/or what they have read or learned through the news media or other means, encourage a growth of fear and disparity between school and learners.

(v) Learner's Self Perceptions

Glasser (1984), as reported by Charles (1989), proposed that a better understanding of human behaviour is needed in order to devise effective strategies for classroom management. It was purported in this article that Glasser believed that behaviours exhibited are due to the person's best attempt to satisfy his/her most pressing needs at a given time. According to Glasser (1984), behaviour is motivated by forces within the individual rather than by external events.

Mitman and Lash (1988) conducted a study to investigate whether children's misbehaviours were influenced by their perceptions of the academic standings in class. How learners view their academic attainment seems to influence their level of willingness or cooperation in performing the day to day classroom activities. Thirteen (13) third grade classes participated in the study. Data was collected on the children's perception of their academic achievements and the perceptions of their interactions with their teachers. Results showed that the children who considered themselves as lacking success in academics exhibited more misbehaviours than those who perceived themselves as having higher academic standing in class. Glottfredson (1989) asserts that a number of studies have shown that learners are more likely to engage in disruptive behaviours if they tend to dislike school because they are doing poorly in academics, and envision limited career objectives.

Charlotte Danielson (1996) in her work, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* expressed the belief that better focused learners result from educators sharing clear and concise explanations and expectancy of the standards and goals learners are required to achieve. Making clear standards available to these learners would demystify how they may accomplish their goals and may, in fact, encourage greater efforts on the part of the learners.

Learners' engagement in authentic learning and student's active responsibility for their learning seems to foster on-task behaviour and lessen discipline problems in the classroom.

Sometimes problematic behaviour occurs because learners simply don't know how to act appropriately. Black and Downs, as cited in Gaustad (1989: 1), urged administrators to regard disciplinary referrals as opportunities to teach learners valuable social skills that will promote success in future employment as well as in school. They presented detailed procedures for "deescalating disruptive behaviour, obtaining and maintaining instructional control, teaching alternative behaviour, and preparing learners for classroom re-entry". Mayer (2001) proposed that learners may act in a retaliatory manner after being disciplined, either verbally or physically, for an infraction. A student may destroy school property or take out his/her ire on another student. He also suggests that a student may alternatively rebel against the school by cutting classes, or even dropping out of school altogether.

(vi) Peer Distractions and Interactions

Felme and Eder (1985) conducted a study of first grade learners in reading groups. The study demonstrated that distractions caused by the inattentiveness of one student adversely affected the other learners in the class. Doll (1996) found a change in children's self-esteem, like or dislike of school, teen pregnancy and violence at school is heightened for children who experience isolation or rejection from their peers (Smith & Sandhu, 2004). On average, approximately one in ten school-age children are repeatedly and persistently victimized by their peers, and many more children are victimized less regularly (Olweus, 1978, 1991; Perry, Kusel, & Perry, 1988). Moreover, children who are victimized by their peers are susceptible to school adjustment and performance difficulties (Kochenderfer & Ladd, 1996; Ladd, Kochenderfer, & Coleman, 1997).

One very prevalent interaction with peers that can cause off-task behaviours and varying levels of misbehaviours is bullying; particularly for the victim. "Bullying occurs more often at schools than on the way to and from there" (Sampson, 2002:1). Bullying is a pervasive problem. Many learners avoid attending school due to the real possibility of being victimized. And when in school, they may find it very difficult to focus on school work. According to the

National Association of School Psychologists' research by Vail (1999) and Banks, (2000) reported "approximately 160,000 learners absent themselves from school every day because they are afraid of being bullied. This fear not only can make the learners distracted from their work, but may interfere with their normal interactions and relationships with school administrators, other school staff and their peers". "Bullying is now recognized as a common form of victimization on American school campuses and a significant school safety problem (Nansel et al., 2001)".

2.4.2 Classroom discipline as a management tool in the United Kingdom

Robertson (1998: 75) identifies types of misbehaviour displayed by pupils as those that violate the interest of the concerned, for example, failing to work or doing something dangerous to his/her own safety. The types of misbehaviour identified by Robertson were those that violate the interests of the other pupils, such as distracting others from working, bullying and dangerous behaviour and lastly, those which violate the interest of the school or community (for example, challenging teachers' authority or failing to wear a school uniform).

Writing in the Daily Express, Will (2005: 1) reported of a study by the Child Behavioural Index claiming that 70% of the British children were officially classed as badly behaved. The report echoed the concern on discipline in the schools, where the youngsters spend most of the day under the care of the schools. Indiscipline in the schools has been reported in the British papers as a major concern. Harris (205: 19) reported that one in ten secondary schools was failing to keep a lid on discipline .At the same time; one in four secondary schools was doing only just enough to keep control in their classrooms. Grey (2002: 3) indicates that standards of children's behaviour in schools and elsewhere are seen to be deteriorating as family and societal values change and children are exposed to an increasing range of corrupting influence.

Clark (2005: 24) reports that a one-off study based on visits to a random sample of nearly 80 schools and colleges, ordered by Office for Standard in Education (OFsted); in response to growing concern about school indiscipline, showed that standards of discipline in schools were steadily declining. The report painted a disturbing picture of rowdy and disrupted

classes with physical and verbal abuse of both children and teachers. According to Rogers (1998: 3), there are many learners who will not do what they are asked the first time, or simply because the teacher said so. Rogers identifies behaviours like arguing, answering back, challenging, procrastinating, debating, talking “out of turn”, getting out of seats “without permission: and general rowdiness”, as what mostly concerns teachers. These behaviours occurred right across the school spectrum.

Cotton (2001) identifies “lack of discipline” as the most serious problem facing the educational system, with many educators and learners also gravely concerned about disorder and danger in school environments. She points out that insubordination and intimidation by pupils results in countless school and classroom disruptions leading to many suspensions in a year. She further says that, in addition to these school discipline issues, classrooms are frequently plagued by other more minor kinds of misbehaviour which disrupt the flow of classroom activities and interfere with learning. This, she claims takes up approximately one-half of all classroom time, with activities other than instruction, and discipline problems being responsible for a significant portion of this lost instructional time.

According to Clark (2005: 24), a study by the Office for the Standard in Education (OFsted), found unruly behaviour as being evident even among four year olds, who, were said to come to school ill-prepared socially and emotionally. The report continues to say twenty per cent of poor behaviour in primary schools involves pupils aged eight to nine-year old. It is further stated that, boys are more likely than girls to be defiant and physically abusive, with 8 to 9 and 12 to 15 year olds being the worst behaved age groups. Lastly, pupils misbehave in some lessons more than others. Some of the behaviours identified by (OFsted) included “challenging behaviour”- including biting, pinching, throwing furniture, assault, disobedience and temper tantrums shown by up to half of pupils in some schools. Gang culture is perceived as widespread in a fifth of secondary schools and some pupils take medication because of disruptive behaviour at more than half of all schools. The report concluded that behaviour was best in schools where rules were applied fairly and consistently.

(i) Causes of unwanted behaviour

Feelings are the emotions that we experience. These emotional responses are the result of our interactions with the world and the people with whom we relate. Feelings occur as a result of positive or negative experiences. If we are feeling happy, sad or angry it will be a response to a person or event. Behaviour is the way in which we try to express our feelings. This expression itself is an attempt to communicate, but the individual may not be aware of the link between their feelings and their behaviour. (Mc Namara and Moreton, 2001: 91)

Robertson (1989: 76) reports that when teachers are asked to speculate on the reasons for unwanted behaviour, their reasons can be categorised in three distinct ways, that is (a) in terms of the cause of the behaviour, that is, the most experience of the child which might predispose them towards certain behaviour or temperamental factors. (b) in terms of the pay-offs for the behaviour that is, what the child gains by misbehaving. (c) in terms of the context in which unwanted behaviour is more likely to occur, that is, the teacher's part in promoting unwanted behaviour.

(ii) Home background

According to Robertson (1989: 78), the home background has a serious bearing on the behaviour of the child. He points out that economic difficulty and the effects of grossly distorted care, such as for children brought up in same family, are very pronounced and sometimes irreversible. He claims that these children are frequently in the process of establishing and sustaining relationships and suffered from lowered general ability. Robertson (1989: 78) summarising the comparative study of children in an Inner London Borough and children on the Isle of Wight, concluded that family discord and disharmony, parental mental disorder, criminality in the parents, large family size and overcrowding within the home, admission of the child into care of the local Authority (welfare) and low occupational status. The assumption is that the reason for the child's behaviour, good or bad, lies in the home and outside the classroom. Caution is given that whilst information about the home background may help to explain something about the child's frame of mind, skill level or pattern of behaviour, it is essential that it remains just one source of information as to

possible motivation (Mc Namara & Moreton, 2001: 13). Robertson (1989: 79) observed that some children might be predisposed, genetically or congenitally to experience learning and behavioural problems. He further asserts that school failure and behaviour problems are strongly associated but there is also evidence to suggest that some children may be more liable to develop behaviour problems due to temperamental factors.

(iii) Idols

It is observed by Whitehead and Riches (2005: 1) that as discipline in the classroom hit an all-time low, teachers are blaming some stars for the appalling behaviour of the country's youth. They condemn the shameful behaviour of millionaire footballers, whose vile televised obscenities are watched by millions of impressionable children. Harris (2005: 5) also report of the accusation on Wayne Rooney's behaviour as contributing to the soaring levels of misbehaviour in classrooms with his foul-mouthed outbursts on the pitch. It is claimed that youngsters believe it is an acceptable way to act.

(iv) Punishment

“There is lack of punishment in schools. Teachers cannot cope in lots of instances and they are leaving the profession. We need more powers of punishment and stricter discipline all round” (Seaton in Whitehead & Riches, 2005: 1). Harris (2005: 5) states that teachers are worried about the aggression being directed at them by parents and many teachers are suffering with stress and retiring through ill-health due to “constant backchat, disrespect and questioning of authority, by pupils. The report further alleges that “The balance between the rights often tipped in favour of the pupil”. By this it means that teachers suffer when it comes to implementing the sanctions lest they be sued for tempering with “some parent's child”.

(v) Social class and ethnic grouping as a cause

There are a number of social class and ethnic grouping related issues that have been identified as contributing factors to school indiscipline.

(vi) Teacher attitude

The authors echo the plea for teachers to change their attitude towards learners who are disruptive and to see them as learners who the school has failed.

(vii) Gender

Teachers give more attention to boys (Spender, 1982: 14). Boys shout out and use aggressive behaviour, and as a result are removed from the classroom either outside the door or outside the entire institution. Teachers give less time to girls: girls tend to conform, chat to each other, and any expression of unhappiness is in the form of withdrawal.

(viii) Race

Behaviour of working class boys, are more likely to be found unacceptable in schools, and that of working class Afro-Caribbean boys the most unacceptable. It seems to Witcomb and Wood (2005: 18) that Afro-Caribbean behaviours, especially non-verbal, are the very ones interpreted in the conformity norms in schools as being insolent, sly, aggressive, manipulative and non-co-operative. School norms can contribute to creating a problem for some student, particularly those from working class families.

a. Self-esteem as a cause

Lepkowska (2005: 1) reports on a study by the National Foundation for Educational Research. The study questioned teachers and other professionals, parents and pupils attending 17 primary, secondary and special schools in six local education areas and found that (a) schools tolerate poor behaviour from children with special needs rather than excluding them. (b) Disruptive children who have special needs are treated more leniently by their teachers than their peers, if they behave badly. (c) Although children with special needs tended to be treated similarly to other pupils, “threshold was often high and a greater degree of unacceptable behaviour was tolerated before the exclusion was intended”.

The study recommended that schools should make teachers aware of whether a child's behaviour was as a result of special needs, or because the pupil was de-motivated. They should also make sure that staff reacts appropriately to pupil behaviour and "help pupils acquire desirable patterns of behaviour" (Lepkowska, 2005: 1). Counter to the above, "Official figures show that two-thirds of excluded pupils have some form of special needs, so it is simply not true that these children are treated more leniently" (Sir John Wright) special spokesperson for the Independent Panel for Special Education Advise.

2.4.3 Classroom discipline as a management tool in Australia

In Australian schools learner misbehaviour is largely associated with such matters as a failure to pay attention in class, disrespect for other learners or staff or their property as well as flagrant breaches of school regulations, including for an example, wearing inappropriate clothing or items of jewellery. Although bullying in its various forms, including verbal and psychological bullying, does exist on a frequent basis in every school, violence as a form of learner indiscipline, although on the increase, is comparatively rare.

Maintaining discipline was, however, seen to be a major problem and was a source of considerable stress to teachers and, consequently, a major cause of resignation from the profession. Most worrying in that regard as the Federal Minister for Education recently commented, was the fact that around one quarter of teacher graduates were no longer teaching within three to four years after graduating. One of the major reasons advanced for the exodus was a lack of learner discipline and related high levels of teacher stress (Koers, 2004: 317). The comments support preliminary results of a study currently under way in the state of Queensland showing novice teachers, those in the first year of teaching, suffer high levels of burnout. Additionally, a quarter of those surveyed indicated they would not, if given the choice and on the basis of what they knew at a later stage, select teaching as a career (Goddard & O'Brien, 2003).

In relation to the forms of discipline used in Australian schools, Slee (1995: 3) maintains that "... changes to school discipline policies in Australian public education represent incremental adaptations to traditional imperatives of organizational and social control". He goes on to

argue that the removal of corporal punishment in Australian schools has been "... replaced by more pervasive and intrusive patterns of surveillance and control" (Slee, 1995: 3). Most worrying, Slee (1995: 3) has argued that these policies are "behaviourist in conception and practice" and contribute to marginalising learners and are a leading cause of increased disruption in the classroom. As a consequence he maintains that the policies are putting larger numbers of learners at risk of educational failure.

Research carried out by Rigby (1996) and Rigby and Slee (1998), demonstrates the serious effects of all forms of bullying including physical and psychological harm. Of great concern, moreover, it was the reality that some victims of bullying are so traumatised that they consider self-harm and in some instance even suicide (Hasan, 1995). It has also been demonstrated that many learners who are bullies at school go on to become bullies in the workplace. According to Rigby (2001: 4-5), many victims of bullying remain victims of bullying once they leave school.

(a) Causes of learner misbehaviour in Australian schools

It was well recognised that in Australian schools many learners are, on the other hand, more assertive and openly aggressive or, on the other hand, more apathetic than might have been the case in earlier decades (Cope, 2002). In essence schools have to confront a radically changing youth culture and this is culture which is largely in strong contrast to the work ethic existing in the schools they attend.

Again, learner apathy and poor discipline in schools were a result of the different lives that learners lead outside the school with access to computers, television, and the exhilarating pace of life in their communities compared to what they frequently see as the drudgery of schooling. In relation to assertive, challenging or even aggressive behaviour, it can be argued that learners now demand a range of rights not formerly accorded them including the right to be heard or the right to freedom of speech, whether written or oral. When these demands are not met, learners become more strident and vociferous in their approach.

A further cause of discipline problems in school was traced to the poor example set by some of the “heroes” and some of the leaders in the community. In the sporting events around Australia, too many “heroes” of learners provide poor role models as they abuse both codes of practice as well as opposition players. In addition learners are too often subjected to examples of political, business and church leaders engaging in unethical and at times criminal activities. There were also wider social and economic reasons as to why a learner might have become a discipline problem including home conditions, personality disorders, and drug and alcohol problems. Slee (1995) and Cope (2002) perceived that many of the problems revolve around inappropriate curricula which are put in place but which do not reflect the needs of learners. Furthermore, school organisations were, in many instances, outdated and did not match contemporary learning and organisational theories.

(b) Management of learner misbehaviour in Australia

(i) Corporal punishment

It has to be recognised that learner misbehaviour has always been, and likely always will be, a reality in the life of schools, and teachers have to work out strategies that will alleviate the problem as much as is possible. Corporal punishment as a means of controlling learner misbehaviour is largely prohibited in government schools by State and Territory legislation. For example, in the state of Queensland, an amendment to the Education (General Provisions) act of 1989 prohibits the use of corporal punishment in government schools. Nonetheless, in some jurisdictions corporal punishment was still permissible, provided excessive force was not used. The overwhelming evidence was, however, that corporal punishment was seldom used as a means of addressing learner discipline.

Slee (1995: 40) noted that one reason for the use of physical punishment of learners as being the culture of isolation that surrounds teachers in the classroom- a culture which has worked to discourage them from admitting to any inadequacies they might have in maintaining control over learners. Also as Slee (1995: 40) noted, corporal punishment at school often complements that of the home and so school leaders and classroom teachers may have felt reasonably comfortable in its use.

(ii) Exclusion

As Corporal punishment has become unlawful in most school settings in Australia, teachers have had to look to other methods of ensuring appropriate standards of learner behaviour. Most Australian education authorities have passed regulations providing principals with the power to exclude misbehaving learners from their school. That power includes suspension and in worst case scenarios; expulsion. There were restrictions on the number of days for which a principal could suspend a learner and any expulsion was at the discretion of the education authority itself.

As with the question of the efficacy of corporal punishment, there was considerable debate over how effective excluding a learner from the school setting was (Dettman, 1972, Cahoon, 1989, Pyke, 1993, Slee, 1995). Suspension from school has commonly had the major objective of removing an offending learner from the classroom and thus allowing the teacher to get on with the lesson in hand. It also provides an opportunity to require parents to be involved in any review of a learner's behaviour problems and it can be used as a mechanism for punishing unacceptable behaviour.

In Australia, the power to exclude a learner from a government school is established by legislative provision while that of independent or non-government schools is largely contained within the provisions of the contract existing between the school, the parents and the learner. Regardless of the ongoing debate into the effectiveness of exclusion practices, it is required that all schools have a system in place that will ensure every learner who is being considered for exclusion is given a fair hearing.

Steward and Knott (2002: 135) note that the three major issues of, "the nature of the power to exclude, procedural fairness and equal opportunity laws" need to be considered when there is a possibility of a learner being excluded. A power to exclude involves the principal actually knowing he or she has the legal power to carry out the exclusion as well as the period for which exclusion may be given. Steward and Knott (2002: 136) pointed out that it is necessary for the reason for any exclusion to be legally sound. One other issue of considerable

importance for schools' legal well-being concerns the adherence to procedural requirements that are necessary to ensure that any decision taken is a valid one.

(iii)Detention

In relation to detention, certain restrictions are imposed on schools as to when this might be exercised (i.e. before school, during morning tea or lunch recess or after school). Some schools, mainly in the independent sector even have learners carry out detention at weekends. While this has disadvantages such as the teacher having to be present, it also has the distinct advantage of emphasising to parents that their child has been behaving inappropriately and the detention serves to involve the parents in the reformatory process.

(iv)Moral development

An important aspect of behaviour is that it needs to be taught to learners as it cannot be taken for granted they will automatically behave as a teacher might wish. Seen in this light, schools need to think in terms of behaviour development of the learner and not simply in terms of behaviour management. In terms of Kohlberg's theory of moral development teachers should aim to assist learners' progression from the pre-conventional stage of moral development-with its concentration on the self and punitive authoritarian discipline strategies-to the conventional where empathy for, and the rights of others are emphasised. At this level of moral development working together serves the purpose of emphasising the point that others have rights and needs and that these can be met in classrooms and community settings.

Ideally, behaviour strategies should have the objective of developing learners' moral behaviour to Kohlberg's post-conventional level that is based on principled behaviour and abstract principles. It is a level, seldom reached, that emphasises universally applied principles and values rather than mechanically following rules without necessarily realising the underlying purpose for them.

In essence, moral development is achieved in schools by teachers modelling appropriate behaviour and by having school-behaviour management plans based on similar principles. In

reality, most schools exhibit values and beliefs that are a mix of conventional behavioural patterns and it would be inconsistent, in terms of Kohlberg's theories of moral development for teachers to exhibit pre-conventional behaviour such as anger, humiliation, embarrassment, and arbitrary or illogical punishment.

2.4.4 Classroom discipline as a management tool in Nigeria

School discipline is an essential element in school administration. This is because discipline is a mode of life in accordance with laid down rules of the society to which all members must confirm, and the violation of which are questionable and also disciplined. It is seen as a process of training and learning that foster growth and development (Imaquezor, 1997). The aim of discipline is therefore, to help the individual to be well adjusted, happy and useful to his society. The doctrine of school discipline according to Nolte (1980) and Barrell (1978) is based on the concept of "loco parentis" which allows school authorities full responsibility for children's upbringing, the right of discipline and control.

In Nigerian law, the human right principles which also apply to learners as citizen of the country are prescribed in section 30-40 of the 1979 constitution. For in the infringement of the rights of the individuals, unless such practices are proved reasonable and justifiable in the eyes of the law, the individual may disagree and challenge disciplinary measures. Due to the peculiar nature of the school, there are many areas a teacher has to conduct disciplinary matters. The rules and regulations are thus made to cover many grounds affecting the student, school attendance, use and misuse of school property, student to student relationship, student to teacher relationship, class regulations and test/examination.

A teacher involved in handling any of the above disciplinary matters must do it within the limit of the law. To do this, three guidelines are given. These are that (i) the teacher must adopt the appropriate code of conduct when dealing with the student. (ii) the method adopted to ensure discipline, must be authorized by the Ministry of Education. (iii) the action of the teacher must be protected by the vicarious liability, that is, he is working within the scope of his employment.

Punishment to learners' discipline problems in Nigerian schools

The administration of punishment cannot be ruled out in the control and discipline of student. The right and authority of a teacher to inflict punishment on learners for offences, who breach school rules and regulations, is enhanced by section 34, subsection (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) which specifies people's right to personal liberty, and instances in which a person who has not attained the age of eighteen may be deprived of his/her right to personal liberty, specifically, for educative and welfare purposes. However, punishment must be reasonable and properly meted out to the student on account of the offence committed, it should be moderate and commensurate with the offence committed.

Although, it has been emphasized that school authorities have the right to punish learners for breach of school regulations, the administration of punishment that entails physical chastisement must not be inflicted in such a way or with such force as may be considered sadistic, cruel or excessive. While some Nigerian parents, teachers and school administrators favour the use of corporal punishment, others are strongly opposed to its use in schools. Peretomode (1992) made the following points in support of corporal punishment: (i) some learners only respond to corporal punishment. (b) corporal punishment is effective because it makes learners think twice before committing the same offence and (iii) the use of physical punishment can be a deterrent to other learners who might violate a rule in the absence of such punishment.

On the other hand Peretomode (1992) also opposed corporal punishment based on the following reasons, it is cruel and inhuman, unreasonable corporal punishment is too difficult to prove in court and corporal punishment holds considerable potential for child abuse.

Application of corporal punishment by teachers to learners' indiscipline

According to (Zindi, 1995), a teacher has authority to corporally punish a pupil even when his/her parent objects to that type of punishment, unless the parent proffers convincing reason. A teacher's authority stems from any of the following: parental delegation, necessity, preservation of discipline, government's duty, and public duty. In a State where corporal

punishment is statutorily prohibited, a teacher's authority to inflict corporal punishment is at an end (Zindi, 1995). In secondary schools, the range of permissible punishment is at present very broad in Nigeria, ranging from expulsion, suspension and exclusion, to corporal punishment. For ages, the infliction of corporal punishment on recalcitrant children has been an accepted method of promoting good behaviour and instilling notions of responsibility and decorum into the mischievous heads of school children.

Most schools have regulations which prescribe rules on who may inflict corporal punishment, the number of licks that may be administered, the need to keep a record of it in a register, and perhaps a requirement that the pupil's parent should be informed promptly. For example, regulation 3(1)(m) of the Schools and Institutions (Records) Regulations made under the Education Law of Oyo State Provides as follows:

A corporal punishment book in which shall be entered by the headmaster or teacher authorized by the headmaster, the date of all such punishment awarded, the nature of the offence and punishment, the name of the teacher administering the punishment and the name of the pupil. Such corporal punishment shall be kept to the minimum and shall be administered only by the headmaster, or teacher authorized by the headmaster, such authorization is to be entered in the log book: provided that no female pupil shall receive corporal punishment from a male teacher.

Suspension and expulsion of learners

In Nigeria, pupils should be given a fair hearing prior to suspension or expulsion. It is recommended that parents are invited to the disciplinary committee hearing if the sanction of expulsion is contemplated. There should be a right to appeal to a higher person or body. A principal or headmaster is at liberty to inform the entire student body the reason for the suspension or expulsion if it will have a deterrent effect on them.

Exclusion

Exclusion means that a pupil who infracts school rules may be asked to have limited contact with other pupils in the school. He/she may be permitted to enter the school premises solely to write an internal or external examination while he/she remains barred from receiving lessons or participating in other school activities. Without attempting an exhaustive list, the following can be grounds for suspension, expulsion or exclusion: truancy, tardiness, insubordination to teachers, insulting a teacher, talking back, swearing at a teacher, hitting a teacher, cursing or calling other learners bad names, fighting with another learner, inattentiveness in class, going out of school premises without permission, smoking, use of drugs or alcohol, refusal to stay for detention, refusal to clean the grounds as ordered, failure to maintain silence, lack of civility, failure to adhere to time schedules and destruction of school property.

Teacher exclusion or disempowerment

Nigerian teachers insinuated that the reason for the exponential growth of cases of learner misconduct is that school regulations are not founded on teachers' strategies for disciplining children. They claim that child discipline is an integral part of child socialization and that in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, it is not the responsibility of a lone person/institution. They also lamented that they are excluded in matters of disciplining a learner.

According to these teachers, the corporal punishment, suspension and expulsion regulations are a scheme which strips off their rightful authority over learners (Zindi, 1995). They claim that these regulations contravene the cultural practices of child upbringing where every adult in a society was regarded as a parent and had the right to discipline any child as he/she sees fit. Each and every teacher, as a parent, in-loco-parentis would have been given the privilege of moulding learners' characters into that of desirable citizenry. This, they believe, would be a successful approach to learners' discipline. They also complain that the Ministry of Education is not giving them enough support especially in cases of suspension and expulsion. Although only the school head is allowed to administer corporal punishment, most teachers ignore this regulation. Infact, teachers complain that they are rarely respected by parents and

if it happens that they punish learners, their parents would come to reprimand them even in the presence of the learners.

2.5 DISCIPLINE AS A MANAGEMENT TOOL IN SCHOOL CLASSROOM

Discipline continues to be one of the most puzzling and frustrating problems confronting educators today, more so than ever before. This assertion is confirmed by Charles (2002) who says that a surprising number of educators suffer stress and leave the profession because of learner misbehaviour and many of those who remain are asking for help. This is also confirmed by a research that was commissioned for educator support in Scotland (Finlayson, 2002), which found that the main cause of educator stress was learner misbehaviour. The reality of the matter is that while most educators are struggling to deal with learner misbehaviour, there are some educators who are able to establish discipline in their classrooms. The then minister of education, Naledi Pandor (2006), also acknowledges that whilst many educators are struggling in terms of establishing discipline, there are some educators who are coping. “We should also acknowledge that not all schools are problem schools. Our tribute must go to the thousands of teachers who have created empowering and caring schools in thousands of communities through the country” (Daily Dispatch, 28 November 2006).

Learner misconduct in South African schools should not be underestimated. Expressing her concern with regard to the seriousness of learner misconduct, the then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, said that if we allow violence, abuse and drugs to become a familiar and accepted part of schooling, our future is lost. If we dither and hide behind our rights-based laws, then we merely confirm that rights protect abusers and not the dignity of all (South African Government Information, 21 November 2006).

2.5.1 The meaning of the word “discipline”

Discipline in the classroom context is perceived differently by individual educators in schools. Some perceived it as the formation of the moral character, others perceived it as

control over learners, and also some perceived it as a preventive and corrective measure, as self-discipline, whereas others understand it more narrowly as punishment.

Rossouw (2003) sees discipline as the formation of moral character. He thus holds that discipline should equip the learner and help him to be prepared to act as a responsible and effective member of a society. His assertion is supported by Oosthuizen, Roux & Van der Walt (2003), who say that discipline should be prospective in the sense that it should enable a learner to become an effective and well-behaved future functionary in society. Oosthuizen, et al., (2003) define discipline as the action by which an educator calls a learner to order and to self-discipline thinking with the purpose of instilling in the latter a sober and balanced state of mind and self-control, enabling the latter to become fully equipped for his calling in life and for meaningful existence within the constraints of acceptable behavioural codes in his or her particular environment. Charles (2002) combines prevention, control and correction in his definition of discipline. Thus, he says that discipline is intended to prevent, suppress and direct misbehaviour. Foucault (1997) sees discipline as control and suppression and thus describes discipline as the specific technique of power that regards individuals both as instruments of its exercise. Foucault's argument is that discipline creates "docile bodies (Foucault, 1997). He therefore maintains that to construct docile bodies, the disciplinary institutions must be able to constantly observe and record the bodies they control and ensure the internalization of the disciplinary individuality within the bodies being controlled.

Charles (2002) sees discipline as inner control. He maintains that the goal of discipline is to reduce the need for educator intervention over time by helping learners become self-disciplined and are thus able to control their behaviour appropriately. He says that when educators employ various discipline techniques, they hope not only that misbehaviour will cease but that learners will further internalize self-discipline and display it in the classroom and elsewhere. Charles (2002) supports Dreikurs, Grunwald & Pepper (1982) and states that discipline is an inner process, an integrated part of one's values. It is imperative, however, to note that in the context of South African schooling discipline is often understood more narrowly as punishment and as a result many mistakenly equate discipline with punishment. Dreikurs et al., (1982) points out that most people, educators and parents alike, use the word "discipline" to mean control through punitive measures. "To people it signifies physical

punishment, to others, rigid control of rules and regulations and autocratic authority” asserts Drekers et al., (1982: 80).

The findings in this study confirmed that educators attach different meanings to the word “discipline”. It became evident that to some educators discipline is synonymous to control through punitive measures, to others, it is synonymous with the development of moral character and it is thus perceived as the ability to behave responsibly. To some educators, discipline remains synonymous with corporal punishment, whereas to other educators it implies self-discipline.

2.5.2 Discipline challenges

Most educators are struggling to find alternatives that will enable them to feel in control of the learners they teach, as a result they are suffering from stress and some consider leaving teaching because of difficulties in dealing with learner misbehaviour. Finlayson (2002) confirms that the main cause of educators’ stress is learner misbehaviour. One cannot help but marry this struggle with the educators’ lack of knowledge and skills to establish discipline in their classrooms. It is believed that most educators have not received formal training with regard to the discipline strategies and their application as recommended by the Department of Education.

Some learners are not cooperative towards their educators and turn to violent and aggressive behaviour, smoke dagga and carry dangerous weapons. This confirms what is expressed by Flannery (2005) where he mentions that learners constantly disrespect, disrupt and demean. “Learners verbally assault educators regularly. They steal, cheat, lie, and vandalize, use cell phones in class and keep iPod earphones dangling from their ears”, argues Flannery (2005: 22). Furthering his argument, he says that many learners come to school with little regard for rules. “They’re used to getting their own way,” Flannery maintains. In this way educators do not have a cultural foundation to build upon. This also confirms Bateman’s (Pretoria News, 28 May 2007) report that learners carry knives and fire arms, verbally abuse and threaten their educators.

It was also revealed that some educators still see corporal punishment as a necessary classroom tool. The then Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor (Department of Education, 2007) acknowledged that corporal punishment is regrettably still practiced in many schools and stressed that the use of corporal punishment is in direct contravention of the law. It is also crucial to note that the educators who never relied on corporal punishment as a means to establish discipline are not facing as many challenges as those who relied solely on corporal punishment.

Another challenge is that most parents of learners who are truant are not supportive. Schools are not getting 100% support from parents with regard to learner behaviour management. This confirms Holford's (2006) argument that not all parents respond positively on receiving reports that their children have been corrected for misbehaviour.

Generally educators are finding it difficult to establish discipline in their classrooms. The struggle is more with some educators than with others. Those who have never relied on corporal punishment seem to be coping whereas those who have relied on it feel frustrated by the new system of education. The new curriculums in schools, as well as the outcome-based education approach are also cited as contributing to the discipline challenges. However, some educators are being creative and one school has made a great effort to put in place a point system that enables educators to establish some kind of discipline.

2.5.3 Discipline strategies employed by educators in their classrooms

It is important to note that strategies that are employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom will be based on the knowledge, skills, attitude and values that they acquired in one way or another. Before unpacking the strategies that are being employed by educators to establish discipline as articulated by different researchers, it is essential to outline the major models of classroom management from which these different discipline strategies that are employed by educators emanate.

A foundation from which educators make classroom management decisions and respond to issues of learner misbehaviour is essential to creating well disciplined schools. In order to

achieve that, Malmgren, Bervely & Peter (2005) urge educators to develop a cohesive and thoughtfully constructed personal philosophy of classroom management, which will provide them with the foundation from which their classroom management decisions and their responses to learner misbehaviour are based. Thus the following models of classroom management are discussed: assertive discipline, logical consequences and teacher effectiveness training. These three models are elaborated on in the following paragraphs.

(i) Assertive discipline

According to Charles (2002: 35), assertive discipline focuses primarily on rewards and punishment. The assertive discipline model as described by both Charles (2002) and Malmgren, et al., (2005), involves a high level of educator control in the classroom, as the educators control their classroom in a firm manner. Essentially, the core of this approach is developing a clear classroom discipline plan that consists of rules which learners must follow at all times, positive recognition that learners will receive for following the rules and consequences that result when learners choose not to follow the rules. Edward (2000) also confirms that basically assertive discipline involves establishing rules, punishing learners who violate rules and rewarding learners for good behaviour.

Classroom discipline strategies that are used by educators in their classrooms are based on the assertive model of classroom management and as such, discipline strategies are control-oriented. Although classroom rules are determined and agreed upon with learners, the consequence of breaking the rules is punishment of some sort. This will vary from educator to educator. It could be time-out, detention, cleaning up after school, ordering the learner to stand at a corner in the classroom and so on. Basically educators use punishment to establish discipline in their classroom and use rewards to encourage good behaviour.

(ii) Logical consequences

This model of classroom management is based on the notion that learners' misbehaviour is an outgrowth of their unmet needs. Thus, one of the underlying assumptions of this model is that all learners desire and need social recognition (Malmgren et al., 2005). According to

Dreikurs, et al., (1982), when the learners' need for social recognition is not fulfilled, learners tend to adopt the following four mistaken goals without being aware of them, namely: to gain undue attention, to seek power, to seek revenge or to get even and to display inadequacy.

Dreikurs et al., (1982, in Charles, 2002) encourages educators to learn to identify mistaken goals and to deal with them. He suggests that when educators see evidence that learners are pursuing mistaken goals, they should in a friendly and non-threatening manner point out the fact by identifying the mistaken goal and discussing the faulty logic involved with the learners. He strongly discourages the use of punishment because he says it has many bad side effects and suggests that it should be replaced with application of logic consequences agreed to with the class (Charles, 2002:29).

According to Charles (2002:29), consequences are not logical. For example, with the application of the demerit system learners get points which ultimately lead to detention. In this way detention becomes the ultimate consequence, irrespective of the kind of misbehaviour. This is a big concern because the learners will not be able to connect the consequence with the misbehaviour since the learner sits for detention long after the misbehaviour was demonstrated. Hence the educators' concern is that a discipline measure such as detention does not seem to help the situation. Learners sit through one detention after the other, but most learner behaviour does not change. The above mentioned authors revealed that schools utilizing one discipline system as the main discipline strategy in the classrooms have some form of consistency in the application of such a system rather than a school wherein there is no agreed upon discipline strategy and as a result educators are using different strategies depending on their experience and discretion. A disturbing finding was that some educators use certain discipline strategies even when they are not convinced that they will be effective. Also, it was discovered that some educators refrain from using other forms of punishment but use harsh abusive verbal expressions that are emotionally destructive to the learners.

(iii) Teacher effectiveness training

Gordon (1989) emphasizes the importance of teaching learners to regulate and manage their own behaviour rather than employing power-based or control-oriented strategies. He maintains that these control-type strategies do not actually influence learners but only coerce or compel them. He believes that such strategies more often than not create new problems that range from rebellion to withdrawal, and that praise and reward do little to change learner behaviour for the better (Charles: 2002). He therefore urges educators to strive for cooperation with learners, while avoiding power punishment, praise and reward.

In his teachings, Gordon (1989, in Charles 2002: 87) maintains that non-controlling strategies of behaviour change are available for educators in order to influence learners to behave properly. He asserts that it is counterproductive for educators to use authoritative power or rewards and punishments to control learners.

Gordon (1989) articulates his views on discipline and emphasizes that the only effective discipline is self-control that occurs internally and he therefore urges educators to renounce external control by rewards and punishment. Gordon (1989, as cited in Charles 2002), asserts that educators need to assist learners and to teach them how to attain self-control. He further asserts that in order to teach learners to control their own behaviour and to become self-reliant in making positive decisions, educators must first give up their “controlling” power over learners. Thus Gordon believes that this occurs best in classrooms when learners are able to use their inner sense of self-control.

Gordon (1989) states that rewards and punishments are used by educators to control learners. As a result of the use of control-oriented strategies, educators are not always successful in establishing discipline. Although some educators manage to keep learner misbehaviour within tolerable limits, other educators are not managing at all. Gordon (1989: 81) asserts that when control-oriented strategies are used to establish classroom discipline, learners engage in various coping mechanisms in a quest to achieve some degree of autonomy or at least to make life more miserable for those trying to coerce them. In other words, learners who have

been coerced usually show very little self-control when they are outside the influence of the controller.

2.6 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Porteus et al., (2001: 59) refer to classroom management as a democratic process in which rules are made with special emphasis on the importance of participation and involvement in the thinking and decision-making processes within a classroom. Educators facilitate a participative process with learners and parents to establish the “rules” and the consequences of good and bad behaviour. The aforementioned authors further state that children, like most people, are more likely to understand, respect and follow principles that they helped to create. Through this process of participation, they build their own capacity for decision-making, community building and responsibility. The management of discipline therefore requires that educators make learners feel emotionally comfortable and physically safe so that they can develop intrinsic discipline and accountability for their actions (Charles, 2002: 13).

Cooper et al., (1977) define classroom management as a set of teaching behaviours by which the teacher establishes and maintains conditions that enable learners to learn efficiently. It is also defined as a set of teaching behaviours by which the teacher establishes and maintains order in the classroom. Furthermore classroom management is defined as a set of teaching behaviours by which the teacher enables learners to do what they want to do when they want to do it. It is additionally described as a set of teaching behaviours by which the teacher promotes appropriate student behaviour and eliminates inappropriate student behaviour. Finally, it is described as a set of teaching behaviours by which the teacher develops good interpersonal relationship and a positive socio-emotional climate.

2.6.1 Managing discipline at school

It is an accepted fact that discipline problems will always exist for as long as there are learners. It is thus important that discipline at school be managed. In this regard, it is important to consider the components of school discipline. To this end, many views exist about what constitutes classroom discipline, school wide or whole school discipline and

individual learner discipline (cf. cotton, 2001; Putman, Handler & Luiselli, 2003; Florida Department of Education Office of School Improvement; undated). Managing discipline in the sense of these discipline components require the creation of school environments that address these three components. While this can be frustrating for schools that seek to engage in “on the spot” quick-fix solutions, it must be noted that creating such a climate demands a conscientious effort. A whole school discipline management approach is thus advocated for this purpose.

The whole school approach to school discipline moves from the premise that identifies the course of misbehaviour and focuses on addressing them and essentially advocated dealing with existing discipline problems while engendering an atmosphere of prevention (cf. Putman et al., 2003). In this regard, Centre on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Support (2004: 10) advocates a preventive and positive approach to managing existing discipline problems to one that is reactive and aversive. Where schools must work for and with all learners, since every child entering school needs behaviour support., Give priority to empirically validated procedures and system that have demonstrated effectiveness, efficiency and relevance, integrated academic and behavioural success for all learners. Emphasize prevention in established and maintaining safe and supportive school climates. Expand the use of effective practices and systems to district, regional and to state levels. Increase collaboration among multiple community support systems (education, juvenile, community mental health, family, and medical system). Build a school environment where team building and problem solving skills are expected, taught and reinforced.

The whole school approach to discipline entails what other writers refer to as a school-wide positive behavioural support, which according to Stormont, Lewis and Beckner (2005), integrates behavioural sciences, practical interventions, social values and a systems perspective. This approach, as pointed out by Center on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (2004: 10) advocates a systems approach to whole school discipline, which considers the school as the basic “unit of analysis” or “point of influence or action” and how the collective actions of individuals within the school contribute to how the school is characterised. This is precisely because the school as an organisation does not behave, individuals within the organisation engage in various behaviours. The school comprises of a

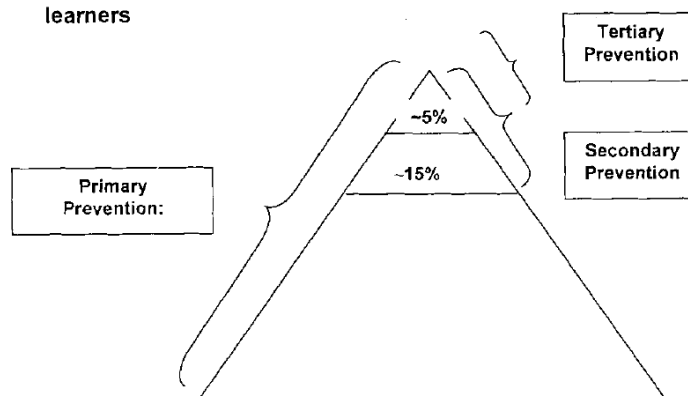
group of individuals who behave together to achieve a common goal and therefore needs systems to support the collective use of best practices by individuals within the organisation.

Thus, the school-wide positive behaviour support approach gives priority to the establishment of a system that supports the adoption and durable implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures and focuses on the interactive and self-checking process of organisational correction and improvement around four key elements namely (Center on Positive Behavioural and Supports, 2004: 10):

- Outcomes: academic and behaviour targets that are endorsed and emphasized by learners, families, and educators.
- Practices: interventions and strategies that are evidence based.
- Data: information that is used to identify status, need for change, and effects of interventions.
- Systems: supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of the practices of the approach.

It is clear therefore that a school-wide positive behaviour support approach provides a continuum of support for all learners, which entails primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention (see figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 A continuum of school-wide positive behaviour support for all learners



(Adapted from Centre on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports, (2004:17).

As illustrated in fig 2.1 above, primary prevention focuses on (Centre on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Support, 2004:18): preventing the development of new cases of problem behaviours by focusing on all learners and staff across all settings (school-wide, classroom and non-classroom/non-instruction settings). Secondary prevention focuses on reducing the number of existing cases of problem behaviours by establishing efficient and rapid responses to problem behaviour. Tertiary prevention focuses on reducing the intensity and/or complexity of existing cases of problem behaviours that are resistant to primary and secondary prevention efforts.

This approach therefore focuses on (Centre on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports, (2004:17) :

- Removing antecedent or preceding factors that prompt, trigger, or occasion problem behaviour in children and undesirable intervention practices.
- Adding antecedent or preceding factors that prompt, trigger, or occasion appropriate behaviour and desirable intervention practices.
- Removing consequences or following factors that maintain and strengthen occurrences of problem behaviour and undesirable intervention practices.
- Adding consequences or following factors that maintain and strengthen occurrences of appropriate behaviours and desirable intervention practice.
- Arranging environments so that opportunities are maximized to teach and practice appropriate behaviour and desirable intervention practices.

Centre on Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (2004:26) stresses that the effectiveness of the implementation of the school-wide positive behaviour support is related to the extent that a common vision and a set of principles are used to guide decision-making and implementation efforts and that the goals and capacity building elements of this approach are found on five major constructs or foundational concepts:

- (a) prevention, which refers to organizing learning and teaching environments to prevent the development of new problems behaviours, worsening of existing problem behaviours and triggering of problems behaviours.

- (b) whole school, which refers to addressing the behaviour support needs of all members (for example, learners, staff, family members, classified staff and all setting of a school community);
- (c) evidence-based practices, which refer to interventions, strategies and techniques that have empirical evidence in terms of their effectiveness, efficiency, relevance and durability;
- (d) teaming, which refers to working as a cohesive, integrated, and representative collection of individuals who lead the system change and implementation process; and
- (e) Evaluation, which refers to the regular and systematic self-improvement action planning process.

2.7 DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS

In 1996 the South African Schools Act 84 banned the use of corporal punishment in all South African Schools (Sonn, 1999: 2). As a result, this was met with mixed reaction. Some educators and parents were very positive about it and felt that this act merely reflected the Constitution, which stated that: “No person shall be subjected to torture of any kind, nor shall any person be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way”. Others were very concerned in that they felt that there were no viable alternatives to corporal punishment. Oosthuizen (2002: 4) states that the abolition of corporal punishment in South African schools has left a gap which cannot be filled and this has led to all kinds of discipline problems in schools. According to Rodgers (1994: 151), these discipline problems refer to disruptive behaviour that affects the fundamental rights of the learner to feel safe and to be treated with respect in the learning environment. In the year 2000, a national project on discipline in South African schools was undertaken and many of the results were incorporated in the booklet titled, *Alternative to Corporal Punishment: the learning experience*. This booklet was distributed to all schools in South Africa in 2001, containing guidelines for dealing with alternatives to corporal punishment in an effort to combat the fast-escalating problems with discipline, as well as examples of disciplinary action for dealing with misconduct, ranging from verbal warning and community service to suspension from all school activities. However, as the headline of the newspaper Beeld (19 November year?)

stated: “Punishment guide not helping much with discipline – wonderful theories not always practical (Rademeyer 2001).

In addition to this, in 1998 Outcome-based Education (OBE) was introduced in South African schools which was a new curriculum altogether. One of the fundamental aspects of OBE and the new ‘Curriculum 2005’ was group work whereby the educator’s focus and attention is spread across the classroom to as many as ten groups of six learners. As a result, educators were complaining that the introduction of group work has exacerbated the disciplinary problems. The combination of these factors has led to a situation where it is felt that discipline has collapsed in many South African schools (Joubert & Prinsloo, 1999: 55). Based on the above mentioned facts, it is clear that the proposed measures by the Department of Education were wholly inadequate.

2.8 FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNER’S VIEWS

Misbehaviour is often a symptom of underlying problems. Adults need to find out the contributing causes and the way in which they manifest themselves in external and internal noncompliance. According to (Edwards & Daire, 2006, Morrison et al, 2001), this include home environment and parenting style, peer group association, stage of development, societal expectations or cultural influence, and previous experiences with authority figures, learner behaviour and teacher response to that behaviour.

Of equal importance is to examine communication styles of interested parties and to decide what the effects of unclear expectations are when examining causes of misbehaviour or non-compliance (Ruin, 2004: 89). Rubin offered a set of guidelines for educators in developing a positive school climate and implementing effective discipline plans. The guide includes the following: (a) establish a school standard, (b) develop a forum for community involvement, (c) provide staff development, (d) examine curriculum, (e) establish a support and referral system for a variety of stakeholder needs, (f) develop appropriate school and class discipline practices, and (g) employ effective instructional practices.

2.9 DISCIPLINE MEASURES

In a scholastic environment, the word discipline refers to learning, regulated scholarship, guidance and orderliness (Mabeba & Prinsloo in Pinaar 2003: 262). According to the Oxford Dictionary (2002: 250), the word discipline means using a system of punishment that aims at producing obedience to rules.

The Department of Education (2000: 9) makes a valid distinction between discipline and punishment. The booklet states that discipline relies on constructive, corrective, rights-based, positive educative practices and not punishment or specific disciplinary actions, which are perceived as punitive, destructive and negative. According to the Department of Education (2000), disciplinary measures are divided into two categories – firstly those associated with discipline and followed by those associated with punishment.

2.9.1 Discipline

According to the Department of Education (2000: 12), Schulze & Dzivhani (2002: 125), the following factors relate specifically to the measures which the educator can utilise in the classroom in order to work proactively in terms of discipline and in order to avoid disciplinary measures: (a) being well prepared for lessons, (b) exercising self-discipline, (c) having extension work available, (d) involving learners in the initial establishment of classroom rules, (e) building positive relationship with learners and (f) being consistent in the application of the rules.

School policy: The code of conduct for the whole school must be drawn. Parents, learners as well as teachers, must be involved in the development of the Code of conduct. A disciplinary committee must also be formed as part of this process.

Classroom policy: According to the Department of education (2000: 20), Schulze & Dzivhani (2002: 118), a classroom policy which would include a code of conduct, indicating clearly expected behaviour could go a long way in

creating a more positive environment and therefore leading to better discipline.

Learner Representative Council (LRC): The LRC appears to be effective in maintaining discipline, possibly as a result of the fact that learners are elected by other learners to represent them.

School governing body: According to Van Wyk (2001: 200), members of this body are normally involved in dealing with serious matters of discipline such as suspension or expulsion.

Standard or grade tutor: A standard or grade tutor is an educator who is in charge of all the affairs of a certain grade, including disciplinary problems. If the problems are beyond the scope of the tutor, then the matter could be referred to a disciplinary committee (Van Wyk 2001: 200).

2.10 CAUSES OF LEARNER MISBEHAVIOUR

The Master Teacher (2003: x) presents discipline problems in schools as emanating from learner needs that are not satisfied and these basically have to do with learners themselves as people. These, according to The Master Teacher (2003: x) can be classified as primary and secondary needs and are explained thus:

(a) Primary causes of learner misbehaviour

These causes of learner misbehaviour emanate mainly from the following:

Attention (The Master Teacher, 2003: x), which relates to the fact that most children gain attention in school or at home in normal positive ways. However, some children feel that misbehaving is their best way to get attention and they are the ones who constantly speak out without permission in school, arrive late for class, or make strange noises in class, which forces educators' attention or make noises at the dinner table that force everyone to stop their conversation and pay attention. In this regard, McFarlane (2005: 47) reports that educators supply reasons such as overcrowded classrooms making it difficult for individual attention being paid to learners and lack of teaching and learning resources, infrastructure and educator shortage as contributory factor.

- Power (The Master Teacher, 2003:x), which relates to the need for power where learners with this need argue a lot and refuse to follow rules because they usually feel defeated if they do as they are told and think that they are losing if they do what adults want them to do. These learners are known as the defiant ones, the rule-breakers or bullies. In essence, they truly feel that lack of power lies behind all their troubles and that more would be the answer to all their problems.

- Revenge (The Master Teacher, 2003: xi), which relates to the fact that some learners find their places by being hated because failure has made them give up trying for attention and power. Unfortunately, they find personal satisfaction in being mean, vicious and violent and as such seek revenge against parents and other children or siblings in any way they can. These are usually the learners who write on desks in school, beat up other children or siblings, threaten younger children and vandalise property.

Self-confidence (The Master Teacher, 2003: xi), which relates to learners who honestly expect failure because they do not feel they have the ability to function in the classroom- but may feel completely adequate outside school or when they are supposed to be doing something connected with school. These learners frustrate educators and parents because they are often capable of handling their schoolwork successfully, but they do not and consequently use inability, real or assumed to escape participation. When they are supposed to be doing their homework they play and look for distractions instead and make excuses like “I couldn’t do it” or “I’m dumb”, such that no amount of parental encouragement seems to make a difference to them.

(b) Secondary causes of learner misbehaviour

Secondary causes of misbehaviour emanates from psychological needs that are also learnt. According to The Master Teacher (2003: xiii), secondary needs are a strong motivating force and learners will try very hard to meet these needs without misbehaving. However, if they cannot meet these needs in a good way, they will try negative ways or misbehave to meet them. The Master teacher (2003: xiv) presents these needs as follows:

- Gregariousness (The Master Teacher, 2003: xiv), which relate to learner's need to associate with a group and is strong in learners who really want to be part of a particular group at school or in the neighbourhood. This need, if unmet, also causes learners to be very upset if they are left out of a party, not chosen for a committee, not asked for input on family activities or if decisions are imposed on them with no explanations.

- Aggression (The Master Teacher, 2003: xiv), which relates to learners' need to assert themselves and failing which parents and educators may find themselves being forced into confrontations for no particular reason. It is therefore important to include learners in certain decisions, to involve them in planning activities and give them responsibility for choosing certain courses. Letting a child with strong aggression have some control will go a long way toward channelling this tendency in positive ways. This is because many children feel that they have no say in anything, that no one listens to them or lets them be in charge of anything, which for them, is a terrible and helpless feeling. The aggression need can often be met by just listening to and considering the learners' point of view.

- Affiliation (The Master Teacher, 2003: xiv), which relates to developing, maintaining, and strengthening associations with others. Some learners have a very strong need to be close to each other, but often they also have an intense desire to be close to the parents and they need someone in whom they can confide and trust thereby making them feel secure and special, and will do anything to have such an affiliation- with parents and educators, with other children or siblings and in school activities. This is how young people can end up in gangs or with other people they would rather not associate with. Affiliation is thus a normal drive to ward off loneliness and find the "you are a special person" affection.

- Inquisitiveness (The Teacher, 2003: xiv), which relates to the need to know what is going on and for some learners, is a driving force. Children are generally motivated by the need to know, which enhances positive behaviour and will help cut down on misbehaviour.

- Achievement (The Master Teacher, 2003: xv), which relates to the fact that all people have a need to succeed and need to be recognized for their success. Thus a great deal of misbehaviour results because some learners feel they cannot win at school or at home and the

only way they can get any recognition is through failure and whenever learners make an effort and they do not get recognition for their effort, they soon realise that they will get the same “reward” for doing nothing- so why bother to try?

- Power (The Master Teacher, 2003: xv), which relates to the fact that learners can express the need for power either positively or negatively, and for some children, power is an extremely strong need. Learners who cannot find a power base in the home or school may attempt to find it outside school, in gangs or other negative ways. Therefore, a sense of ownership is power and learners feel a sense of ownership when they are involved in shared decision making at home or at school.

- Status (The Master Teacher, 2003: xvi), which relates to the fact that everybody wants to be “somebody”. For some, this need is a driving force in their lives. Therefore, any dehumanizing effort or action by a parent or educator on a learner is a mistake and can lead to serious misbehaviour. Meeting this need means always making sure that learners know that they are recognised and their special qualities and talents are valued.

- Autonomy (The Master Teacher, 2003: xvii), which relates to the need to be the boss, to be independent and to have some control over one’s own life. Adults can help learners express this need by letting them make choices and set goals and by being sensitive to opportunities to fulfil, whenever the need learners have for autonomy arises.

The role of parental involvement is also cited as a factor in school discipline. This is the basis on which the South African Schools Act (SASA) mandates SGBs to develop codes of conduct for learners, and by virtue of the composition of the SGB in the secondary school, the development of such codes of conduct is an inclusive process that involves even learners. In this regard, it can be asserted that the problem of discipline in schools is at times aggravated by poor parental involvement especially because parents seem to reduce their commitments as their children get older and start secondary education (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003: 30-36).

This should however be understood in the context of barriers to parental involvement in schools. Among other barriers, parents may feel that what they may have to offer is unimportant and unappreciated, may also not believe that they have any knowledge that is of interest to the school. They may fear embarrassment because they may be illiterate or unable to speak English, which could make communication difficult if not impossible. Furthermore, they may also be embarrassed by memories of their own failure at school (LaBahn, 2002: 49). The writer's own experience attests to the difficulty of parental involvement. For instance, parents feel very uncomfortable when called to school to intervene on their children's lack of discipline. They normally try to cut the story short by asking educators to stop calling them and just apply corporal punishment. Parents argue that their parents were never called to school during their time as corporal punishment was used.

It seems that methods of maintaining discipline at schools are not always successful. The misbehaviour of children is common in all schools. Poor discipline management within a school can cause a more general breakdown in order. At times there are uprisings and violence against educators. Problems with schools discipline have also led to a reduction in a number of people wanting to become educators, especially in high schools or schools regarded as being difficult (Blandford, 2003: 5).

2.11 DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Before a discussion of school disciplinary practices affecting learner behaviour can begin, examination of the current state of behavioural trends in education must occur. Each organisation and management skills that ensure safety and order are a prerequisite for effective instruction. Order and discipline in the classroom can be ensured by a classroom policy that is jointly set by the educator and the learners. Effective rules and procedures for the classroom will lead to the smooth course of teaching /learning situations.

According to Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1997: 46), each organisation should have a policy which can serve as a guideline for the behaviour of the employees. Policy formulation is the management function whereby guidelines for behaviour are set, and according to which objectives can be realised. By means of a classroom policy, an educator can use rules and

procedures to regulate all aspects of the classroom environment and all the actions and behaviour within the classroom. The most important requirement of a policy is to give a clear guideline for all involved (i.e. the educator and learners).

2.11.1 Characteristics of a classroom policy

According to Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (2002: 50), a classroom policy is a means of accomplishing teaching and learning objectives. A good classroom policy must clearly reflect the objectives (long-term) and aims (short-term) for which the class is striving, be consistent, be flexible (it must be possible to adapt the policy when circumstances change), be put in writing and pinned up on a notice board in the classroom, be explained to learners (they must be familiar with its contents), be acceptable to the majority, facilitate decision-making about certain matters and make provision for class rules and procedures.

The same authors also alluded to the fact that classroom policy serves as a general guideline for behaviour in the classroom, and should include all aspects of classroom activities such as (a) teaching (b) learner behaviour (c) homework (d) learner leadership (e) parent involvement (f) finances (g) general matters such as tasks and (h) allocation, classroom decoration, the neatness of the classroom, respect for property.

2.11.2 Classroom rules and procedures

Classroom rules and procedures ensure that the classroom policy is carried out. Rules and procedures represent acceptable behaviour in the classroom. Rules indicate acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, while procedures indicate the way in which specific tasks or activities in the classroom should be carried out. Both authors, Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (2002: 52), provide some guidelines to be followed in drafting class rules and procedures, namely, (a) keep rules reasonable and necessary (b) keep rules consistent with instructional goals (c) keep the rules to a minimum (d) rules must be functional and practical (e) formulate rules positively (f) keep rules short and clear (g) the class rules must be clearly displayed on the notice board and (h) allow learners to take part in formulating the rules.

In addition, classroom rules should meet various legal requirements such as, they must not conflict with school policy, existing rules must be taken into account before new rules are made, constitutional requirements must be taken into account, rules should be in writing and given verbally to young learners who cannot yet read, rules should be applied consistently in an unprejudiced and fair manner and rules should always be discussed when they are announced to ensure that the learners understand them.

2.12 PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCIPLINARY PLANS

As with any plan or procedure, changes in knowledge and practice may not occur by simply creating opportunities for classroom management improvements Wren (2003: 43). This is true for learner behaviour as well as for the educator charged with setting behavioural expectations, specific policies and procedures, and rewards consequences. When examining the way in which educators dispense punishment and respond to learner misbehaviour, the guidelines of the school's discipline policies deserve consideration. Effective plans properly reflect the uniqueness of the learner population as well as the needs of the institution. The rationale of the plan needs buy-in from all stakeholders, while failure to admit limits of a given discipline plan directly affects those giving and receiving consequences or rewards. Therefore, the types of plans used in the participating schools, methods for implementation, and educator training will be examined to garner a better understanding of perceptual criteria's effect on effective discipline.

2.12.1 Types of plans

Selecting a proper discipline plan or changing an existing plan relies on the educator's and the educational organization's underlying beliefs, depending on the academic and behavioural expectation, the belief that a strategy adheres to pedagogical standard, Traynor (2003: 578). The feasibility of implementation, and the previous experience of the educator, different discipline plans may encourage or discourage learner's misbehaviour and the faculty's adherence to the plan itself Muscott et al., (2004: 19).

Cruickshank et al., (2002: 130), identify three main approaches to planning in the classroom. The three approaches differ considerably, but can be seen as being at the opposite ends of a

continuum. These three approaches are the process approach, the product approach and an outcomes-based approach.

The process approach

Planning done in this way is usually more ‘general’. The educator can see the advantages of providing certain learning experiences, but can only plan them in a general way, allowing for things that could happen to change what, when and how the learning experience will be conducted. This allows for more spontaneity and flexibility and learners are given an opportunity to influence the learning that is taking place.

The product approach

The other end of the continuum can be labelled the product approach. Educators who use this approach feel better when they have a detailed plan. They are willing to sacrifice some flexibility and spontaneity in order to feel more certain that learners are likely to gain some specific knowledge and insight. So, in contrast with the process approach, learning experiences are carefully structured to ensure that learners will succeed in reaching important set goals.

An outcomes-based approach

According to Jacobs, Guwe and Vakalisa (2004: 89), an outcomes-based approach to planning enables learners to develop a range of competencies that will serve them in good stead for the rest of their lives. It also provides educators with essential knowledge they need to guide learners in the right direction. Outcomes are ultimately guidelines that can lead learners to self-realisation, high achievement, learning satisfaction, emotional stability, enduring relationships and personal fulfilment. Jacobs et al., (2004: 89) define an outcome as the statement of a desired task, skill or set of behaviours that a learner should be able to demonstrate at the end of a learning experience and it is the ability to demonstrate, at the end of a learning experience, a predetermined task, skill or set of behaviours in a manner that involves understanding and truthfulness.

According to Jacobs et al. (2004: 93), outcomes-based education is structured around a hierarchical framework of long-term outcomes. The above mentioned authors further explain that long-term outcomes are necessary to set out the general purpose of education so that educators are aware of the ultimate goals towards which they must direct their learners. These outcomes are usually based on the 'image' of the kind of citizen the country wants to develop and include values such as a virtuous life, a sense of responsibility, critical thinking, the willingness to earn a living, service to others and a well-rounded personality. On the other hand, Jacobs et al. (2004: 94) state that learners and educators need short-term outcomes to be able to focus on something more precise, concrete, definite and attainable.

2.12.2 Implementation of disciplinary plan

Successful implementation of any plan relies on several components. First, as mentioned earlier, all plans require educator buy-in; otherwise, inconsistency and lack of follow-through undermine the intent of the plan. Second, the plan itself must incorporate practices and implementation strategies that are proven to create positive results (Utley et al. 2002: 47). Luiselli, Putnam, Handler and Feinberg (2005: 185) alluded to the fact that data and training must drive implementation. According to Shukla-Mehta and Albin (2003:53), an examination of learner behavioural patterns and the identification of the purpose and intent of behavioural choices results in the creation of proactive behavioural strategies. Prevention based on effectively anticipating behaviour choices proves more effective than a system of punishments or consequences. Third is examining the limits and barriers to success. These barriers include but are not limited to (a) the cost and organization of continuous faculty development and training, (b) accurately analyzing behaviour trends, and (c) encouraging and developing parental and learner involvement in decision making (Utley et al., 2002: 78).

Duke (2006: 4) explained the gaps in existing research on learner achievement and school improvement. The specific benefits of or detriments to learner achievement and learning remain undefined because of the continued application of multiple, simultaneously carried out interventions. Confidentiality measures designed to protect the learner and making data collection impossible often limit educational and behavioural change. Duke's writing

outlined the steps needed to improve intervention effects, which began with improving school leadership and modifying intervention programs to assist with more effective data collection.

2.12.3 Measuring and reporting disciplinary violation

Currently, little educational research exists explaining the effects of measuring and reporting disciplinary violations. Findings from business-related research (Appelbaum & Shapiro, 2006:5), suggested that organizations often increase the items measured when they begin to record and report particular outcomes formally. Appelbaum and Shapiro described the effects of deviant behaviour in the workplace as being characterized by absenteeism, lack of productivity and behaviours ranging from passive noncompliance to aggressive acts. Solutions for minimizing deviant behaviour included the use of equity theory, addressing employees' negative affectivity, and building social connectivity. Applications of these methods proved more effective than simply reporting deviant behaviours and giving consequences.

If this logic transfers into educational arena, assessing learners based on their discipline records would necessarily increase misbehaviour or noncompliance. The focus on misbehaviour, or measured item, would highlight and reinforce negative behaviours instead of providing opportunities for positive decision making. Using the same logic, behavioural choices would improve by measuring positive behaviours or compliance; however, the existing school structure could not realistically support a school-wide discipline plan designed to measure positive behaviour. Since a minimal percent of the total learner population has a discipline record, Mendez & Knoff (2003: 8), it is much more efficient to monitor negative behaviour.

Lapointe and Legault (2004: 9) offered an opposing but related view of disciplinary focus. They asserted that the use of discipline or punitive measures to curb misbehaviour results in short-term gains but fails to alter learner' behaviour strategies overall. According to Lapointe and Legault (2004: 12), if the focus were placed on increasing self-discipline, discipline trends would begin to show improvements in academic achievement as well as in the learning environment.

2.12.4 Teacher Training

The increase in number and severity of discipline infractions, or behaviour escalation (Shukla-Mehta & Albin, 2003: 43), depends heavily on the skill of the teacher and the degree to which learners experience academic achievement (Mazzotti & Higgins, 2006: 34, Walker-Dalhouse, 2005: 26, Kokkinos et al., 2004: 110, Tyler-Wood, Cereijo, & Pemberton, 2004: 58). Mazzotti and Higgins (2006: 63) described the increase likelihood of juvenile justice recidivism, for low-income learners in particular, if learners continue to experience academic failure. The authors praised the contributions well-trained faculty members made to increasing academic success and positive behavioural outcomes. According to Mazzotti and Higgins, by creating a positive learning environment, accurately assessing learner strength, and applying effective teaching strategies, teachers create a culture that supports positive learner growth, academically and behaviourally.

Walker-Dalhouse (2005: 75) recorded the Marva Collins method of classroom management implemented in a fourth-grade classroom plagued with behavioural violation. This method required developing positive relations between teacher and learner as well as learner-created goals related to behavioural outcomes. This included learner reflection using terminology from Collins' Creed, which is part of the method implemented, and other related literature, such as proverbs. Walker-Dalhouse's intervention resulted in minimal noncompliance, which supported the decision that teacher training and openness to alternative disciplinary methods enabled a more effective approach to classroom management.

Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, and Curran (2004: 36) discussed including culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) practices into teachers' repertoire of discipline strategies and stressed its importance. According to the authors, receiving information about learner demographics and culture increased the likelihood of cultural compatibility in the classroom as well as positive decision making. They further noted that teacher education programs did not address details of CRCM because of the multifaceted nature of culture, however, these programs served as orientations into the cultural development of educators.

Tyler-Wood et al. (2004: 45) examined the curriculum-based assessment (CBA) instructional technique, using a field-based study approach with 55 special education master's degree candidates as participants. Introducing CBA and giving instructions occurred during 12 class periods over a twelve-week period. Participating fourth-and fifth-grade learners met the state criteria for receipt of behavioural special education services. Independent tests show the lack of differences in number of referrals before the intervention. A paired test after the intervention suggests a significant decrease in referral numbers for the learners of teachers who used CBA. While the researchers identified limits when relying on referrals instead of firsthand observations of misbehaviour, findings highlight the positive effects of teacher training on learner behaviour.

Escalation occurs more often in settings where the adult lacks proper training in prevention and intervention strategies. As Kalb and Loeber (2003:265) explained, adults not knowing the cause of misbehaviour may indicate a lack in training. This training, if compliance is the goal, must consider learners' culture and the effect of previous experiences on learning and behavioural decision making at school (Utley et al., 2002: 62). Failure to receive proper training often results in the use of authoritarian management techniques and encourages power struggles and escalation of behavioural violations (Sobel & Taylor, 2006: 37, Kokkinos et al.,2003: 38, Traynor, 2003: 54, Skiba et al., et al., 2002: 45).

Sobel and Taylor (2005: 47) analyzed the results of a yearlong study involving 62 pre-service teachers who took part in the Professional Development School (PDS). Results show the benefits of pre-service exposure to cultural diversity in the classroom as well as the combined focus on theory and practice for applying effective teaching and classroom management techniques. The overwhelming conclusion by the pre-service teachers highlights the importance of teaching through observation and practice. The researchers offered recommendations related to continuing mentoring to promote the effective application of culturally responsive teaching and management strategies.

Sobel and Taylor (2006: 6) asserted that improvements in learner behaviour rely on culturally responsive measures of learner behaviour and improvements in teacher preparation. The discussion of findings focused on the request by the Council for Exceptional Children to

incorporate diversity into classroom practices, assessment, and discipline. Recommendations include professional development for all educators and a wider range of interventions that address the needs of an ever-changing learner population. These authors further suggested that creating a responsive classroom required effective and constant teacher training. This process included self-reflection for the teachers and the continued application of various teaching techniques that supported excellence in the classroom.

2.13 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS A DISCIPLINE MEASURE

The South African Schools Act (SA, 1996b) defines the concept 'parent' as the parent of a learner, the person legally entitled to custody of a learner and the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to (learner) in education at school.

A thorough study of research and literature reveals that parental involvement is becoming one of the most essential measures of discipline both within the school and out of the school. It is seen as a preventative measure specifically in the early grades of school. Deater-Deckard and Dodge (1997: 170) concluded that behaviour problems in children in the pre-school phase were related to a lack of parental warmth and positive involvement. Further studies discovered that poor parental discipline and monitoring, amongst other factors, have been responsible for the occurrence and persistence of conduct problems during middle childhood and adolescence (Dishion, French & Patterson, 1995: 451, Loeber & Farrington 1998: 25). Lazelere's research (1996: 82) revealed that positive or at least neutral behaviour outcomes resulted when relationships were characterised by high levels of positive parental involvement. Campbell, Pierce, March and Ewing (1991: 182) concurred with these results in finding that low levels of parental sensitivity and involvement were predictive of the development of later behavioural problems.

Kohl, Lengua and McMahon (2002: 501) found that parental involvement is closely associated with more positive experiences in children in the school environment. Ngcobo (2003: 24) concluded that if parents did not involve themselves in disciplining their children, any programme related to behaviour change that the school may start will not be effected. He also states (2003: 25) that discipline at home forms part of school discipline. The Department

of Education (2000:22) declared that parents should take responsibility for the discipline of their children at home as well as becoming involved in the activities both of the child and the school. Kruger (2002: 8) goes a step further in saying that, by becoming involved with their children, parents are likely to ensure that the values, direction and the character of the community are established and maintained at school. Reid (2003: 252) and Kazdin (2003: 301) argued that the most effective mechanism for intervening with children with behaviour problems is training parents in non-violent and effective discipline strategies. Schulze and Dzivhani (2002: 129) concur, stating that schools should consider establishing programmes where parents can develop strategies to maintain discipline at home, in order that there can be better discipline at school.

It would seem, based on the research discussed above, that involvement with children at home and at school is a vital link in the chain of discipline and learning in the classroom. It also appears that the earlier this involvement begins, the better the long-term prognosis in terms of discipline.

2.13.1 The rights and duties of parents

The South African Schools Act (South Africa 1996b: 6) and the School education Act (Gauteng Department of Education 1995: 5) set out the following parental duties:

School attendance of learners: Every parent must ensure that the learner for whom he or she is responsible attends a school from the year in which the learner turns seven until the learner reaches the age of 15 or the ninth grade, whichever comes first.

Paying of school fees: A parent is liable for payment of the school fees as determined by the governing body (in consultation with the parents) unless they are exempt from such payment.

Liability for property damage: The parent of a learner at a public school shall be liable for any damage to, or loss of school or departmental property which has been caused by the learner. It is also the duty of every parent to assist the state and the governing body of the school to promote a culture of respect for school property.

The right to information: Every parent shall have the right of access to information held by the department, a public school or a private school if such information concerns a learner who is his or her child.

The right to be part of the governance of a school: Parents have the right to choose other parents to represent them on the school's governing structure. They also have the right to be informed on a regular basis about what the governing body has decided on their behalf. Governance is only one aspect of the relationship between school and home. Pretorius and Lemmer (2002: 31) mention a number of other facets of home-school relations: (a) communication (b) assisting parents with their parenting task (c) volunteering (d) learning at home (e) decision-making.

2.13.2 Parent resistance to involvement in classroom management

Nowadays schools are under increasing pressure to develop strategies for securing greater parental involvement. According to Bauer & Shea (2003: 65), parents have reported that they do not become involved in the children's teaching because of (in order of importance) a lack of time, feeling that they have nothing to contribute, not knowing how to become involved, lack of childcare, feeling intimidated, not being available during the time the school arranges functions and not feeling welcome at the school.

Froyen (2003: 208) mentions a number of reasons why parents sometimes resist becoming involved in their children's schooling, (a) fear of divulging conflicts at home (b) panic over the child's possible failure (c) guilt about lack of parenting skills (d) reluctance to interfere in the educator's work (e) belief that they would not know how to participate (f) belief that the educator is trying to shift responsibility.

2.13.3 A model for parent involvement

Dunst and Trivette (in Bauer & Shea 2003: 65) find that programmes that have been successful in working with parents share a number of common characteristics. These programmes tend to focus on prevention rather than treatment. They recognise the need to

work with the whole family, as well as the community. They have a commitment to the family as an active participant in their children's education and are also committed to cultural diversity. Furthermore, successful programmes focus on strength-based needs, effective programming and continuous evaluation and have flexible staffing.

Several other factors also emerge when working with parents. The issue of equity must be addressed, i.e., making sure that experiences are open to both parents with limited resources and those who are more affluent. Whether parent participation is voluntary or involuntary is a factor that could change the whole nature and intention of the participation. Programmes should be of high quality and should be specific in terms of their objectives. Finally, educators and other professionals working with parents should be culturally sensitive or at least competent. Swap (in Bauer & Shea 2003: 67) describes four basic models of parent involvement.

Model 1: This is called the “protective model”. The goal of this model is to reduce tension between parents and educators, primarily by separating their functions, thereby protecting the school from parent interference. The model assumes that parents delegate the education of their children to the school and that the school is then accountable. There is little parent involvement and no structure exists for preventative problem-solving.

Model 2: This is known as the “School-to-home transition”. In this model the school enlists the parents in supporting the objectives of the school. Although parents are not equal partners, they are supposed to endorse the school's expectations.

Model 3: In the “curriculum enrichment” model the goal is to extend the school's curriculum by incorporating the contributions of the families. The assumption is that educators and parents should work together to enrich curriculum objectives and content. Relationships are based on trust and respect.

Model 4: The goal of the “parent-educator partnership” model is for parents and educators to work together to accomplish success for all the learners. The assumption is that a common

mission requires collaboration between parents and educators. This is a true partnership based on authority shared among colleagues (so-called “collegiality”).

Based on Model 4, Bauer and Shea (2003: 67) developed an integrated model for engaging parents. This model consists of five steps or phases which are intake and assessment (first meeting), selection of goals and objectives, planning and implementation, evaluation of activities and review.

2.14 THE CURRENT LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The year 1994 marked the end of the apartheid education system whereby discipline at schools was enforced through physical or corporal punishment. It also marked the beginning of a democratic South Africa wherein the education system changed and corporal punishment as a form of discipline was outlawed. The new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that recognises human rights and dignity was formulated and adopted in 1996.

After 1994 elections, South Africa became a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) (Porteus, Vally & Ruth, and 2001: 1). This convention pledges to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negative treatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. In relation to school discipline, this legislation and policy affirms that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity and conforms to the spirit of the convention (Porteus et al., 2001: 1). The Constitution and the South African Schools Act are perhaps the most important pieces of legislation that regulate discipline issues at schools.

2.14.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The constitution is the kingpin of our new democratic constitutional dispensation. Whereas previously we had a sovereign or supreme parliament, we now have a supreme law; the constitution and no other legislation or source of law has the same legal status or force.

Squelch (2000: 8) describes the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (hereafter referred to as the Constitution) as the supreme law of the country and therefore all law, including education legislation, regulations and school policies may not be in conflict with it.

Chapter Two, Section 10 of the Constitution contains the Bill of Rights which promotes among other rights, the right to human dignity. Human dignity is the innermost and social right to respect with regard to values and dignity, and to which each and every person is entitled, purely because they are human. What this implies is the unacceptability of behaviour that is hostile or offensive to a reasonable person and that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work, academic performance or social life. Any behaviour that creates an undermining of the integrity or dignity of an individual and that such behaviour can make a reasonable person feel uncomfortable, unsafe, frightened, embarrassed, and may be physical, verbal or non-verbal and would be unwanted by any reasonable person and could not be justified through a personal, family or any social relationship (Department of Education, 2000: 9). This is aimed at ensuring that everyone, including learners should be treated with respect and dignity.

According to Sonesson (2005b: 18) and in line with the Constitution, South Africa has prohibited corporal punishment being applied in all aspects of public life. This includes the courts, prisons, children's institutions and schools. This assertion finds expression in the provisions of Section 12c-e of the Constitution which states that: "Everyone has the right to freedom and security which includes the right to be free from all forms of violence from either public or private sources, not to be tortured in any way, and not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way". The Constitution therefore abolishes any form of corporal punishment or use of discipline measures which undermine human dignity. What is important in this regard is that discipline measures should not be such that they make a person (learner) uncomfortable, unsafe, frightened or embarrassed. This goes for the physical, verbal or non-verbal forms of discipline. The South African Schools Act adds more clarity and provides guidelines in this regard.

2.14.2 South African Schools Act

The South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (SASA) specifically relates to issues pertaining to discipline at schools. According to Department of Education (2000: 9), discipline must be maintained in the school and the classroom to ensure that the education of learners proceeds without any disruptive behaviour and as such school authorities are allowed to discipline learners. Furthermore, learners have the responsibility to learn and develop their own full potential and to allow fellow learners, without any hindrance, to reach their full potential. To this end, SASA places the responsibility of ensuring the discipline of learners squarely on the functional competency of the SGB and advocates the establishment of the school code of conduct as a first step in this regard. Section 7 states that (a) subject to any applicable provincial law, a governing body of a public school must adopt a code of conduct for the learners after consultation with the learners, parents and educators of the school.(b) a code of conduct referred to in subsection (1) must be aimed at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process.(c) a code of conduct must contain provisions of due process safeguarding the interests of the learner and any other party involved in disciplinary proceeding. From these provisions of the SASA, it is clear that the approach to discipline at school should aim at improving and maintaining the quality of the learning process and not punishment as such.

In this regard, Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1997: 59) outlines the purpose of the code of conduct and therefore discipline at school as aiming to (a) create a well-organized and a good schooling environment so that effective learning and teaching can take place.(b) promote self-discipline, (c) encourage good behaviour, and (d) regulate conduct. This in essence implies that focus must be on self-discipline, self-motivation and self-respect together with academic and sporting achievements (Department of Education, 2000: 20). This also implies that discipline should be approached as a means to encourage the respect of human dignity as enshrined in the Constitution.

The SASA furthermore details procedures for discipline as it pertains to learners at schools and how SGBs should take responsibility in this regard (Sayed & Jansen, 2001: 102). Accordingly, Section 9 states:

- Subject to this Act and any applicable provincial law, the governing body of a public school may, after a fair hearing, suspend a learner from attending the school as a correctional measure for a period not longer than one week, or pending a decision as to whether the learner is to be expelled from the school by the Head of Department.

- Subject to any applicable provincial law, a learner at a public school may be expelled only by the Head of Department, and if found guilty of serious misconduct after a fair hearing.

- The Member of the Executive Council must determine by notice in the Provincial Gazette about the behaviour by a learner at a public school which may constitute serious misconduct, disciplinary proceedings to be followed in such cases and provisions of due process safeguarding the interests of the learner and any other party involved in disciplinary proceedings.

- A learner or the parent of a learner who has been expelled from a public school may appeal against the decision of the Head of Department to the Member of the Executive Council.

- If a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance in terms of section 3(1) is expelled from a public school, the Head of Department must make an alternative arrangement for his or her placement at a public school.

The focus of these provisions relates to what is called the due process, which implies that for any disciplinary measure against a learner, such a learner must be given a proper hearing. This also relates to suspension and expulsion of learners which can only be applied when the learners commit serious offences. The implication is that expulsion is permanent and thus

ends a learner's right to attend at a particular school. This is the reason why expulsion is only done by the Head of Department.

From the foregoing exposition, it is clear that discipline aims at building a learner and ensuring that effective learning processes do take place at schools. It is also clear that punishment in the form of suspension and expulsion is used only as a very last resort and only in serious cases of misbehaviour. This leaves the question as to how then should discipline be exercised at schools especially regarding such offences as those that frustrate educators and those that make them perceive corporal punishment as an answer as alluded to in previous sections. The Department of Education, in this regard, provided schools and educators with alternatives to corporal punishment.

2.15 EDUCATION LAW PROVISIONS REGULATING LEARNER DISCIPLINE

Two of the most difficult tasks facing classroom managers are creating a disciplined classroom conducive to teaching and learning and dealing with unacceptable learner behaviour. It is important that classroom managers fulfil these tasks within the framework of the law. The most common administrative actions a classroom manager will perform are adopting classroom rules, enforcing discipline and punishing learners. It is essential that classroom managers understand the legal provisions regulating these administrative actions.

2.15.1 Classroom management and discipline

Many educators claim that the introduction of Outcomes-Based Education and the resultant introduction of extensive group work have exacerbated the discipline problems in classrooms (Pienaar 2003: 262). Although the law has always recognised the right of the principal and educators to discipline learners and to punish offenders, educators have to balance the need for a safe, orderly environment against the rights of learners to be free of unfair disciplinary practices. One of the most important characteristics of an effective classroom is good classroom discipline. In terms of the South African Schools Act (South Africa 1996b: S 8(2), a school's Code of Conduct must aim at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning

process. Thus the emphasis must be on positive discipline, e.g. the classroom manager must establish a disciplined environment that will facilitate constructive teaching and learning and foster self-discipline.

The Guidelines for the Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners (South Africa 1998b: Par.7) deals with discipline and sets out that (a) the emphasis must be on teaching and leading learners to self-discipline (b) the disciplinary process must be expeditious, fair, just, corrective, consistent and educative (c) where possible, parents should be involved in the correction of learners' behaviour (d) learners should be protected against abuse (e) classroom managers may restrain a learner (e.g. control the action of a learner that would harm others or him or herself or that may violate the rights of other learners or the educator). (f) the authority to discipline learners may not be delegated to fellow learners (g) educators have full authority and responsibility to correct learners' behaviour and (h) serious misconduct must be referred to the principal.

2.15.2 Discipline versus punishment

In most instances discipline tends to be confused with punishment. While these two terms are often used interchangeably, they are not the same. Squelch (2002: 2) explains discipline as being about positive behaviour management aimed at promoting appropriate behaviour and developing in learners a sense of self-discipline and self-control. In other words, as stated by Rogers (1998: 11), discipline is indeed “an educator directed activity whereby he or she seeks to lead, guide, direct, manage or confront a learner about behaviour that disrupts the rights of others”.

In the Reader's Digest Complete Wordfinder (2002: 21), the concept of discipline is defined as “control or order exercised over people... the system of rules used to maintain this control” and it is also equated with “punishment”. This can be confusing if we want to distinguish between discipline and punishment. Perhaps it would help to regard punishment as part of discipline in that it constitutes the measures used to enforce and ensure discipline. Le Mottee (2005: 43) gives a valuable explanation that “discipline has nothing to do with controlling disruptive or other unacceptable bad behaviour... ; it has everything to do with

ensuring a safe and valuing environment so that the rights and needs of people are respected, vindicated and safeguarded...”

As stated above, the emphasis must be on positive discipline. The goal is to teach and lead learners to self-discipline. According to the on-line Wikipedia Encyclopaedia (under “discipline”), self-discipline means that a learner is capable of using his or her own reason to determine the best course of action and does not merely give in to his or her desires. Learners will behave because they are forced to do so. Punishment is defined as “... a corrective measure or a penalty inflicted on an offender who has to suffer the consequences of misconduct in order to maintain the orderly society of the school” (South Africa 1998b. Par. 8.1). It is generally believed that if children are made to suffer for doing wrong, they will not repeat their inappropriate behaviour (Department of Education 2000: Preface).

According to Le Mottee (2005: 54), discipline differs from punishment in that (a) discipline is intrinsic, while punishment is external, (b) discipline is educative, while punishment is punitive, (c) discipline is about self-control for the sake of self-actualisation, while punishment is the exercise of control over people for the sake of compliance. Classroom managers who do not succeed in establishing a disciplined classroom tend to rely heavily on punishment. Discipline, however, must not be punitive and punishment-orientated (South Africa 1998b: Par. 1.4).

2.15.3 Scope of disciplinary power

Disciplinary power is vested in parents and other persons with authority over children, such as principals and educators. The person vested with the power may delegate the exercise of discipline and has the discretion to impose discipline on another. Educators have original disciplinary power by virtue of their status as educators. Disciplinary powers are mainly derived from common law and especially from the *in loco parentis* principle. Legislation has, however, increasingly made provision for disciplinary powers. For example, the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 (South Africa 1996c: S 3 (4) (n) empowers the Minister to determine policy for control and discipline of learners. It is stated that this policy may not allow corporal punishment or psychological or physical abuse. The public document,

Guidelines for the Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners (South Africa 1998b: Par. 7.5) also mentions educators' disciplinary powers.

Literally translated, the expression *in loco parentis* means "in place of the parent". In terms of common law guardians, educators and those running school hostels have authority over children in schools and hostels who are participating in official school activities. The *in loco parentis* principle does not imply that the parent is replaced- the parent merely delegates his or her parental authority to educators. The task, rights and duties that parents delegate to educators, in other words what one could call educators' "delegated authority", must also promote the welfare and aims of the relevant institution. The educator acts in the place of the parent and is responsible for disciplining children.

2.15.4 Punishment

It is of utmost important to note that punishment as such is not forbidden. Only corporal punishment or punishment which is degrading and inhuman is prohibited. The Guidelines for the Consideration of Governing Bodies in Adopting a Code of Conduct for Learners (South Africa 1998b: Par. 3.5) states that: "Learners must understand that action may be taken against them if they contravene the Code of Conduct. When action is taken learners should be informed why their conduct is considered as misbehaviour or misconduct and why they are to be disciplined or punished. The punishment must suit the offence".

The following are the education law sources which regulate punishment in schools:

Education law sources regulating punishment

The Constitution (and its Bill of Rights) is a very important source of law when it comes to classroom discipline and punishment. The second education law source regulating punishment is legislation. The Schools Act is an example of a statute that has significant implications for how punishment may or may not be administered in schools (e.g. Section 10 of the Schools Act).

Care should be taken not to interpret or quote law incorrectly. It is, for example, not correct to state that the Bill of Rights expressly prohibits corporal punishment. Corporal punishment is not even mentioned in Section 12 of the Constitution. Section 12(1) (e) guarantees a person's right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way and because corporal punishment is regarded as cruel and inhuman punishment, administering it will be regarded as a violation of this right. Section 10(1) of the Schools Act, on the other hand, expressly prohibits corporal punishment: "No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner".

The third education law source regulating punishment is common law. Common law gives educators certain powers to discipline learners. These powers derive mainly from the fact that we regard educators as acting in loco parentis. In the absence of parents, educators assume certain rights and responsibilities, such as supervision and discipline. All the same, educators' powers are not unlimited. The rules of natural justice are now embodied in Section 33 of the Constitution.

The fourth education law source that regulates punishment is case law. Case law provides important legal principles concerning punishment e.g. whether the educator has acted in a fair and reasonable manner.

Types of punishment and legal implications

Educators use a variety of methods for dealing with learners who infringe school rules. However, it is important to ensure that punishment methods are fair and appropriate and do not infringe learners' constitutional rights. Making children stand on one leg for long periods of time or making them sit outside in the corridor to do their work would be considered unreasonable and could lead to legal action being taken against the educator. Educators also need to be careful when assigning extra homework as a means of punishment. Such homework should be constructive in that it relates to class work. Classroom managers should always keep a record of disciplinary action taken against a learner, e.g. verbal warnings and written warnings (Pienaar 2003: 265). Types of punishment with specific legal implications are minor sanctions, corporal punishment and detention.

Minor sanction

Minor sanctions are used for so-called level 1 misconduct, such as failing to be in class on time, bunking classes, failing to complete homework, failing to respond to reasonable instructions and being dishonest (Department of Education 2000b: 25). Examples of minor sanctions are a verbal warning or written reprimand, a reprimand look, withdrawal of privileges, additional, supervised schoolwork which is constructive, small menial tasks such as tidying up the classroom, referral to a senior member of staff, demerits-losing credits which have already been gained and detention in which learners use their time constructively, but within the confines of the classroom.

Sanctions for level 2 misconduct

The following sanctions can be used for level 2 misconduct (a) any of the minor sanctions listed above, (b) a disciplinary talk with the learner, (c) talks with the learners' parents or guardians, (d) written warnings, (e) signing a contract with the learner who agrees to improve, (f) daily report taken by learner and signed by all educators and (g) performing duties that improve the school environment, such as cleaning, gardening or administrative tasks (Department of Education 2000b: 26). Level 2 misconduct would be if a learner frequently repeats the level 1 misconduct or is guilty of level 2 misconduct, such as smoking or being in the possession of tobacco, leaving the school without permission, using abusive language, interrupting education in the classroom, showing disrespect for another person, engaging in minor vandalism, such as graffiti and being dishonest with more serious consequences.

Sanctions for level 3 misconduct

The following sanctions can be used for level 3 misconduct (a) any of the sanctions used for level 1 or 2 misconduct, (b) a written warning that the learner may be suspended, (c) referral to a counsellor or social worker and (d) community service (with the approval of the HOD).

Level 3 misconduct would include gambling, theft, vandalism, cheating during exams, possessing dangerous weapons, possessing or distributing pornographic, racist or sexist language and being severely disruptive in class, inflicting minor injury to another person and frequently repeating level 2 misconduct. Sanctions for levels 4 and 5 misconduct are carried out by the principal, governing body and/or HOD.

2.15.5 Corporal punishment

Classroom managers must take note of the fact that corporal punishment is very broadly defined as any deliberate act against a child that inflicts pain or physical discomfort to punish or contain him or her. This includes, but is not limited to spanking, pinching, paddling or hitting a child with a hand or with an object, denying or restricting a child's use of the toilet, denying meals, drink, heat and shelter, pushing or pulling a child with force, forcing the child to do exercise (Department of Education 2000b: 6).

Corporal punishment is outlawed in South Africa. The prohibition of corporal punishment is part and parcel of the transformation of the education system in order to bring it in line with the letter and spirit of the Constitution (Department of Education 2000b: 6). South Africa is a signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which compels it to pass laws and take social, educational and administrative measures to protect the child from all forms of physical and mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. As a signatory to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, South Africa is also committed to ensure that a child who is subjected to discipline shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the child.

According to Section 10(1) of the Schools Act, “no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner” and “any person who contravenes Subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault”. This means that no person (e.g. educator, principal or parent) may administer corporal punishment at a school (public or independent) to a learner (boys or girls). Parents may not give principals or educators permission to use corporal punishment. This provision

applies to both public and independent schools. In addition, Section 12 of the Constitution states that everyone has the right not to be punished or treated in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way. Besides formal corporal punishment, non-formal use of force, such as slapping and rough handling, are also prohibited. Anyone who metes out corporal punishment at a school may be charged with assault in a court of law and punished (Squelch 2002b: 2-3).

2.15.6 Alternative to corporal punishment

As pointed out earlier (2.19.5), corporal punishment is viewed differently by different people. It is also clear that its prohibition was a result of, among other issues, views about its abuse and negative consequences on the subjects thereof. It is also clear that educators largely do not feel comfortable with discipline without the use of corporal punishment. Though outlawed, corporal punishment remains controversial with educators still using it because they see it as “the only thing that works” (Sapa, 2006: 8). This feeling is also expressed by many parents. The Department of Education (2000) launched a manual detailing alternatives to corporal punishment as a way of assisting educators to deal with discipline problems at schools.

In the manual, reasons for corporal punishment being ineffective for discipline are provided and state that corporal punishment (Department of Education, 2000: 7) (a) Does not build a culture of human rights, tolerance and respect. (b) Does not stop bad behaviour of difficult children but instead these children are punished over and over again for the same offences. (c) Does not nurture self-discipline in children but instead it provokes aggression and feelings of revenge and leads to anti-social behaviour. (d) Does not make children feel responsible for their own actions. They worry about being caught and not about their personal responsibilities, which undermines the growth of self-discipline. (f) Leads learners to brag about being beaten as something to be proud of or as a badge of bravery or success, and (g) undermines a caring relationship between learner and educator, which is critical for the development of all learners, particularly those with behavioural difficulties.

Porteus et al (2001: 8) say that some educators who pride themselves on moving away from “corporal punishment” have replaced corporal punishment with methods of humiliation,

sarcasm and neglect. The above mentioned manual then asserts that discipline requires creating a climate based on mutual respect within which learners feel safe and affirmed and thus decreases the need for disciplinary action as it helps develop a learner to practice self-discipline (Department of Education, 2000: 12). In essence, this implies as outlined in the manual, creating a positive culture of teaching and learning which involves adopting a whole school approach and making sure that classroom discipline reflects the school's policies, establishing ground rules, being serious and consistent about the implementation of the rules, knowing learners and focusing on relationship building and managing the learning process and the learning environment enthusiastically and professionally.

The manual furthermore outlines disciplinary measures and procedures which include the development of a code of conduct which details actions and procedures to be taken for serious misconduct of learners. While the afore-detailed alternatives to corporal punishment offer useful guidelines in as far as dealing with discipline issues at schools is concerned, this research argues that these are ready-made and reactionary solutions to discipline issues at schools. They seem to address discipline problems in a form of punishing or assigning some form of reaction. While this is sometimes necessary, it is argued that schools need to deal with discipline problems from a holistic framework that considers the root causes of learner discipline problems.

In this regard, Soneson (2005b: 5) opines that the challenge facing South Africa is to increase awareness among educators and parents about the children's basic rights to be protected from corporal punishment and other forms of dehumanising and degrading punishment. It can be argued that in essence, the challenge for schools is to create conditions where discipline problems are addressed in a way that will minimise the need for any form of punishment. In this sense, the manual for alternatives to corporal punishment correctly propounds developing positive behaviour of learners and the use of staff such as school psychologists and counsellors and instituting democratic discipline that encourages participation and results in good and common decision-making (Department of Education, 2000: 15). To create a school climate that is conducive to positive discipline and applies a whole approach to discipline, an insight into the essence of discipline at schools is necessary.

2.16 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Understanding the foundational goal and definition of disobedience or noncompliance allows educators to decide what elicits or inhibits particular behaviours. The review of literature provides hints at the effectiveness of using the subjective nature and needs of all stakeholders and drives changes (Stader, 2004: 49). It further supports the notion that insights into learner perceptions and relationships at home and school could make preventive measures more effective (Monroe, 2005:5, Nelson et al., 2002: 8). However, little information exists to connect the degree to which subjectivity and influencing aspects of school disciplinary practices ultimately affect learner behavioural choices. This chapter explored the literature review with regard to the theoretical framework, the main aim of the study, global trends on discipline as a management tool in school classrooms, and classroom management in schools. Disciplinary problems in South African schools, factors affecting learners' views, discipline measures and causes of learner misbehaviour were also explored. The chapter also discussed disciplinary policy, procedures, and perceived effectiveness of disciplinary plans. Furthermore, parental involvement as a disciplinary measure, the legislative framework on discipline and education law provision regulating learner discipline were discussed.

2.17 PROJECTIONS OF THE NEXT CHAPTER

The literature related to disobedience, discipline plans, perception, and cultural effects on discipline provides an expansive picture of the behaviours guiding educators and learners. An abundance of research (Monroe, 2005: 5, Eamon & Altshuler, 2004: 21, Watts & Erevelle, 2004: 59) indicates that multiple levels of environmental influences affect behaviour and opinion. Failure to disarm subjectivity and bias in the areas under educator and school control makes disciplinary strategies useless (Powers et al., 2005: 10). Cultural variation, changing views of youth, and the applicability of specific discipline plans contribute to the plethora of stimuli positively and negatively affecting learner behaviour choices and educator responses.

Race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and gender set the stage for behavioural and value clashes that impede accurate perceptual development (Duncan, 2005: 253, Watts & Erevelles, Thomas & Smith, 2004: 11). Unfortunately, in the research, a void exists between describing

reasons for learner behaviour and demonstrating specific methods that impede or enhance positive behaviour. In the following chapter, the methods used in this study to fill the void previously mentioned are described. Details about the design, population, data collection and data analysis help to determine whether a correlation exists between learner opinion and resulting behaviour choices in the learning environment.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter Two, a theoretical perspective was presented on classroom discipline in South African schools as well as schools abroad. Special attention was given to the historical legacy that influences how discipline is currently managed in South African Schools. Various approaches to classroom discipline were investigated, with specific emphasis on socio-emotional learning and the relationship-driven classroom, and more pro-active ways of disciplining learners in the classroom. This approach places the responsibility for identifying and implementing positive alternative disciplinary measures squarely in the court of the school. This chapter will provide a detailed discussion of the chosen research methodology and design. The techniques and methods employed by the researcher to address the research questions will be explained in details.

3.2 THE AIM OF EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Empirical research methods are a class of research methods in which empirical observations or data are collected in order to answer particular research questions (Dillman, 2000). Creswell (2005: 9) states that the purpose statement is a focused restatement of the problem and conveys the overall objective of intent of the study. He further alludes to the fact that the purpose statement explains the major focus of the study and who the participants are, and refer to the sites of inquiry. McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 397) state that, historically, quantitative researchers describe and explain or describe and explore by building rich descriptions of complex situations and by giving directions for future research.

The aim of this empirical research was to gather information about learners' perceptions of discipline as management tool in school classrooms, Thabo Mofutsanyana-Free State Province. Again, to investigate how classroom discipline is managed at schools in Thabo Mofutsanyana. A quantitative approach was used to gather information in this regard. According to Stubbs (2005), this entails incorporating a statistical element designed to

quantify the extent to which a target group is aware of, things, believes or is inclined to behave in a certain way. Statistics in this research was used in this research to quantify the research population's responses to the subject of inquiry.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 94) state that quantitative research is used to answer questions about relationships among measurable variables with the purpose of explanations and predictions that will generalise to other persons or places. In this study the quantitative approach was used to determine the perceptions of learners about classroom discipline.

3.3 MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Information gathered from the literature study was used to develop and design questionnaires to gather information from the study population about learner's perception about classroom discipline in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

Undertaking research requires a thorough and a meticulous process. This implies that before actually conducting research, the researcher needs to create parameters within which the research project is to be conducted. This ensures that the research is orderly and follows a direction that will ensure that the process is focussed in terms of the research inquiry. This is accomplished by outlining a clear research methodology and design.

To qualify and quantify the effects of learner's perceptions on behavioural choices, this study offers a guide to the data collection and analysis, which provides useful information that, is relevant to pre-service and practicing educators. This chapter provides the research method and design, describes the data collection components, offer proof of validity and reliability, and provides identification of the process for data analysis. The discussion involves specific elaboration of details related to the research rationale as well as the degree to which this design satisfied the study goals.

The purpose of this quantitative study is to analyse aspects of school disciplinary practices that influence the beliefs and behavioural choices of learners in the Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District. Through the process of data collection and analysis, an attempt was made in this study to discover a link between learner perceptions, views, and beliefs by examining the following areas: theoretical framework, the main aim of the study, discipline as management tool in school classrooms, classroom management in schools, global trends of discipline as a management tool, disciplinary problems in South African Schools, factors affecting learners' views, approaches to classroom discipline, discipline measures, punishment or misconduct, discipline policy and procedures, classroom rules and procedures, disciplinary plans, parental involvement, home environment and parental discipline style.

3.4.1 Research design

The concept "research design" refers to the planned structure of an investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions (McMillan and Schumacher 1993: 31, Hysamen, 1994: 10, and Vos et al 2005: 389). A design entails an outline and discussion of the procedure that was used for conducting a study, which includes answers to the questions when, from whom, and under what conditions the data were obtained. In fact, the design indicates how the research was set, what happened to the participants and what methods of data collection were used. Conrad and Serlin (2006:377) state that the research design chosen depends on the philosophical assumptions underlying how an inquiry into the phenomenon being studied can be pursued. The research questions and purposes should determine the selection of research design and methodology (Conrad & Serlin, 2006: 337). McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 31) are in agreement and state that the research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer the research questions.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 85), the research design provides the overall structure for the procedures the research follows, the data collection and analysis which simply put means planning. This is always done with the central goal of solving the research problem in mind. In this regard, Denzin and Lincoln (2005: 32) point out that due to many factors that must be considered in planning the research, inter alia, time and cost, it is

imperative for researchers to consciously and purposely select and utilise those research methods that would permit better, convenient and successful attainment of specific research aims.

As part of this descriptive quantitative research, the researcher used non-experimental descriptive survey research, as supported by Maree and Pietersen (2007: 152) and Creswell (2009: 12). As pointed out by Maree (2007: 152), the term non-experimental indicated that the researcher plans not to manipulate any of the data and this type of research was generally accompanied by a survey. Survey research, according to Creswell (2009: 12), provided a numeric description of trends, characteristics, attitudes or opinion by studying a sample of a specific population. Maree and Pietersen (2007: 155) support making use of a non-experimental descriptive survey research design for this research by indicating survey research as an everyday technique to get hold of the required information. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007), hold that research design is governed by the notion of fitness of purpose. This means that the research design and methodology is determined by the purpose of the research. The methodology of this study was quantitative, since this study focused on interpretation. There are two broad approaches commonly used by researchers to collect data. These are the quantitative and qualitative approaches. In this research, a quantitative approach was used to investigate how learner discipline in Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District was managed.

3.5 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Cryer (2002: 45) defines research methods as methods to gather and process data. Cohen and Manion (in Brazelle, 2004: 4), explain that; “Research is best conceived as the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data”. A quantitative method of gathering data was used in this study. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 95), quantitative research methods are those methods that seek to objectively measure the variables of interest. In using a quantitative research method, the quantitative researcher did not want to influence the outcome of the research. A sample or specific number of variables was selected and the research was conducted by using the said sample. The results, in the form of data are numerically

presented and it was taken that those were representative of the population represented by the sample (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005: 96-96). This approach, according to Leedy and Ormrod, (2005: 95-96), is sometimes referred to as the traditional, experimental or positivist approach. Neuman (1994: 317) represent the characteristics of a quantitative method as follows:

- Test hypothesis that the researcher begins with.
- Concepts are in the form of distinct variables.
- Measures are systematically created before data collection and are standardised.
- Data are in the form of numbers from precise measurement.
- Theory is largely casual and is deductive.
- Procedures are standard, and replication is assumed.
- Analyzise proceeds by using statistics, tables or charts and discussing how what they show relates to the hypotheses.

For the sake of this study, the researcher uses the questionnaire as a quantitative research instrument. The questionnaire is used for this study because of the quest for objectivity and the desire to minimise bias and distortion.

3.5.1 The questionnaire as a research tool.

A questionnaire is a self-reporting instrument used for gathering data about the variables of interest to the researcher and consist of a number of questions that a respondent reads and answers (Best & Khan, 1993: 230). Tuckman (1994: 230) explains the fact that questionnaires are used by researchers to convert information directly given by people into data. The suitability of the questionnaire in this research is based on the fact that respondents are all learners in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District. McMillan and Schumacher (2002: 257) assert that the questionnaire, for many reasons is the most widely used technique for obtaining information from subjects. Among other reasons for using it, a questionnaire is relatively economical, has the same questions for all subjects and can ensure anonymity. In developing a questionnaire, McMillan and Schumacher (2002: 259) allude to the fact that questionnaires can use statements or questions, but in all cases the subject is responding to something written for specific purposes.

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche` and Delpont (2002: 76) propose certain principles for the formulation of the questions in a questionnaire:

- Sentences must be brief and clear and the vocabulary and style of the questions must be understandable to the respondents.
- Question and response alternatives must be clear and must not reflect the bias of the researcher.
- Every question must contain one thought only.
- Every question must be relevant to the purpose of the questionnaire.
- Abstract questions not applicable to the milieu of the respondents should be avoided.

According to Ary et al. (1990: 429), the questionnaire items and the covering letter are the main sources of information that the respondents refer to in deciding whether or not to complete the questionnaire.

The following rules of questionnaire formatting must be adhered to (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 202-204):

- The questionnaire must be attractive.
- Questions should be organized in such a way that the questionnaire is easy to complete.
- Questions should display a natural ordering or flow so that it keeps the respondents moving towards completion.
- Questionnaire items and pages must be numbered.
- Brief, clear and bold-type printed instructions should be included.
- The questionnaire should not be too long and should include enough information so that items are interesting to the respondents.

It is noted, however, that questionnaires are limited by certain disadvantages, especially in a survey of this nature, where respondents have to indicate what pertains to the situation at their own schools (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 185). According to Tuckman (2002: 216), questionnaires are limited by, among others, misleading responses as a result of not being able to check the motivation of respondents, socially desirable responses as a result of

respondents being unwilling to respond to questions bordering on private or controversial issues. Tuckman (2002: 216) also lists other limiting factors for questionnaires as; indiscriminate answering of the questionnaire due to little interest in a particular problem and failure to get a true picture of opinions and feelings as a result of the questionnaire not being able to probe deep enough as the case with interviews.

In this research, the questionnaire was chosen because of its advantages, especially the anonymity factor and such advantages as the relatively low cost of administering it, the ability to cover a large geographic area and the ability to reach a large sample, which factors ensured increased accessibility to the research subject (Delpont, 2002: 172). The questionnaire in this study was used as a data collection instrument because it would be easy to distribute and would be cost-effective with regard to financial resourcing and time (Charles & Mertler, 2002: 159). The questionnaire was also used because it satisfies the assumptions on which questionnaires are based (Leedy & Ormrod, 2002: 202), viz.:

- That the respondents can read and understand the questions;
- That the respondents are in the positions to supply the information to answer the questions, especially in view of the prevailing conditions in their schools.
- Lastly, that the possibility of willingness to answer the questions exists.

A questionnaire can be seen as a tool to probe beyond the surface and an instrument for observing data beyond the physical reach of the observer. The following are advantages of using the questionnaire:

3.5.2 Advantages of a questionnaire

The following are some of the advantages of the questionnaire as discussed by Tuckmman (2008: 216)

- It tends to yield reliable results because the respondents fill it alone without interference, unlike in the case of an interview.
- It saves time because the researcher does not have to be there.
- It is more effective because the respondents are free to give their thoughts.
- Anybody can administer it on behalf of the researcher.

- It is relatively easy to plan, construct and administer.
- It can be distributed to respondents with financial and time cost-effectiveness and has a wide coverage.
- It reaches people who would be difficult to reach, thus obtaining a broad spectrum of views.

The questionnaire enhances progress in many areas of educational research and brings to light much information that would otherwise be lost. Due to its impersonal nature, the questionnaire may elicit more candid and objective (and thus more valid) responses. Anonymity of respondents is assured since respondents are not required to expose their identities, addresses and institutions. The influence that an interviewer might have on the respondent is prevented. Respondents can answer the questionnaire without pressure for immediate response. Since questions are phrased identically, the questionnaire allows for uniformity and elicits more comparable data. Processing is made easy by the questionnaire being well constructed.

3.5.3 Disadvantages of a questionnaire

According to Tuckman (2008: 216), questionnaires also have the following disadvantages:

- Questionnaire might be interpreted and understood differently by respondents.
- Respondents might have little interest in a particular problem and therefore might answer the questionnaire indiscriminately.
- Questionnaires that do not probe deeply enough do not reveal a true picture of opinions and feelings.
- As the motivation of the respondents is difficult to check, misleading responses might be received.
- It is difficult to determine who really completed the questionnaire.
- A low response rate is the biggest disadvantage of the questionnaire and may lead to misleading responses.
- Respondents may feel that their personal opinions are left out.

- Respondents may be unwilling to respond to questions on private matters or controversial issues and may consequently provide what they regard as desirable responses.
- The length of the questionnaire may lead to careless or inaccurate responses and may result in low return rates.

In this research, care was taken to combat the above disadvantages. To ensure effectiveness, questionnaire items should be constructed meticulously.

3.6 THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire must be structured so that it can serve as an appropriate and useful data-gathering device (Gall et al., 1996: 294). A questionnaire that is badly designed is a waste of time and effort for both the researcher and the respondents (Moloko, 1996: 90). To avoid the problem of a poorly designed questionnaire, we can check what characterises a good questionnaire. As suggested by Ary, Jacob and Razavieh (1990: 422-424), such factors were considered in the preparation of this questionnaire:

- The questionnaire should deal with an important significant topic so that it entuses respondents to give responses.
- It should seek only such data that cannot be obtained from sources like books, reports and records.
- It should be as short as possible, and at the same time as comprehensive as necessary so that it does not leave out any relevant and critical information.
- Each question should deal with a single idea, be worded simply and as clearly as possible, and provide an opportunity for an easy, accurate and unambiguous response.
- The questions should be objective, with no clues, hints or suggestions as to the response desired.
- Double negative questions should be avoided.
- It should be easy to tabulate, summarise and interpret.
- The questionnaire should reflect scholarship so as to elicit high returns.
- Questionnaires should communicate necessary rules about the process of answering so as to reduce complexities.

- Questions should allow for respondents to review their own relevant experiences in order to arrive at accurate and complete responses.
- The questionnaire should be attractive, neatly arranged and clearly duplicated or printed.
- Questionnaires should not include unnecessary items.
- Questions that might elicit embarrassment, suspicion or hostility in the respondents should be avoided.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2002: 258), questionnaire design and construction must be well-organised and thoroughly processed. This involves preparing, constructing items and formatting the questionnaire. McMillan and Schumacher (2002: 265) contend that there are many questionnaire formats, among others, writing items and using boxes for respondents' answers as well as using contingency questions. In this research, a survey inquiry in which statistics were used to quantify and analyse data was used. A 35-item questionnaire was constructed relating to the following:

- Biographic information (Section A)
- Classroom rules (Section B)
- Parental/ Caregiver support (Section C)
- Respect and rights (Section D)
- Tasks and responsibilities (Section E)
- Punishment (Section F)

In formulating the questions, the language proficiency of the sample were taken into account. The ranking scale used required respondents to indicate on a four-point Likert-type scale indicating: 1= Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly disagree.

In constructing and formatting the questionnaires, guidelines provided by authors on research design were considered and used to finalise the questionnaire (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 190, Delport, 2002: 176, McMillan, 2002: 258). The questionnaire would be subject to a process of administration, which included the pilot survey, finalisation and distribution.

3.6.1 The questionnaire format

A pilot study is a small preliminary investigation designed to acquaint the researcher with the feasibility of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001: 116). According to Ary et al. (190: 429), the questionnaire items and the covering letter are the main sources of information that the respondents refer to in deciding whether or not to complete the questionnaire. The following rules of questionnaire formatting must be adhered to (Leedy & Ormmrod, 2001: 202-204);

- The questionnaire must be attractive.
- Questions should be organized in such a way that the questionnaire is easy to complete.
- Questions should display a natural ordering or flow so that it keeps the respondents moving towards completion.
- Questionnaire items and pages must be numbered.
- Brief, clear and bold-type printed instructions should be included.
- The questionnaire should not be too long and should include enough information so that items are interesting to the respondents.

3.7 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The study population comprised all learners in the Free State Department of Education. However, due to the vast expanse of the Free State Province and for purposes of logistics and accessibility, it was decided to delimit the research to the Free State Department of Education's Thabo Mofutsanyana District. Mertens (1998: 253) defines sampling as the method used to select a given number of people (or things) from a population. It is important to be cautious in selecting a sample because the type of sample selected determines or influences the quality of the responses. It is necessary to have a sample because quite often it is not possible to collect data from everyone from the research population (Mertens, 1998: 253).

Sampling is also defined by Zikmund (2000) as a process of using a small number of items or parts of a larger population to make conclusions about the whole population. This study had to ensure that there was adequate representation of schools from different cultural and socio-

economic backgrounds. This was done to ensure that the effects of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds on classroom discipline are reflected in this study. Thus, purposeful sampling was used. This means that the researcher selected sites for study which can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell 2007).

The study population comprised all learners in the Reitz cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District. The research was conducted amongst learners. Thabo Mofutsanyana District is divided into 4 clusters, viz, Bethlehem, Harrismith, Phuthaditjhaba and Reitz. The Reitz cluster was decided upon as the area in which the research was conducted because it was accessible to the researcher. The research was conducted in both secondary and primary schools, and in the 17 of the total of 31 schools in the Reitz cluster. The Reitz cluster is made up of schools in the following towns:

Table 3.1 The Reitz Study sites

Petrus Steyn =3	Lindley =3	Arlington =2
Reitz =5	Vrede =2	Memel =3

For the purpose of this study, simple random sampling was used because it was a technique that gave each member of the population an equal and independent chance of being selected. The latter was done to avoid bias and to achieve valid results. The Reitz cluster had 31 schools; 13 of those schools are secondary, while 18 are primary schools. The research was mainly confined to urban schools. The following was randomly selected sample: 8 secondary schools representing 61, 5 percent of the secondary schools in the cluster, 8 primary schools representing 50 percent of the primary schools in the cluster and 3 learners from the Representative Council of Learners (RCL) per school to complete the questionnaire. The target group for the empirical study included learners from Thabo Mofutsanyana District only. The questionnaires were sent out to 600 respondents. By the end of February 2013 the questionnaires had been returned.

3.7.1 Response Rate

A total of 600 questionnaires were issued for the purpose of this study. Of the questionnaires returned, 555 were usable. Table 3.1 illustrates the return rate of the questionnaires per population category.

Table 3.2 Response rate of questionnaires

No. of questionnaires sent out	No. of questionnaires received back	Percentage
600	555	93%

It can be seen from Table 3.1 that the return rate from learners was 93% which, according to Delport (2002: 172) is considered an acceptable return rate. This return rate can be attributed in part to the personal distribution and collection of questionnaires from schools as well as the use of contact persons. Tuckman (1994: 61) indicates that reliable and valid deductions can be made if 70% of the questionnaires have been returned.

3.7.2 Administrative procedures

Administrative procedures include getting approval from education authorities to conduct research at schools and following up on outstanding questionnaires.

3.7.3 Approval from Free State Department of Education

Approval to conduct research in schools was requested from Head of the Free State Department of Education as per departmental protocol.

3.7.4 Follow-up on questionnaire

Personal follow-up visits were undertaken to collect outstanding questionnaires. These were mainly in schools where learners were engaged in school activities that required the researcher to allow for delays in collecting the questionnaires. The whole process took seven weeks to complete.

3.8 PILOT SURVEY

According to Mason and Bramble (1997: 134), a pilot study is a small scale version of the proposed study with a small sample that is similar to the final sample. In other words, before a questionnaire can be distributed to a larger sample, it is first completed by a few persons (three or four), with the aim of identifying major problems. Hence, in this research, a pilot study was done with a small sample of learners from the school where the researcher is based. This assisted the researcher to assess the quality of the questionnaire, as well as to determine how long it took the respondents to complete it (Johnson & Christen 2004: 177). A pilot study was conducted to test the validity of the questionnaire and also to correct ambiguous questions. The questionnaire was pre-tested with a selected number (10) of the respondents from the study population in the adjacent Reitz cluster. The aim of the pilot study was to test the questionnaire's measurement qualities, appropriateness and clarity. This also served to determine its validity. After the pilot study had been conducted, the final questionnaires were distributed. The accompanying cover letter was aimed at orientating the participants to the questionnaire, as well as assuring them of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.8.1 Final questionnaire

After the pilot study had been conducted, the final questionnaires were distributed. The accompanying cover letter was aimed at orientating the respondents to the questionnaire, as well as assuring them of confidentiality and anonymity.

3.8.2 Administration procedures

Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the Free State Department of Education (FDE) on the 13th of January 2013. The questionnaires were distributed with the permission letter from FDE to schools in Thabo Mofutsanyana District. As the study involved both primary and secondary schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District, the researcher delivered the questionnaires personally, also to assure the principals of confidentiality. Moreover, the researcher could assure the principals that the names of the respondents or schools would not be used when writing the research report.

When possible, learners were asked to complete the questionnaires on the spot so that the researcher could collect them immediately. If this was not possible, the researchers left them with the principal and collected them later, as agreed with the principal. In these instances, a letter was added to the questionnaire. The letter indicated the following important information (Gay 1992: 227): It explained the purpose of the study, emphasising its importance and significance, and included a good reason for cooperating, and it indicated a deadline when the completed questionnaire would again be collected.

3.9 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm refers to “a pattern, model for example or the patterning of the thinking of a person”. It is the theory of knowledge that allows the researcher to decide how the research phenomenon will be studied (Groenewald, 2004: 7). For the sake of this research, the researcher made use of a positivism research paradigm. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007: 50) and Neuman (2011: 95), this paradigm supported quantitative research. Moreover, as pointed out by Neuman (2011: 95), researchers who choose this paradigm, generally pick surveys and/or statistics as well.

A positivism worldview holds that facts are inflexible and objective (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 7). However, two points of disapproval concerning choosing such a research paradigm are that (1) it trims life in general down to measurable terms instead of allowing for inner experience and (2) it ignores the individual’s specific viewpoint (Cohen et al., 2007:

17). Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 94-95) point out that authors sometimes refer to positivism as the traditional approach, its most important intention would be letting research participants answer questions that could support the explaining connections that exist between measurable variables.

In general, a positivism researcher gathers data in numeric format: the researcher had done this during the course of the research. The above mentioned points of disapproval did not hamper this research: (1) this research was not aimed at discovering inner experience, but was aimed at determining the participating learners' responses to carefully worded questionnaire items in order to get a completed picture of public school learners' views in this regard; (2) this research was not aimed at determining individual responses. For the purpose of this research, the researcher followed a positivism research paradigm, since the aim was to determine the participating learners' views on managing discipline in classroom context.

3.10 LIMITATIONS CONNECTED TO CONDUCTING SURVEY RESEARCH.

Babbie and Mouton (2002: 263) make the reader aware of several limitations that are connected to conducting research. The following are some of the examples: a) Standardized questionnaires frequently end up with items that signify the least familiar characteristics when determining participants' feeling and perceptions. The researcher focused on determining the responses of the participating learners to statements that reflect the most generally accepted features of classroom discipline.

- b) The researcher may fail to recognize that which is most fitting to all participants. He worked closely with his supervisor to concentrate on including those aspects most fitting to all the learner participants.
- c) Surveys are rigid in more than one manner. The researcher worked closely with his supervisor and consult with other experts in the field as critical readers of the questionnaire to combat this possible shortcoming.

According to Johnson (2011), surveys are popular and systematic approach to collecting quantitative data that will provide statistical information about a population. He made the

reader aware that a wide variety of methods “or modes” of collecting survey data can be via a phone, face-to-face, paper and pencil, or through a website. Johnson (2011) made mention that while surveys can be diverse in subject and varied in methodology, there are some standards to conducting “quality” survey research.

The following are considered as the best practices for survey research that a researcher must follow, according to Johnson (2011):

(g) The researcher must have specific goals for the survey

Goals must be specific and must be unambiguous.

(h) The researcher must consider alternatives to using a survey to collect information

The researcher must take into consideration whether a survey is the best method to collect data. This was done when the researcher was considering both the advantages and disadvantages of a survey.

(i) The researcher must select samples that represent the population to be studied

Samples that are selected should be a replicable. The researcher must also guard against unplanned selectiveness.

(j) The researcher must use designs that balance costs with errors

The researcher must utilize a resource that minimizes cost for conducting his/her research.

(k) The researcher must take great care in matching question wording to the concepts being measured and the population studied

Special attention to the following must be considered (I) topics, concepts and content must be clearly defined.(ii) attention to question wording and order must be considered (iii) attention to survey length and format must also be considered.

(l) The researcher must pretest questionnaires and procedures to identify problems prior to the survey

This can be done by ensuring that questions are understood by respondents, which the survey is properly administered by interviewers and that procedures do not adversely affect survey cooperation.

(m) The researcher must train interviewers carefully on interviewing techniques and the subject matter of the survey

This can be done by insisting on high standards for recruiting and training. Training interviewers must obtain informed consent, stay neutral, know the study thoroughly, read each question verbatim and in order, deal with inconsistencies politely, be courteous and professional at all times, probe for answers and maintain confidentiality.

(n) The researcher must construct quality checks for each stage of the survey

This means that the researcher must check and verify each step taken when conducting a survey.

(o) The researcher must maximize cooperation or response rates within the limits of ethical treatment of human subjects

This can be achieved through the use of proper sample management and control, and a follow-up with non-respondents, reluctant subjects and refusals.

(p) The researcher must use statistical and analytical reporting techniques appropriate to the data collected

Data analysis and interpretation should be competent and clear and findings should be presented fully, understandably and fairly.

(q) The researcher must carefully develop and fulfil pledges of confidentiality given to respondents

This means that the researcher must establish clear intentions to protect confidentiality of information collected, train researchers and other staff to maintain confidentiality and potential for statistical disclosure of respondent(s).

(r) The researcher must disclose all methods of the survey to permit evaluation and replication

It is important that the researcher must explain to the participants who sponsored the survey, the purpose of the study, with specific objectives, instructions or explanations that might affect results, survey or exact full wording of questions and description of population and sampling frame used.

3.11 PARTICIPANTS SELECTION

The researcher used the technique of non-probability sampling strategy and convenience sampling. Choosing the non-probability sampling strategy is supported by Neuman (2011: 242) as the researcher had taken into their limited available money and time. Moreover, Neuman (2011: 242) referred to convenience sampling as also named accidental, availability and/or haphazard sampling: the point then being to select participants who are easily available. Convenience sampling was therefore used since the participants for this research were learners at the researcher's cluster. The participants were the learners at the public schools in Reitz Cluster of Thabo Mofutsanyana District.

3.12 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

A design specifies the unit or units of analysis to be studied. Decisions about samples, both sample size and sampling strategies depend on prior decisions about the appropriate unit of analysis to study. Often individual people, clients or learners are the unit of analysis. This means the primary focus of data collection was on what was happening to individuals in a setting and how individuals were affected by the setting (Patton, 2003).

I collected views on learners' perceptions of discipline in Thabo Mofutsanyana District, Free State Province by and from:

- (a) Director
- (b) District Director
- (c) Principals of schools

(d) Learners

3.13 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Data collection methods are the ways in which the research data are obtained (De Vos, et al., 1998: 82). The research design is a guideline within which a choice about data collection methods has to be made. The methods used for data collection in this study are influenced by the research question and design.

The researcher used self-administered questionnaire to get hold of the data from the research participants (Creswell, 2009: 146). The plan was to use closed-ended questions (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 161) in order to make sure that the research participants felt comfortable within the boundaries of the topic that the researcher was examining.

This closed-ended questionnaire item was developed according to a Likert scale, with the best indicator of using a four-point scale as follows: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly agree. The choice of a Likert scale in this questionnaire was motivated by the researcher's cluster), the intention was to determine learners' perceptions of discipline as management tool in school classrooms.

(f) Advantages of using group administered questionnaire

Maree and Pietersen (2007: 157) point out several advantages in this regard:

- Lots of participants are able to fill in questionnaire relatively quickly.
- The persons, who hand out the questionnaire to the participants, can check whether they have been fully completed.
- This data collection method saves on travelling expenses.
- In general response rates attached to questionnaires are the best possible.

(g) Disadvantages of using group administered questionnaire

The same authors, Maree and Pietersen (2007: 157), indicate several disadvantages:

- It could occur that persons, who do not form part of the selected sample, complete the questionnaire. The researcher chose his own cluster (Reitz cluster), therefore better

control over which participants complete the questionnaire than usually was made possible.

- It is possible that not all participants have the same skill when it comes to understanding all the questionnaire items. The researcher took time to attend to each questionnaire item, making sure that each was worded in simple language. No mathematical skills or other manipulations were used..
- When using a questionnaire, researchers have more or less no control in the field. In this regard, the researcher does not need to take control on the field for the questionnaires to be completed. Researchers who choose to make use of different people to hand out the questionnaires, could affect different responses. The researcher in this regard selected to hand out the questionnaire himself.

3.14 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The data collection process took place as follows:

The researcher applied for the necessary permission to conduct this research. On 13 January 2013, permission was granted from the Free State Department of Education to conduct this research in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District. A literature review was conducted in order to develop the necessary questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed with the permission letter from the Free State Department of Education. The researcher collected the questionnaires from the different schools.

3.15 MY ROLE AS A RESEARCHER

In quantitative studies, the researcher's role is theoretically non-existent (Greenbank, 2003). That is, in the perfect quantitative study, participants act independently of the researcher as if he or she were not there. In experimental studies, a double-blind placebo controlled study is the gold standard and is used to try and remove biases and subjectivity from the study.

According to Greenbank (2003), quantitative studies ideally should be repeatable by others and, under the same conditions, should yield similar results. In correlation studies, the data are collected without regard to the participants or the person collecting the data. The

researcher remained as objective as possible, as he was not taking part in the research on the ground, but merely facilitate the process. This was done by not assisting the participants in their responses, thus participants expressed their own views without being told how to respond. Moreover, questionnaires were used as quantitative research instruments. The questionnaires were used for this study because of the quest for objectivity and the desire to minimize bias and distortion.

3.16 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data analysis means to break down components (Mouton, 1996: 161). Analysing at this stage is where the researcher will reduce the collected data to themes and categories by manipulating, ordering, categorising and summarising (Kerlinger in De Vos, et al., 1998:208).

According to Gay and Airasian (2003: 239), data analysis takes place simultaneously with data collection. The initial step in data analysis is managing the data so that it can be studied. They further corroborate that the researcher cannot interpret data until the data is broken down and classified in some way. They claim that the analysis itself requires four iterative steps, namely reading, memoing, describing, classifying and interpreting, which is a cyclical process focusing on becoming familiar with the data and identifying main themes in it.

Gay and Airasian (2003: 239) further state that the interrelationships among reading, memoing, describing, classifying and interpreting are not necessarily linear. However, as the researcher begins to internalise and reflect on the data, the initial sequence loses its structure and becomes less predictable. They emphasise that it is not the four steps that lead to understanding and interpretation, but the researcher's ability to think, imagine, hypothesise and analyse. The researcher thus ultimately becomes the data interpreter, digesting the contents of quantitative data and finding common threads in it. McMillan and Schumacher (1993: 479) state that quantitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among categories. This means that categories and patterns must emerge from the data and not be imposed on the data prior to data collection.

According to Miles and Huberman (1994: 428-444), data analysis consists primarily of three linked sub-processes, namely data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing or verification. Data analysis needs a lot of well-informed practice and grounding of data manipulation skills (Creswell, 1994: 150). Central to this process is a focus on data reduction and data interpretation (Creswell, 1994: 154). Tesch (1990, in Creswell 1994: 153), describes the data analysis as “eclectic”, implying that there is no one correct way to analyse the data.

According to Merriam (1998: 178) and De Vos (2002: 344), data analysis involves the process of making sense out of data collected by consolidating, reducing and interpreting what participants have said and what the researcher observed. The following process was followed in the data analysis (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005: 150, De Vos, 2002: 340):

- Data was organised into smaller units in the form of main concepts, sentences and individual words,
- The data was perused several times to get a sense of what it contained as a whole. Notes suggesting categories or interpretation were jotted down,
- General categories were identified and it was at this stage that a general impression of the study phenomenon began to emerge, and
- Data was then summarised and integrated into the text for reporting.

As supported by Creswell (2009: 151-152), in order to analyse the data that was obtain, the researcher used descriptive statistics. Maree and Pietersen (2007: 183) states that the term descriptive statistics can be seen to be a joint name, which refers to several statistical techniques, aimed at ordering and abridging data in a meaningfully way.

Frequencies, meaning and percentages were calculated for the different responses to all items on the questionnaire. All the frequencies of the participants, concerning all the various categories on the questionnaires was shown together, as supported by Maree and Pietersen (2007: 187). In general, a mean was regarded as the most accepted measure of location and it was used to compute the mathematical average of the values of the participants’ responses (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 187). Since the researcher did not plan to go beyond presenting a summary of and describing the data, no inferential statistics was necessary (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 198).

3.17 QUALITY CRITERIA

In order to make sure of the quality of this research, the researcher had taken care of the most important criteria of reliability and validity as they were to become applicable to the quantitative research.

According to Creswell (2009: 149-150), reliability can be described as (1) the regularity with which a measuring instrument offers certain outcomes when nothing measured has changed and (2) indicating if there was uniformity during the administering of the research instrument.

The researcher conducted a pilot study before the actual research was completed.

3.18 VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Validity refers to accuracy, or correctness of measurement. Carmines and Zeller (1979: 12), contend that validity “concerns the crucial relationship between concept and indicator (i.e., measurement)”. In this research, the researcher needed to make sure that the research met the terms concerning relevant validity criteria that point to the quantitative research design that was followed. The following criteria, identified by Creswell (2009: 162-164), described as possible threats, were taken into consideration with reference to the validity: Statistical Conclusion Validity. According to Creswell (2009: 162-164), statistical conclusion validity can be described as the risk that occur when researchers draw wrong conclusions from the data, because of (1) insufficient statistical control, or (2) abuse of numerical statements.

Internal Validity: In general, according to Creswell (2009: 162), internal validity can be described as referring to those experiences of the participants that intimate researchers’ skill concerning drawing accurate conclusions from the data regarding the population.

External Validity: Creswell (2009: 162) mentioned the fact that external validity involves looking at risks that occur when researchers draw wrong conclusions from the research data to situations beyond those that were part of the conducted research. In this research, external validity was supported by the fact that the researcher conducted the research in actual settings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005: 99). The researcher was not intending on generalizing his results to

other situations, therefore, the threat as pointed by Creswell (2009: 162) did not influence this research negatively.

Construct Validity: According to Creswell (2009), risks concerning construct validity happen when researchers make use of poor definitions and weak measures of variables. Cohen et al., (2007: 138) point out those researchers need to ensure that their understanding of the research concepts agree with those understood generally. Construct validity relates to understanding and measurement of concepts used in research (Hagan, 2006, Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). Construct validity is theoretically and philosophically based and is concerned with whether or not survey questions measure the constructs intended for measurement. For the sake of this research, the researcher developed his own questionnaires, based on the literature review (cf. chapter two). The researcher adhered to construct validity asking the supervisor to confirm that their understanding of the vital concepts was generally sound. Eliminating threats to construct validity involved practical reasoning as there typically is no criteria with which to compare measurements.

3.18.1 Threads to validity

Fowler (2002) identifies four reasons why participants may respond inaccurately when completing a questionnaire. First, respondents may not understand a question. If respondents infer different meaning from the same question, then error is likely to occur. Researchers must write questions that are easily and consistently understood. The researcher designed the questionnaire to include questions that were easy to comprehend and easy to answer. Fowler also states that researchers sometimes must provide definitions if research is based around a complex construct. Furthermore, the development of survey questions was guided by the literature review and some were modified from previous questionnaires.

Second, participants may not have the requisite knowledge to answer a questionnaire item accurately (Fowler, 2002). This often occurs when researchers ask respondents to answer very detailed questions, when researchers ask respondents to remember events that occurred in a particular time frame, and when researchers desire information that respondents cannot provide. First of all, the questionnaire did not include any questions that required very

detailed responses. The majority of questions were designed as single item measures with interval level response categories. Many questions required respondents to make a mark to the number that corresponded to their perceptions.

Third, respondents may not remember enough about what is being asked to provide an accurate answer and often have difficulty recalling information about events that happened in the past (Fowler, 2002). Thus, researchers sometimes ask respondents to provide information about events that occurred within a particular time frame.

Finally, respondents sometimes do not want to answer particular questions (Fowler, 2002). This often occurs when researchers ask questions that respondents perceive to be sensitive or intrusive. The researcher did not anticipate this to be a problem for this study as the topic of inquiry referred to learners' views on classroom discipline. Furthermore, this survey is measuring learners' perceptions of discipline in a classroom environment. As previously mentioned, this study utilized a self-administered questionnaire and participation was anonymous. Being able to complete the questionnaire on their own and having their identity remain anonymous, often increases the level of accuracy. This study also was concerned with survey error as it relates to validity. Survey error is discussed in the following paragraph.

3.18.2 Survey error

The overall goal of the tailored design approach is to reduce survey error. According to Dillman (2007), there are four sources of error that concerns researchers when gathering data from surveys. These sources of error are related to sampling, coverage, measurement, and non-response. Sampling error occurs when the completed sample (i.e., those individuals who complete and return surveys) does not adequately represent the sample population. This typically occurs when only some, and not all, of the sampling elements are included in the completed sample. Sampling error could result if there are problems with how surveys are distributed. If a low response rate results from issues related to sampling, then the researcher will have introduced error into the study. Error in this case results from particular members of the sample population being excluded from participation. Assuming there are no problems with survey distribution, individuals will self-select themselves into the sample by choosing

to complete and return the survey. Therefore, there is a possibility that the completed sample is not representative of the sample population. However, the researcher attempted to gather data from every member of the sample population or sampling frame as questionnaires were distributed to different schools. In addition, the researcher collaborated with school principals to ensure that everyone had a chance to participate.

Coverage error is another source of error that researchers must consider when conducting survey research. Coverage error results when every individual in the sample population does not have an equal or known chance of selection into the completed sample (Dillman, 2007). All members must be given an equal chance to participate. For instance, if regular full-time learners have greater opportunity to respond than those who are not attending school, then error will occur. As mentioned previously, the researcher hand delivered surveys to each of the sixteen schools. This helped to ensure that every learner in the sample population had a chance to participate.

Measurement error occurs when survey questions do not accurately measure the concepts they are intended to measure and generally results from poor question wording and poor survey construction (Dillman, 2007). Survey research does not allow for adjustment to be made to the data collection instrument once it has been distributed. Thus, it is important that researchers attend to the possibilities of measurement error as meticulously as possible prior to collecting data. Prior research and theory was examined to determine relevant variables for inclusion in the construction of survey items. Therefore, it is assumed these concepts of interest were adequately explored. There is still a possibility that measurement error occurred if learners' responses to the survey did not accurately reflect the responses they would make in real situations. For instance, respondents are sometimes concerned that their behaviours might be construed as socially unacceptable, or undesirable. Measures were taken to alleviate concerns with social desirability. The survey asked learners about their perceptions and not about actual behaviours. Also, respondents were granted anonymity in exchange for their information, which removed any chance for embarrassment from particular responses.

Error also can arise from non-response (Dillman, 2007). This type of error results from individuals who do not complete or return the survey to the researcher. Non-response error

becomes more plausible when the individuals who do not complete and return the survey have very different characteristics than those who do complete and return the survey, and these characteristics are relevant to the study. If these characteristics are not relevant to the study, then non-response error is not plausible.

Non-response error differs from sampling and coverage error. Sampling and coverage error occur when researchers do not adequately provide members of the sample population a chance to participate. Non-response error occurs because members of the sample population decide not to participate. Dillman's (2007) tailored design approach contains five strategies for increasing response rate. These strategies, which already have been discussed, include: using respondent friendly questionnaires. In addition, the researcher targeted a population that was familiar with the research topic. The researcher emphasized the notion that respondents' participation would provide learners with a voice. These strategies likely increased the response rate for this study.

3.18.3 Human subjects protection

Every effort was made by the researcher to ensure the protection of research participants. Participants also provided their consent to participate. Before doing so, it was the researcher's responsibility to adequately inform participants of the purpose and procedures of the research as well as the possible risks and benefits involved in participating. As previously stated, the survey was accompanied by a cover letter, which conveyed the purpose of the research inquiry, the importance and usefulness of participation, and also served as an informed consent document. Completing and returning the survey was considered implied consent from respondents. The informed consent document communicated to participants the voluntary nature of participants, the level of risk involved, the absence of deception, and that participation would remain anonymous. Each of these items is discussed below.

I anticipated not having any direct contact with research participants. Therefore, it was possible learners could inaccurately perceive that completing the survey was mandatory. The informed consent document, or cover letter, explained that participation was voluntary and respondents had the freedom to withdraw at any point during the process.

There were minimal risks to respondents for participating in this study. A key ethical dilemma within social science research is the issue of deceptive research (Warren & Karner, 2005). There were no elements of deception used within this research study. Contrary to deception, the researcher was attempting to establish trust with potential respondents in order to obtain truthful and accurate data. Methods for establishing trust included the absence of deception, the voluntary nature of participation, the minimal risks involved, the use of an informed consent document, the relevance of the topic to the sample population, and the protection of anonymity.

The most significant concern related to respondent protection is the protection of their privacy. Respondents are likely to participate in research inquiries if they are allowed to participate anonymously (Dillman, 2007). Anonymity means it was impossible for me to associate any particular data with the individual that provided that data (Neuman, 2004). I ensured anonymity first, by not having any direct contact with the sampling frame. As previously discussed, surveys were hand delivered to each of the schools and were left to principals.

3.18.4. Weaknesses and Strengths

Research designs generally contain particular weaknesses and strength, especially in the social sciences. Researchers must critically analyze the specific challenges related to their topic of interest and design their study in a way that will either eliminate or reduce these challenges so that reliable and valid data is received. Some research obstacles are inevitable, however, it is still imperative that researchers consider these obstacles and attempt to include features that will strengthen their research design. This section addresses the specific weaknesses and strengths of research design for this study.

3.18.5. Weaknesses

There are a few elements of the research design that may be considered as weaknesses. The study used self-administered questionnaires to collect data and there are several inherent weaknesses within this method. For instance, researchers are not able to explain the study in

person, open-ended questions are not feasible, methods are not flexible, and high response rates are unlikely. Explaining the research study in person would provide the researcher an opportunity to answer any questions or alleviate any concerns that respondents may have. In addition, the researcher would be able to more explicitly convey that the research study was intended to benefit learners. The researcher attempted to accomplish these things by stating very clearly in the cover letters the purposes and nature of the research inquiry. Furthermore, the questionnaires were simple and straightforward and the respondents in the position to answer them without any difficulty. Therefore, the need to explain the research in person was not of high concern.

A second concern was the lack of flexibility in the survey method. Once the questionnaires were formulated and distributed, adjustments were not possible. This could have proved harmful to the results if questions were misunderstood or not articulated clearly. The researcher followed the tailored design approach formulated by Dillman (2007) and also the suggestions for improving research studies by Fowler (2002). Both Dillman and Fowler provide valuable information for constructing and administering questionnaires. In addition, the questionnaire was constructed after a thorough review of the literature and some of the survey items were modified from existing questionnaires.

Third, a common challenge for researchers utilizing the survey method is receiving high response rates. It is very easy for members of the sampling frame to disregard a survey that is either sent to them or left for them to complete. According to Fowler (2002), there is no agreed upon response rate as low as 30%. However, if response rates are too low, then validity of the findings is severely impacted. The researcher included elements of the tailored design approach in an effort to increase response rates.

3.18.6. Strengths

There are several strengths contained within this research design that are related to sampling, the method of data collection, and the topic of inquiry. The sample population was interested in the topic. These characteristics were expected to increase the response rate and also increase the quality of data received. In addition, these characteristics increased the

advantages for using the survey method. For instance, respondents with the above mentioned characteristics were more likely to understand the nature of the survey questions, to comprehend the questionnaire, and more likely, to complete the questionnaire.

The survey method itself contains several advantages. Researchers are able to collect large amounts of data in a relatively short time frame and may do so at a reasonable cost. As previously mentioned, survey methods also allow respondents to complete questionnaires at their own convenience and privacy. This particular survey was formulated by reviewing the literature and from researching previous surveys used for measuring classroom behaviours. This study also utilized Dillman's (2007) strategies for reducing error in survey research. Respondents may have found it satisfying to share their insights and perceptions about the topic of inquiry. This survey provided learners with that opportunity.

3.19 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Pietersen and Maree (2007a: 215) define reliability as pointing to the ability of an instrument to generate similar findings even when it is used repeatedly in different situations. The same authors, Pietersen and Maree (2007a: 216-217), described the validity of a measuring instrument as the point to which the instrument measures what it intends measuring.

(a) Reliability

Internal reliability, or sometimes known as internal consistency, is measured when researchers calculate Cronbach alpha. This Cronbach alpha was linked to the inter-item correlation: as indicated by Pietersen and Maree (2007b: 216). High inter-correlation between the questionnaire items would imply that the Cronbach alpha will be near to one. However, low concentration between these items would imply that the items do not correlate well. Thus, the Cronbach alpha will be near to zero. According to Pietersen and Maree (2007b: 216), the following Cronbach alpha coefficient findings are a sound indication to researchers concerning the type of reliability that they should use:

0.90-high reliability

0.80-moderate reliability

0.70-low reliability

Yet, in more modern terms, Simon (2008) mentions the possibility of the wider range of 0.6-0.9 as indicating that a Cornbrash alpha complies with reliability criteria.

The researcher asked the Statistical Consultation Services to calculate the relevant Cornbrash alphas. This ensured the reliability of the research instrument.

(b) Validity

Face validity: As indicated by Pietersen and Maree (2007a: 217), indicates the degree to which the research instrument appears to be valid when one is looking at it. The question thus is, does it measure what the researcher wants it to measure? In this research the researcher once again used his supervisor to ensure face validity.

Content validity: This points towards the degree to which the research instruments include the entire content of the construct/s that the researcher intends to measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2007: 217). The self-developed questionnaire reflected various parts of the content domain, as informed by doing the relevant literature review in chapter two of this document. The supervisor guided the researcher in making sure that the necessary content was included in the questionnaire.

Construct validity: Pietersen and Maree (2007: 217) mention this type of validity as necessary for standardization: it is all about to what extent different questionnaire items measure the constructs that are included in an instrument. The items in the self-developed questionnaire were verified by the researcher's supervisor, to determine whether it measures the constructs/in question.

Criterion validity: This type of validity is seen as the final test that measures if the instrument measures what the researcher intends to measure (Pietersen & Maree, 2007: 217). For this, the researcher needs access to the scores of an existing instrument. Since the

researcher used a self-developed questionnaire, no access to score of an existing instrument was possible.

3.20 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

With the help of the supervisor, the researcher applied for ethical research permission from the University of South Africa. The researcher developed the relevant letters of consent that were handed to the research participants, asking them to indicate their approval for taking part: (1) one addressed to parents/care givers of the under aged learners, (2) one addressed to the learners and (3) one addressed to principals at the participating schools.

I also applied for ethical research permission from the Free State Department of Education. As pointed out by Creswell (2009: 88-92), researchers need to anticipate the following five ethical issues when they plan and conduct their research:

(g) Ethical issues in the research problem

The researcher has identified a significant research gap, relevant to the field of research and that will be to the benefit of the participating learners. Determining learners' perceptions of discipline as a management tool in school classrooms is relevant to creating and maintaining successful public schools.

(h) Ethical issues in the purpose and questions

The researcher explained the purpose of the study to all participants before the study commenced and clarified any questions the participants might have.

(i) Ethical issues in data collection

The researcher developed the relevant letters of consent which were handed to the parents/caregivers, learners and principals at the participating schools. These letters had to be signed by each party.

(j) Ethical issues in data analysis and interpretation

When the researcher needs to analyse and interpret his qualitative data, he took note of the data being managed by only the Statistical Consultant.

(k) Ethical issues in writing and disseminating the research

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 117-125) also list a number of ethical considerations for quantitative research. The following were adhered to in this research:

Voluntary participation

No learner was forced to participate in any way. Participation was entirely voluntary.

Informed consent

Adequate information on the aims of the research, the procedures that would be followed, possible advantages and disadvantages for the respondents, the credibility of the researcher, and how the results would be used, were given to the respondents. This enabled the respondents to make an informed decision on whether they wanted to participate in the research or not. The consent of other relevant parties (such as parents) was also obtained.

Deception of subjects and/or respondents

No form of deception was inflicted upon the respondents. In other words, withholding information or offering incorrect information to ensure participation of subjects was considered unethical.

Violation of privacy

The privacy of the respondents was protected at all costs. No concealed media such as video cameras, one-way mirrors or microphones were used.

Researcher Actions and competence of the research

The researcher ensured that he was competent to undertake the research project. This implied thorough preparation before embarking on the research and requesting the participation of learners. During the research, no value judgements were made under any circumstances.

Confidentiality and anonymity

Information about the respondents was considered confidential. Only the researcher had access to the data collected. This was ensured in the following ways: collecting data anonymously, and reporting only group, not individual results. In addition to the above, the names of participating learners would not be revealed.

Permission to conduct research

To conduct research at an institution such as a school, approval has to be obtained before any data may be collected. This was done and the correct procedures were followed. The researcher employed a language editor to ensure clear and concise statements.

3.21 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an explanation of the quantitative research design selected for this study, which aimed to explore the classroom discipline techniques in selected schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District. The philosophical background informing the quantitative approach was discussed and justified within the context of this study. The research methodology was described in detail, as were the ethical considerations and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness/reliability.

3.22 PROJECTION OF THE NEXT CHAPTER

In Chapter Four, the data analysis and interpretation will be presented and discussed.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3 the focus was placed on the research methods that were used in collecting the data for this study. A literature review and quantitative research methods was explained and the data collection instrument that I used were indicated. Chapter 4 deals with collected data, presentation, analysis and interpretation.

4.2. AIM OF THE RESEARCH

As mentioned previously, the aim of this empirical research was to gather information about Learners' perceptions of discipline as management tool in school classrooms, Thabo Mofutsanyana District- Free State Province. Again, to investigate how classroom discipline is managed at schools in the same district. To achieve this aim, questionnaires were distributed amongst learners in the demarcated area. The questionnaire is attached (see Appendix A).

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a set of information obtained through systematic investigation. It can refer to information that is numerical or narrative (De Poy & Gitlin, 1998: 305). Neumann (2011: 271) asserts that data analysis is a technique for gathering and explaining the content of the text. The content refers to words, meanings, ideas or any messages that can be communicated. The text is anything written, visual or spoken that serves as a medium of communication. The study follows the quantitative method of data analysis with narrative reporting and interpretation of results. Monnette, Sullivan and Cornell (1999: 11) advocate that analysis of data in quantitative research involves inferences which, in this study imply that judgement is passed, reasoning is used and a conclusion is reached based on evidence.

According to Creswell (2009: 140) the effective strategy of reducing the data, is to develop codes or categories and sort text or visual images and categories. Therefore the interpretation of the text serves to develop the theory and is at the same time that basis for the decision

about which additional data should be collected (Flick, 1998: 178). The summary of data collected is presented in this chapter. Tables are used to indicate frequency counts as well as tests for statistical significance.

4.4. KEY TO THE ACRONYMS USED IN THE DATA ANALYSIS

Table 4.1: Acronyms key

N	Valid responses
F	Frequency
%	Percentage
Sec	Sections

4.5 BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANTS

As pointed out by Maree and Pietersen (2007: 164), data on the participants' factual situation, such as age and gender, can support a researcher in determining the outline of the sample. Questionnaires that were developed for this research comprised of variables that can be identified as main-type (Maree & Pietersen, 2007: 164).

This section presents the responses of the participants in terms of their biographic information: these responses are based on Section A of the questionnaire, which consisted of A-A5 (see appendix).

4.5.1 Biographic information of the participants: Section A

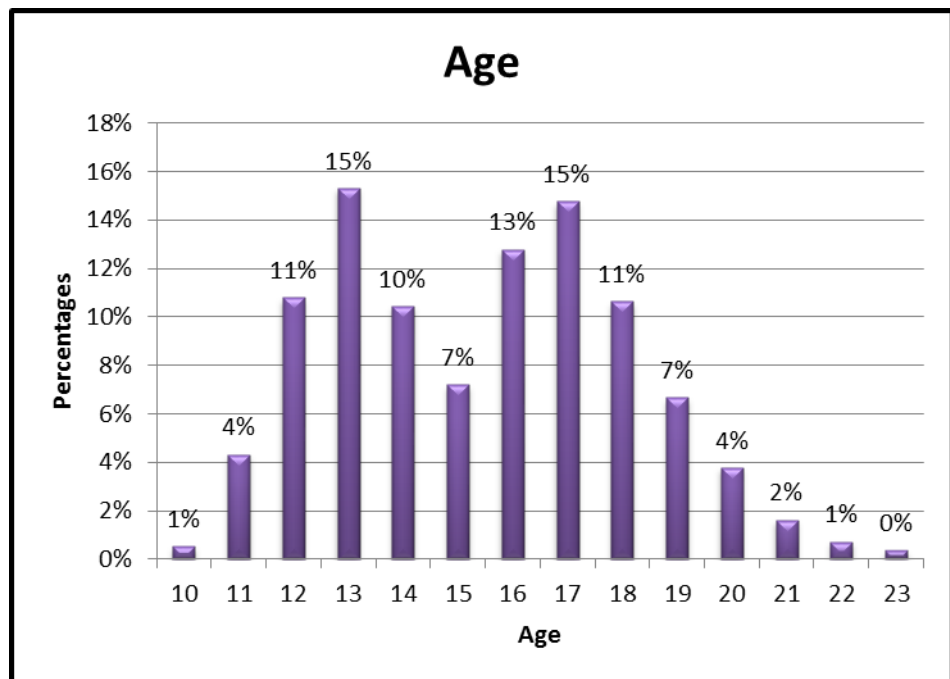
Learners were encouraged to firstly provide information on their age, grades, gender, type of school and district. These sets of data will now be reported.

Age of the participants

The data on the learner participants' age will be reflected in Table and graph 4.3 below

Table and graph 4.3 Age of the participants

Age	F	%
10	3	1%
11	24	4%
12	60	11%
13	85	15%
14	58	10%
15	40	7%
16	71	13%
17	82	15%
18	59	11%
19	37	7%
20	21	4%
21	9	2%
22	4	1%
23	2	0%
	555	100%



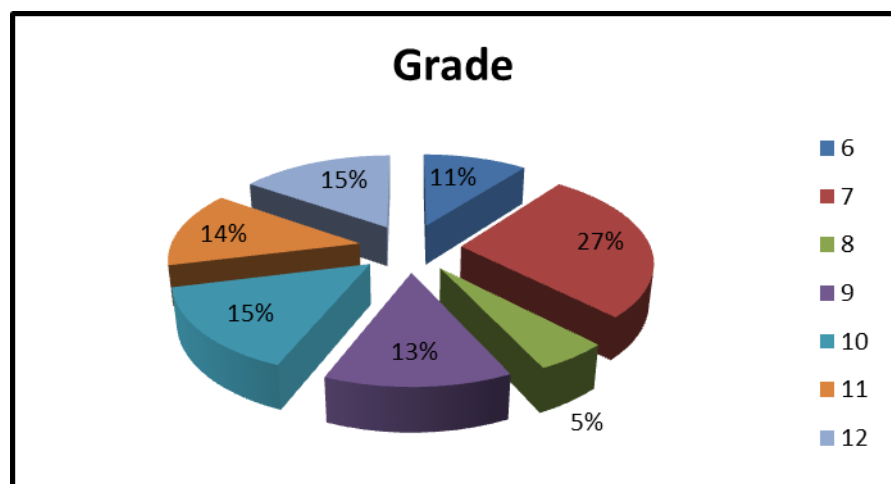
Responses in table 4.3 above indicate that the majority of learners (15%) fall within the 12-18 years age category while the minority of them (0-7%) fall within the 20-23 years category. The possibility may be that most learners completed their grade 12 between the ages 17-18.

Grade of participants

Table and graph 4.4

Grade of participants

Grade	F	%
6	58	10%
7	151	27%
8	29	5%
9	73	13%
10	83	15%
11	75	14%
12	86	15%
	555	100%

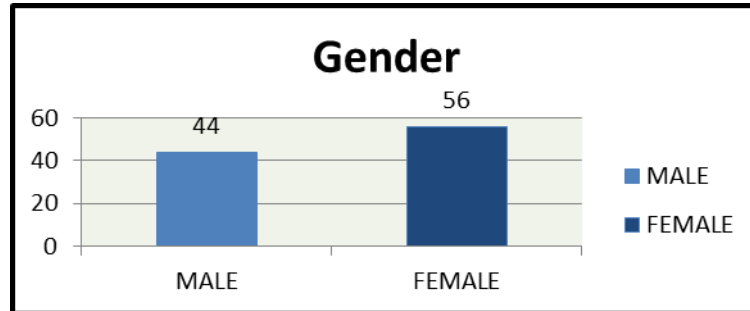


The data in table 4.4 indicates that the majority of participants (27%) are in grade 7, followed by between (13-15%) in grade 9-12.

Gender

Table and graph 4.5

Gender	F	%
Male	243	44%
Female	312	56%
	555	100%

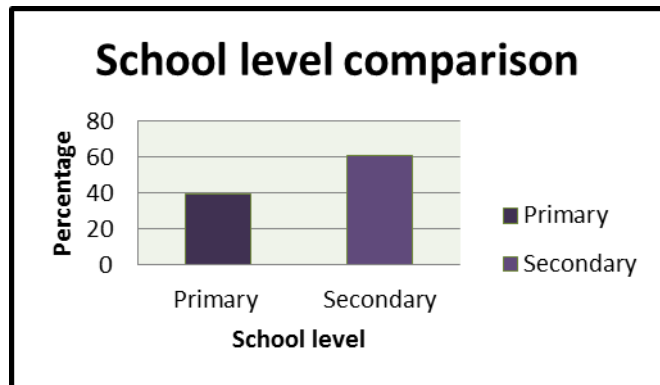


Responses in table 4.5 above indicate that the majority of learners (56%) are females while only (44%) of them are males.

Type of school

Table and graph 4.6

School level comparison	F	%
Primary School	217	39%
Secondary School	338	61%
	555	100%



The data in table 4.6 above indicate that the majority of participants were from secondary schools with (61%) while only (39%) of them are from the primary schools.

4.6 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Learner Questionnaire

Section B: Classroom Rules

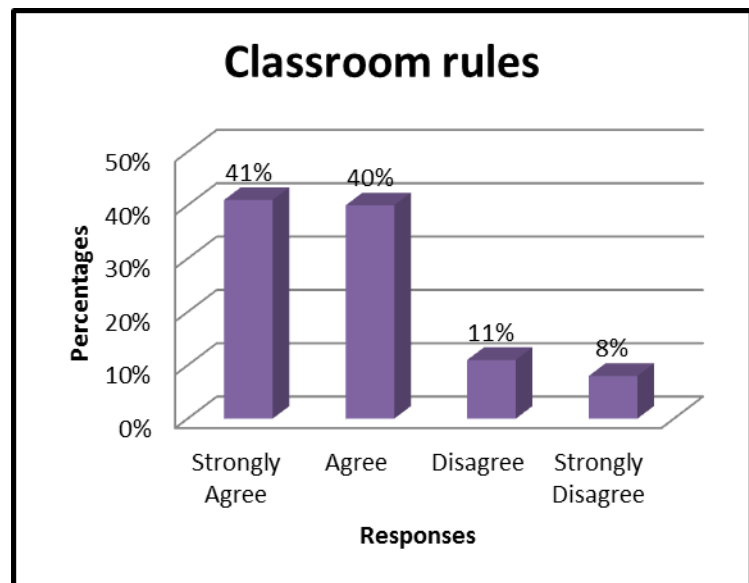
This section presents the responses of participants on how they feel about classroom discipline at their respective schools. The responses are based on section B of the questionnaire, which consisted of B-B9 (see appendix).

Question 1: I help to make the classroom rules

Question 1 was thus asked to determine whether learners take part in formulating classroom rules. The results are recorded in table 4.7 below.

Table and graph 4.7 I help to make classroom rules

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	227	41%
Agree	223	40%
Disagree	62	11%
Strongly Disagree	43	8%
	555	100%



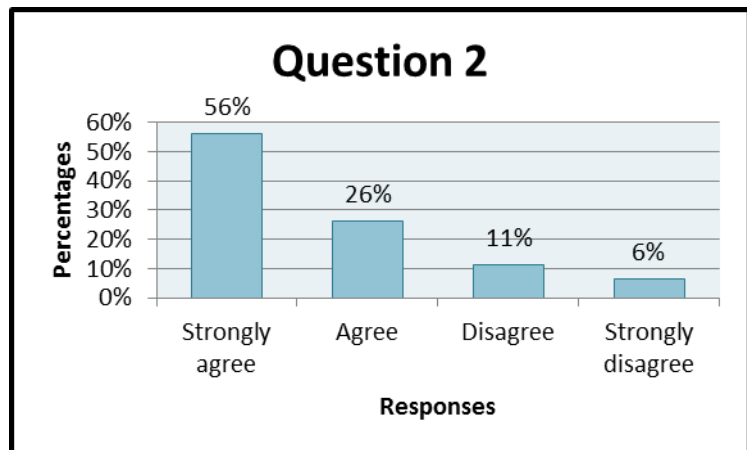
The results in figure 4.5 show that the majority of the respondents (41%) strongly agree that learners do help their educators in making classroom rules while only (8%) strongly disagree.

Question 2: The educator makes the classroom rules.

The question was asked to determine whether the educator is the only one who makes classroom rules. The results are recorded in table 4.8 below.

Table and graph 4.8: The educator makes the classroom rules

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	311	56%
Agree	146	26%
Disagree	62	11%
Strongly Disagree	36	6%
	555	100%



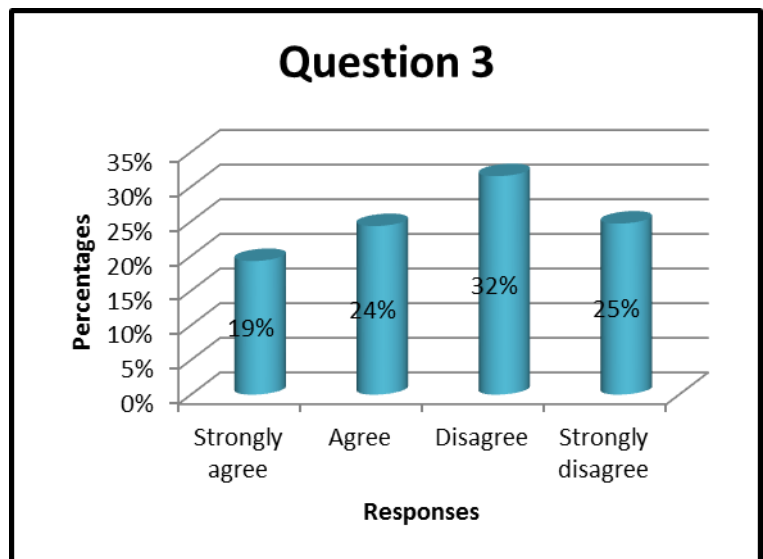
The results in figure 4.8 above, indicates that the majority of respondents (56%) strongly agree that the educator is the only one who makes the classroom rules while only (6%) strongly disagree that the educator is the only one who makes classrooms.

Question 3: Only class leaders help to make classroom rules.

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether class leaders do help to make classroom rules and the results are recorded in table 4.9 below.

Table and graph 4.9

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	107	19%
Agree	136	24%
Disagree	175	32%
Strongly Disagree	137	25%
	555	100%



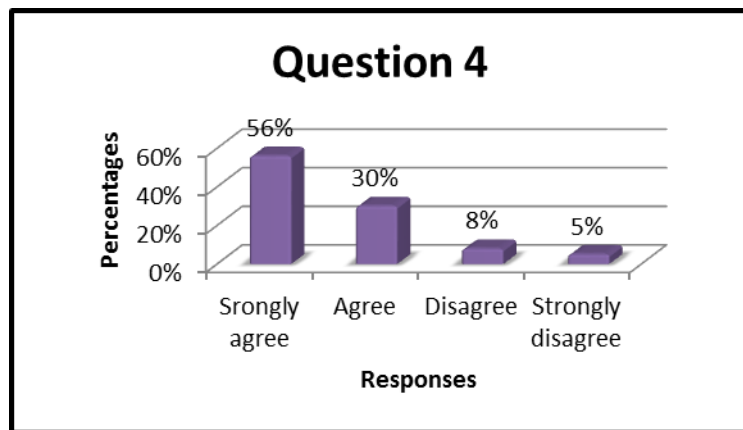
The majority of learners (32%) disagree that class leaders do help educators to make classroom rules while (24%) agree that class leaders do help educators to make classroom rules. This indicates that only educators to make classroom rules in the district.

Question 4: Classroom rules are clear

For learners to understand what classroom rules are all about, rules must be clear and precise. This question was asked to determine whether the classroom rules are clear and understandable.

Table and graph 4.10

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	312	56%
Agree	168	30%
Disagree	45	8%
Strongly Disagree	30	5%
	555	100%



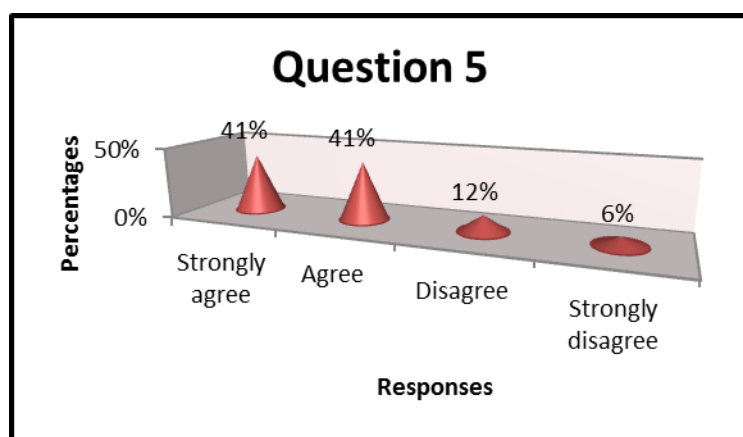
The majority of learners (56%) strongly agree that the classroom rules are clear while only (5%) strongly disagree.

Question 5: Learners obey the classroom rules.

This question was asked to determine whether learners do obey their classroom rules. Results are recorded in table 4.11 below.

Table and graph 4.11

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	226	41%
Agree	230	41%
Disagree	64	12%
Strongly Disagree	35	6%
	555	100%



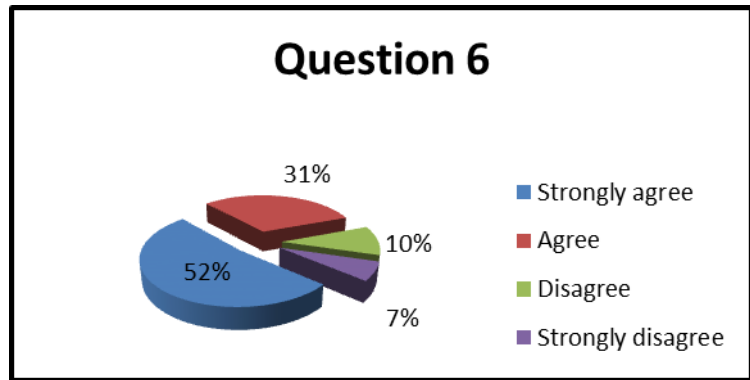
Response in the table above indicates that the majority of learners (41%) strongly agree that learners do obey their classroom rules while only (6%) strongly disagree.

Question 6: Classroom rules are written clearly.

The question was asked to determine whether rules are written clearly for learners to see and understand.

Table and graph 4.12

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	289	52%
Agree	172	31%
Disagree	57	10%
Strongly Disagree	37	6%
	555	100%



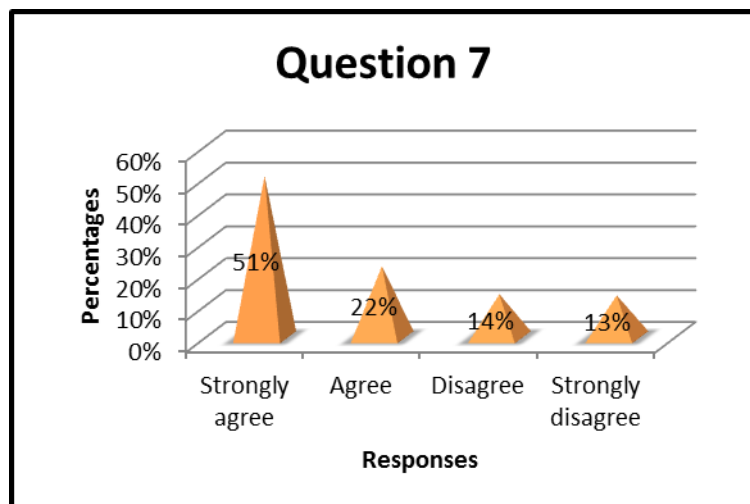
The majority of learners (52%) strongly agree that classroom rules are clearly written for them to see and understand while only (6%) of them strongly disagree.

Question 7: The classroom rules are on the wall.

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether classroom rules are written on the wall and the results are recorded in table 4.13 below.

Table and graph 4.13

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	281	51%
Agree	124	22%
Disagree	76	14%
Strongly Disagree	74	13%
	555	100%



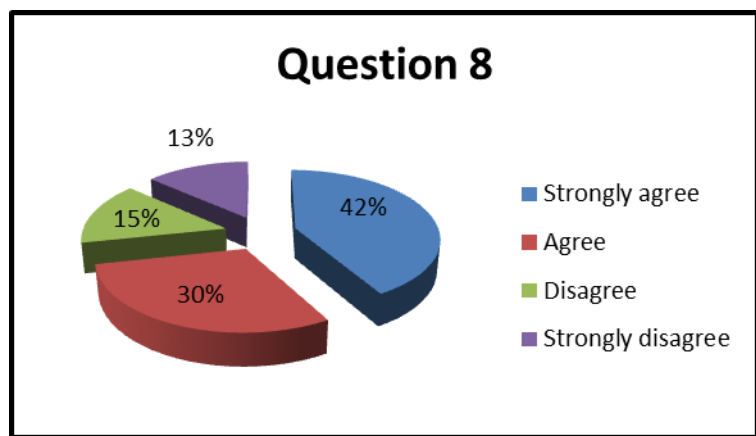
Responses in the table above indicate that the majority of learners (51%) strongly agree that classroom rules are placed on the wall so that everybody can see while only (13%) strongly disagree.

Question 8: Educators read the rules to learners in the classroom

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether educators do read classroom rules to learners, for them to understand them clearly. The results are recorded in table 4.14 below.

Table and graph 4.14

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	231	42%
Agree	166	30%
Disagree	82	15%
Strongly Disagree	76	14%
	555	100%

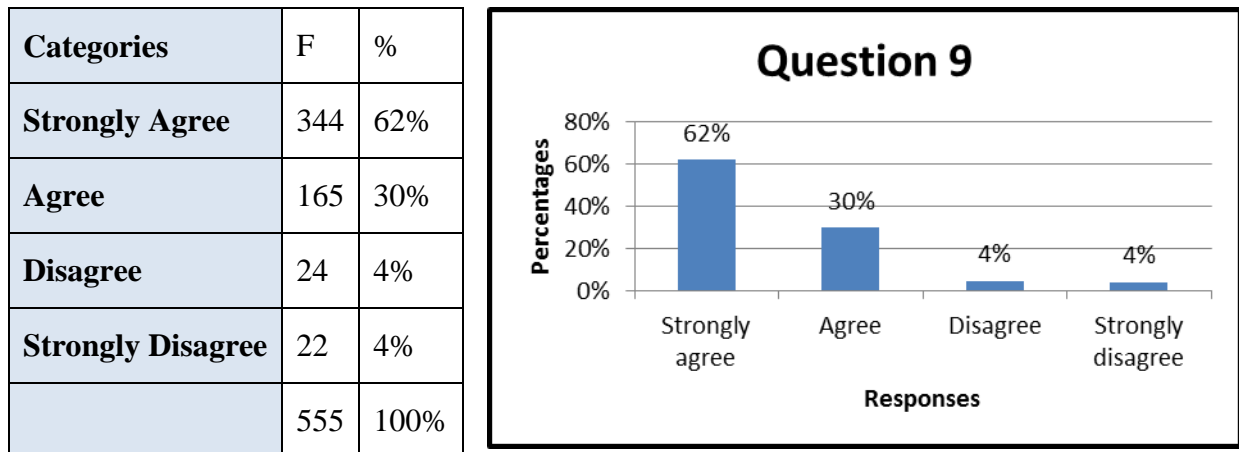


The majority of learners (42%) strongly agree that educators do read classroom rules in their respective classes while only (14%) strongly disagree.

Question 9: Learners do understand their classroom rules.

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether learners do understand their classroom rules, and results are recorded in table 4.15 below.

Table and graph 4.15



The majority of learners (62%) strongly agree that they do understand their classroom rules while only (4%) strongly disagree. The reason can be that educators explain every aspect of the rules to them.

Section C: Parental/Caregiver Support

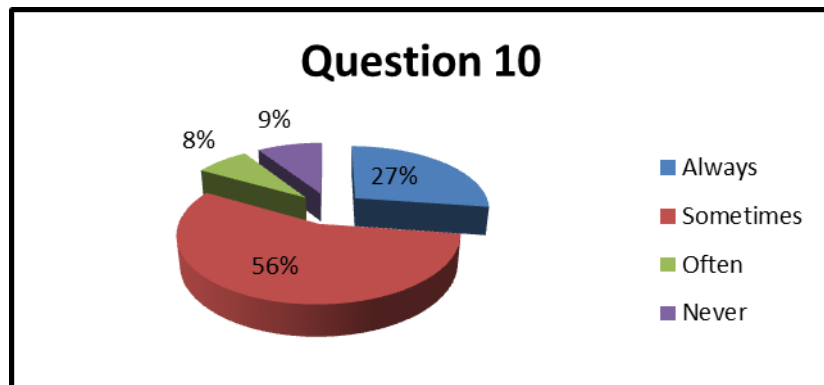
The section present the responses of the participants on how their parents/caregivers do support them in matters concerning school discipline. These responses are based on Section C of the questionnaire, which consisted of C-C14 (see appendix).

Question 10: Parents talking to educators

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether do talk with educators about the behaviour of their children. The results are recorded in table 4.16 below.

Table and graph 4.16

Categories	F	%
Always	151	27%
Sometimes	310	56%
Often	43	8%
Never	51	9%
	555	100%



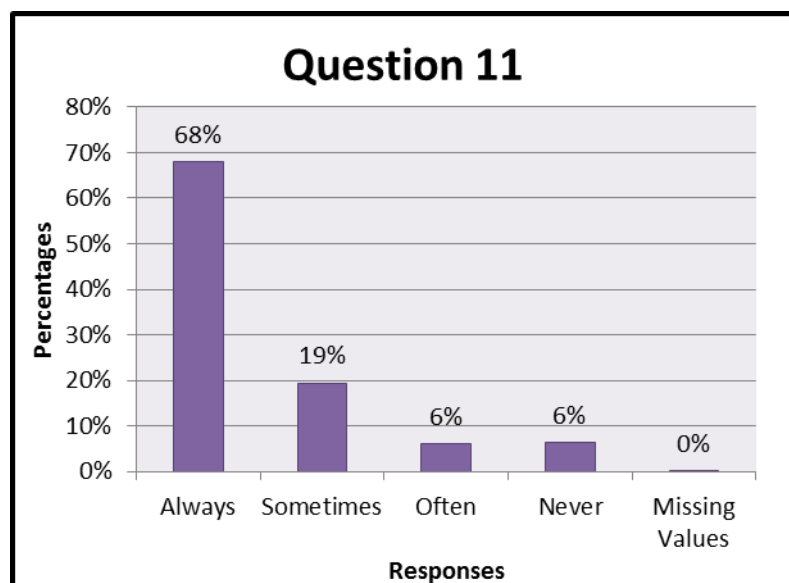
The majority of learners (27%) indicate that parents/caregiver always talks to educators about their learners progress in schools while (8%) of them do not.

Question 11: Parents/Caregiver support the school with disciplining of children.

The above mention question was asked to determine whether parents do support the school in disciplining their children and the results are recorded in table 4.17 below.

Table and graph 4.17

Categories	F	%
Always	377	68%
Sometimes	108	19%
Often	34	6%
Never	35	6%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



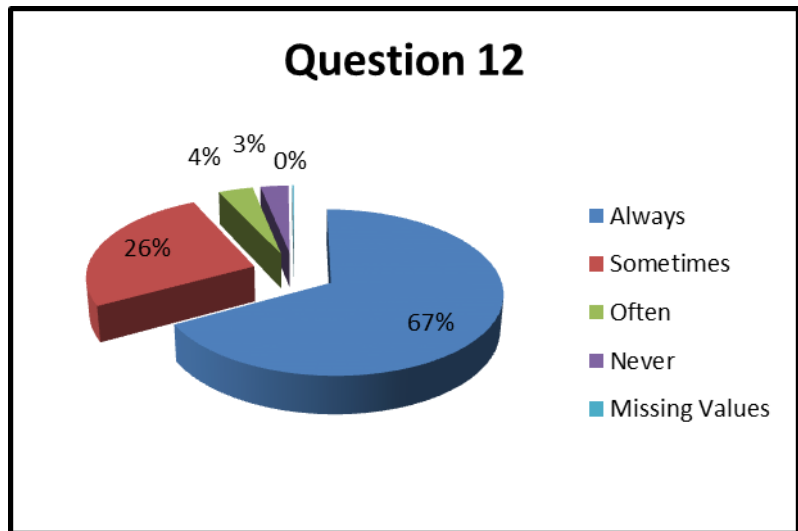
According to the above mentioned table, majority of learners indicate that their parents/caregivers do support schools with discipline while only (6%) indicate that their parents/caregiver do not support schools with discipline.

Question 12: Parents/Caregivers attending school meetings

The question was asked to determine whether parents/caregivers do attend school meetings and the results are recorded in table 4.18 below.

Table and graph 4.18

Categories	F	%
Always	372	67%
Sometimes	144	26%
Often	21	4%
Never	17	3%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



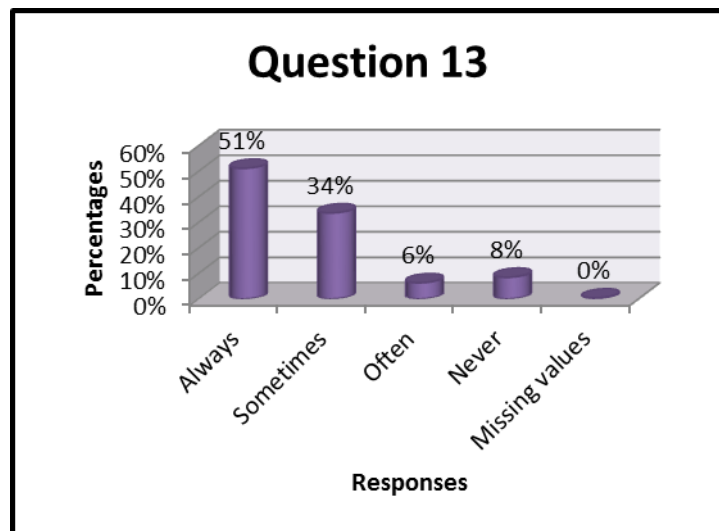
The majority of learners (67%) indicate that their parents/caregivers do attend school meeting while only (3%) indicate that their parents/caregivers never attend school meetings.

Question 13: Parents/caregivers help their children in doing their homework.

This question was asked to determine whether parents/caregivers help their children in doing their homework, and the results are recorded in table 4.19 below.

Table and graph 4.19

Categories	F	%
Always	284	51%
Sometimes	187	34%
Often	35	6%
Never	47	8%
Missing Values	2	0%
	555	100%



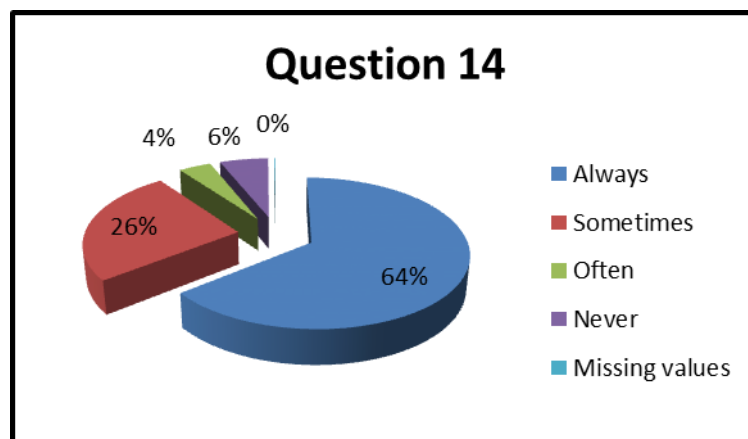
The majority of learners (51%) indicate that their parents/caregivers do help them to do their homework while only (8%) indicate that their parents/caregivers never help them to do their homework.

Question 14: Parents/Caregivers support their children at school

The question was asked to determine whether parents/caregivers do support their children at school and results are recorded in table 4.20 below.

Table and graph 4.20

Categories	F	%
Always	357	64%
Sometimes	142	26%
Often	22	4%
Never	33	6%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



The majority of learners (64%) indicate that their parents/caregivers do support them at school while only (6%) indicate that their parents/caregivers do not support them at school.

Section D: Respect and rights

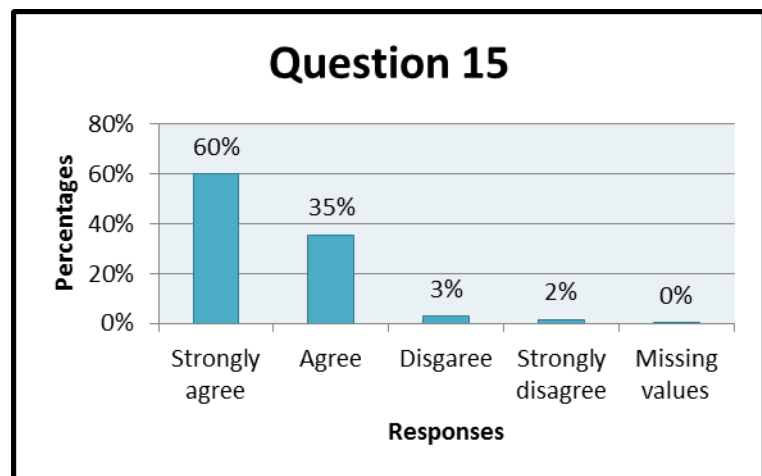
This section presents the responses of participants on how they respect their rights. Responses are based on Section D of the questionnaire, which consisted of D-D22 (see appendix).

Question 15: Respect and rights of other learners

This question was asked to determine whether learners do respect other learners' rights and results are recorded in table 4.21 below.

Table and graph 4.21

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	332	60%
Agree	197	35%
Disagree	16	3%
Strongly Disagree	9	2%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



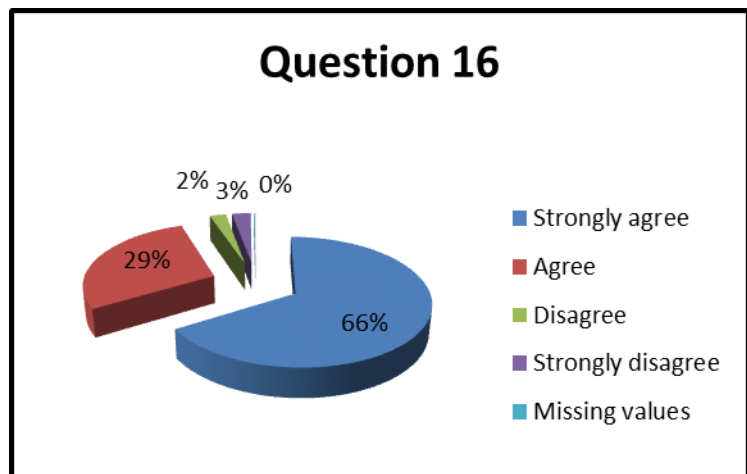
The majority of learners (60%) strongly agree that they do respect other learners' rights while only (2%) strongly disagree.

Question 16: Respecting the rights of educators

The above mention question was asked to determine whether learners do respect their educator's rights and results are recorded in table 4.22 below.

Table and graph 4.22

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	368	66%
Agree	158	28%
Disagree	13	2%
Strongly Disagree	15	3%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%

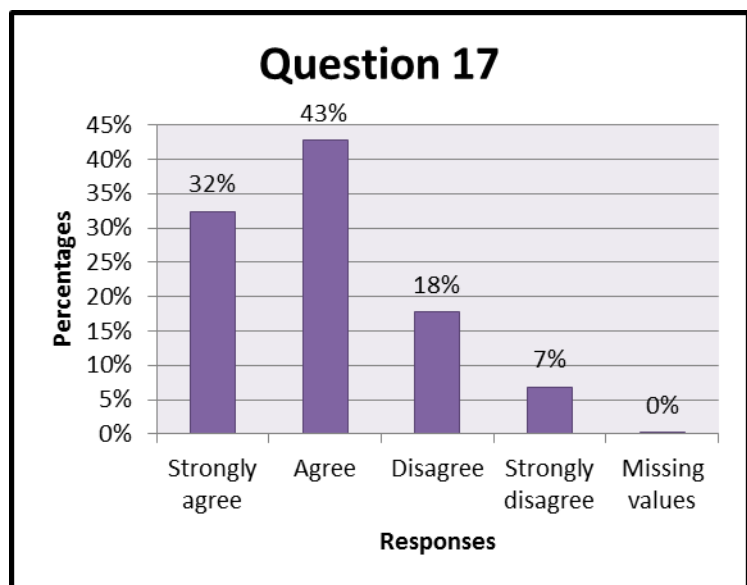


The majority of learners (66%) strongly agree that they respect the rights of their educators while only (3%) strongly disagree.

Question 17: Learners respect other’s rights

The question was asked to determine whether learners respect each other’s rights, and results are recorded in table 4.23 and graph 4.23

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	180	32%
Agree	237	43%
Disagree	99	18%
Strongly Disagree	38	7%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



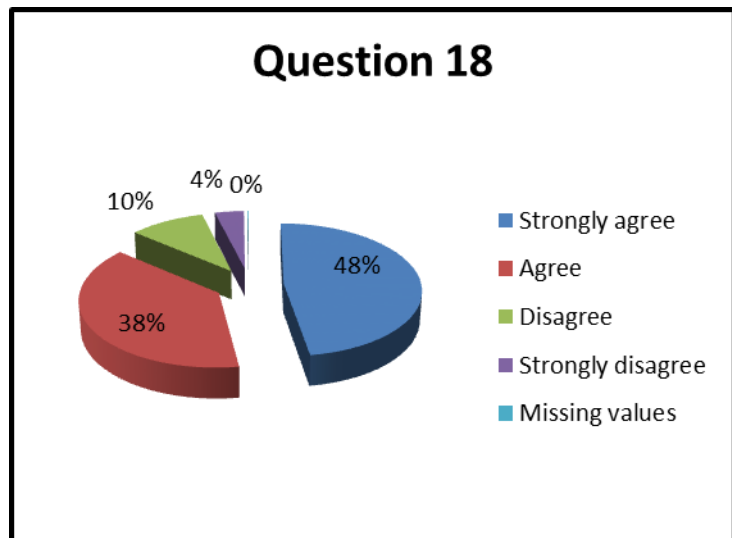
The majority of learners (43%) agree that other learners do respect their rights while only (7%) strongly disagree.

Question 18: Educators respecting the rights of learners

This question was asked to determine whether educators do respect their learners; rights. Results are recorded in table 4.24 below.

Table and graph 4.24

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	264	48%
Agree	214	39%
Disagree	55	10%
Strongly Disagree	21	4%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



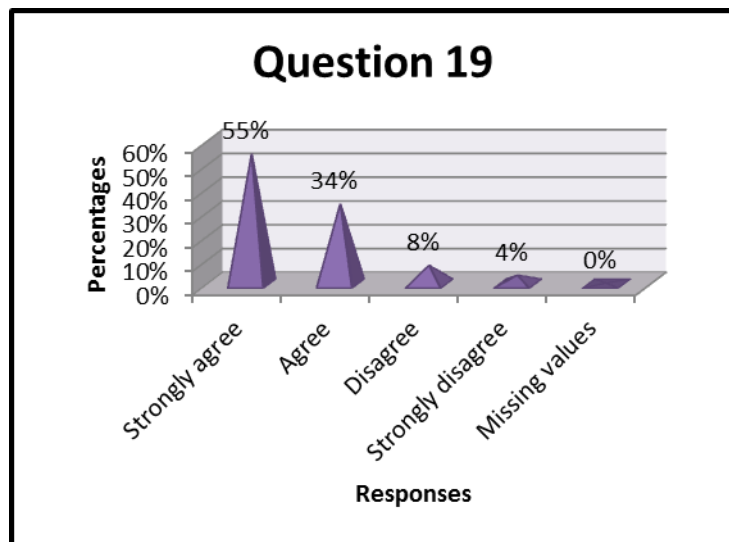
The majority of learners (48%) strongly agree that educators do respect their rights while only (4%) strongly disagree.

Question 19: Learners feel safe in the classroom.

This question was asked to determine the safety of learners in the classroom. Results are recorded in 4.25 below.

Table and graph 4.25

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	304	55%
Agree	187	34%
Disagree	43	8%
Strongly Disagree	20	4%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



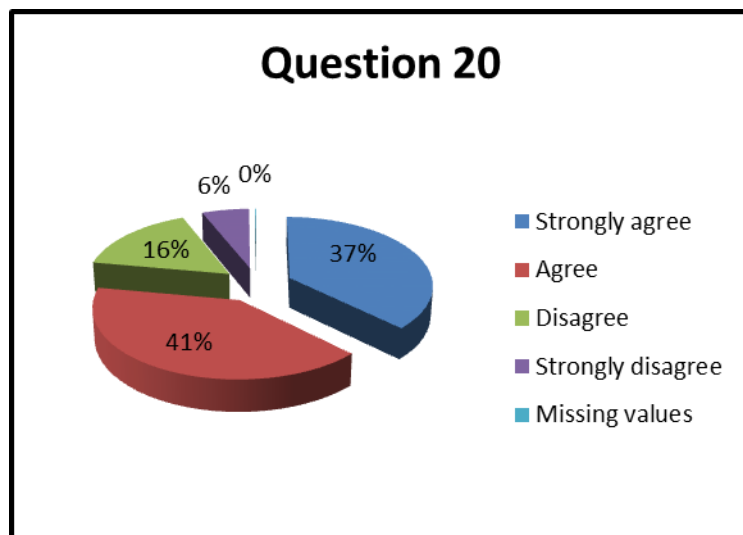
The majority of learners (55%) strongly agree that they feel safe in their classroom while only (4%) strongly disagree.

Question 20: Respect in the classroom

The above mention question was asked to determine whether learners do have respect in the classroom, and results are recorded in table 4.26 below.

Table and graph 4.26

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	207	37%
Agree	225	41%
Disagree	89	16%
Strongly Disagree	33	6%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



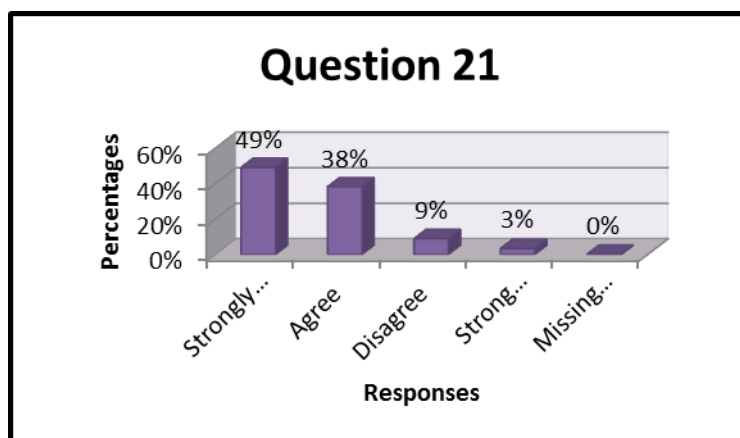
The majority of learners (41%) agree that they feel respected in their classrooms while only (6%) strongly disagree.

Question 21: Learners feels free in the classroom.

The question was asked to determine the freedom of learners in their respective classroom and results are recorded in table 4.27 below.

Table and graph 4.27

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	273	49%
Agree	212	38%
Disagree	50	9%
Strongly Disagree	19	3%
Missing Values	1	0%
	555	100%



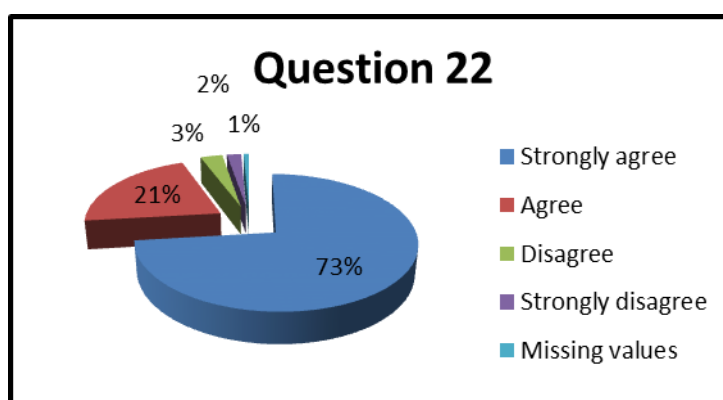
The majority of learners (49%) strongly agree that they feel free in their classroom while only (3%) strongly disagree.

Question 22: Learners do understand their rights

The above mention question was asked to determine how learners understand their rights in the classroom. Results are recorded in table 4.28 below.

Table and graph 4.28

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	406	73%
Agree	117	21%
Disagree	17	3%
Strongly Disagree	11	2%
Missing Values	4	1%
	555	100%



The majority of learners (73%) strongly agree that they do understand their rights while only (2%) of them strongly disagree that they do not understand their rights.

SECTION E: TASK AND RESPONSIBILITIES

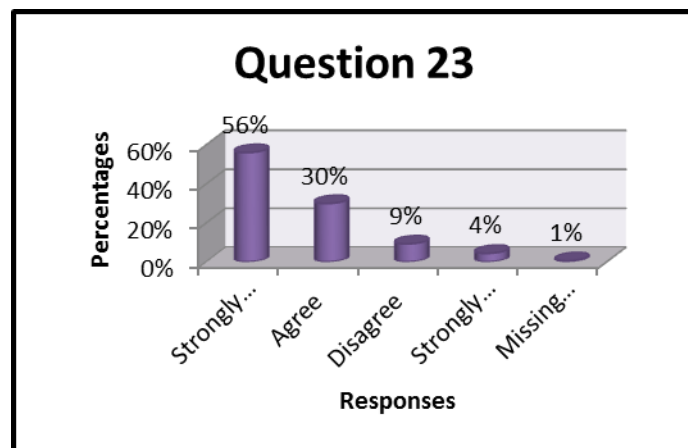
This section presents the responses of the participants about their tasks and responsibilities. The responses are based on Section E of the questionnaire, which consisted of E-E28 (see appendix).

Question 23: Educators treat learners equally.

This question was asked to determine whether learners are treated equally by their educators. Results are recorded in

Table and graph 4.29:

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	311	56%
Agree	166	30%
Disagree	51	9%
Strongly Disagree	24	4%
Missing Values	3	1%
	555	100%



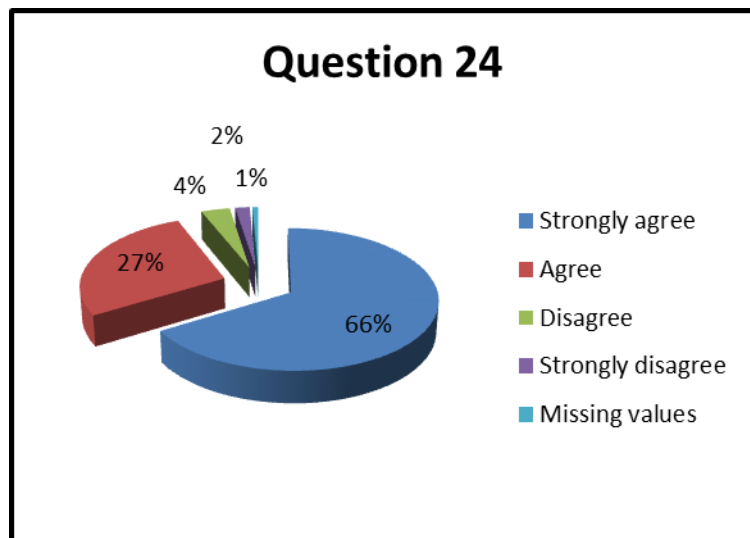
The majority of learners (56%) strongly agree that educators treat them equally while only (4%) strongly disagree.

Question 24: Learners do their class work activities.

The question was asked to determine whether learners do their class work activities and results are recorded in table 4.30 below.

Table and graph 4.30

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	368	66%
Agree	153	28%
Disagree	20	4%
Strongly Disagree	10	2%
Missing Values	4	1%
	555	100%



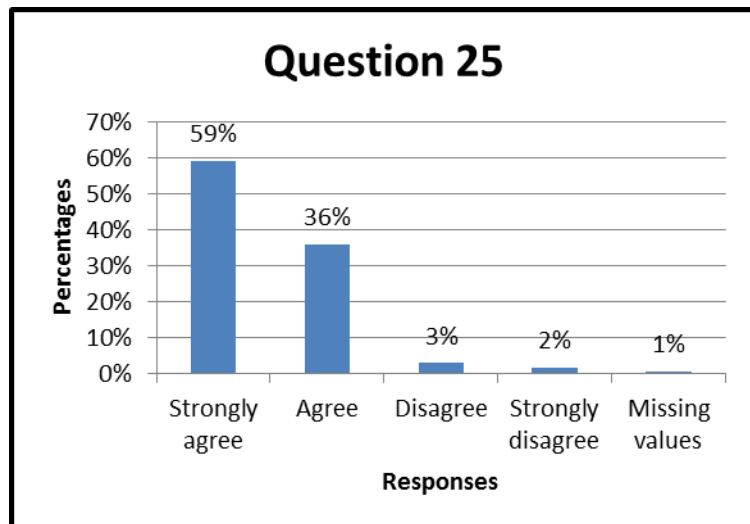
The majority of learners (66%) strongly agree that they do their class work while only (2%) strongly disagree.

Question 25: Learners doing their homework activities

The above mention question was asked to determine whether learners do their homework and the results are recorded in table 4.31 below.

Table and graph 4.31

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	328	59%
Agree	199	36%
Disagree	16	3%
Strongly Disagree	9	2%
Missing Values	3	1%
	555	100%



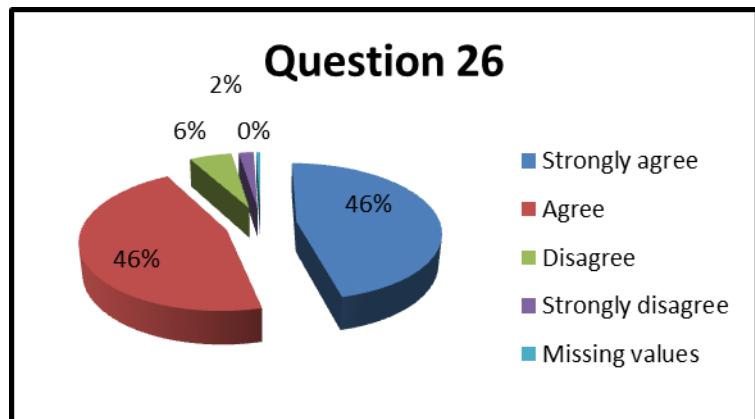
The majority of learners (59%) indicated that they do their homework activities while only (2%) strongly disagree.

Question 26: Learners answering question in the classroom

The above mention question was asked to determine whether learners do answer question when they are posed to them in the classroom. Results are recorded in table 4.32 below.

Table and graph 4.32

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	256	46%
Agree	254	46%
Disagree	31	6%
Strongly Disagree	11	2%
Missing Values	3	1%
	555	100%



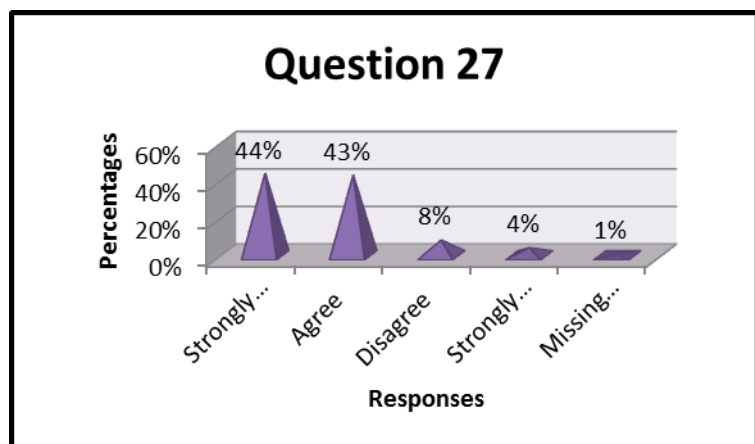
The majority of learners (46%) indicated that they answer questions when they are asked by their educators while only (2%) strongly disagree.

Question 27: Learners carry tasks in the class.

This question was asked to determine whether learners do carry tasks when given in the classroom, and results are recorded in table 4.33 below.

Table and graph 4.33

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	244	44%
Agree	239	43%
Disagree	46	8%
Strongly Disagree	23	4%
Missing Values	3	1%
	555	100%



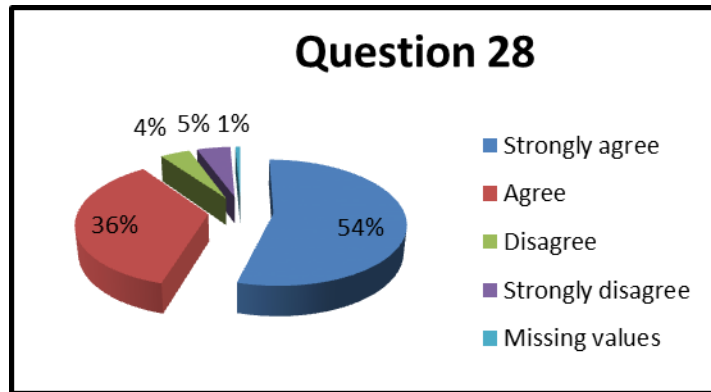
The majority of learners (44%) indicated that they do carry tasks in class while only (4%) strongly disagree.

Question 28: Learners have responsibilities in the classroom.

This question was asked to determine whether learners do have responsibilities in the classroom or not, and the results are recorded in table 4.34 below.

Table and graph 4.34

Categories	F	%
Strongly Agree	302	54%
Agree	198	36%
Disagree	24	4%
Strongly Disagree	27	5%
Missing Values	4	1%
	555	100%



The majority of learners (54%) indicated that they do have responsibilities in the classroom while only (5%) strongly disagree.

SECTION F: PUNISHMENT

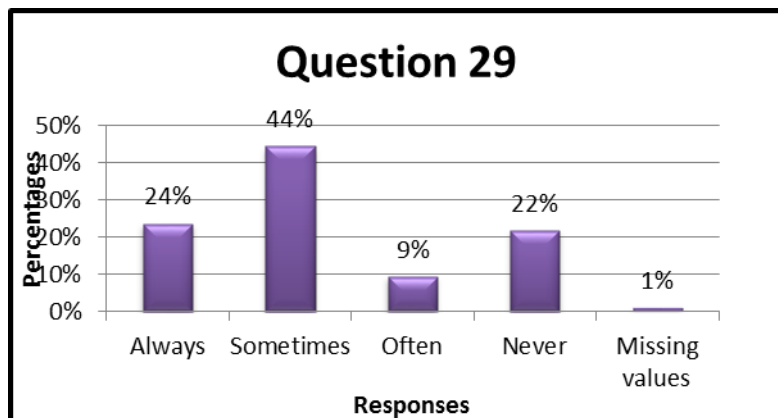
The section presents the responses of the participants on how they are punished when they misbehave in the classroom. These responses are based on section F of the questionnaire, which consisted of F-F35 (see appendix).

Question 29: Educators hit learners when they misbehave

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether educators do hit learners when they misbehave, end results are recorded in table 4.35 below.

Table and graph 4.35

Categories	F	%
Always	131	24%
Sometimes	246	44%
Often	52	9%
Never	121	22%
Missing Values	5	1%
	555	100%



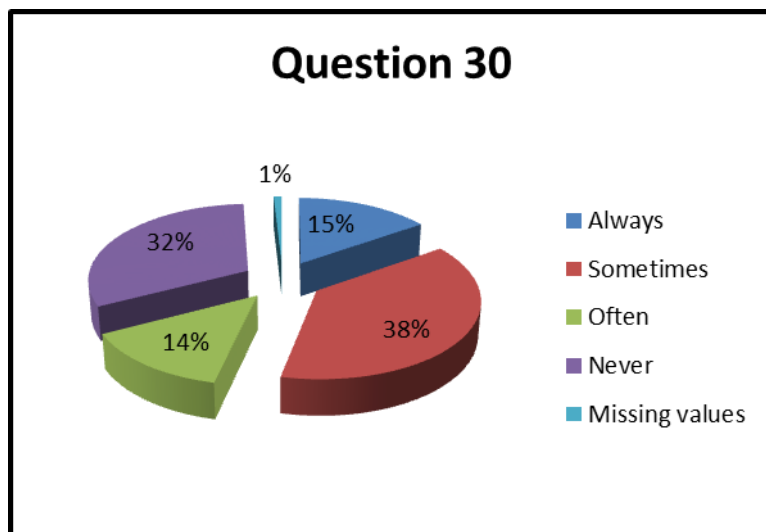
The majority of learners (44%) indicated that their educators sometimes hit them when they misbehave while (22%) indicated that their educators never hit them when they misbehave.

Question 30: Educators scold learners when they misbehave

The above mentioned question was asked to determine whether educators scold learners when they misbehave and results are recorded in table 4.36 below.

Table and graph 4.36

Categories	F	%
Always	85	15%
Sometimes	212	38%
Often	77	14%
Never	176	32%
Missing values	5	1%
	555	100%



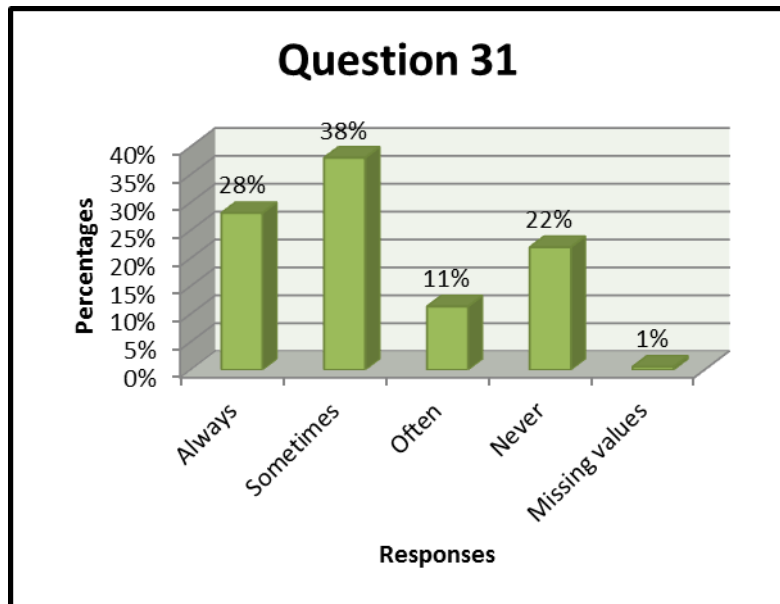
The majority of learners (38%) indicated that their educators scold them when they misbehave while only (32%) indicated that their educators never scold them when they misbehave.

Question 31: Educators warn learners when they misbehave

The above mention question was asked to determine whether educators do warn learners when they misbehave in the classroom and the results are recorded in table 4.37 below.

Table and graph 4.37

Categories	F	%
Always	156	28%
Sometimes	211	38%
Often	63	11%
Never	122	22%
Missing Values	3	1%
	555	100%



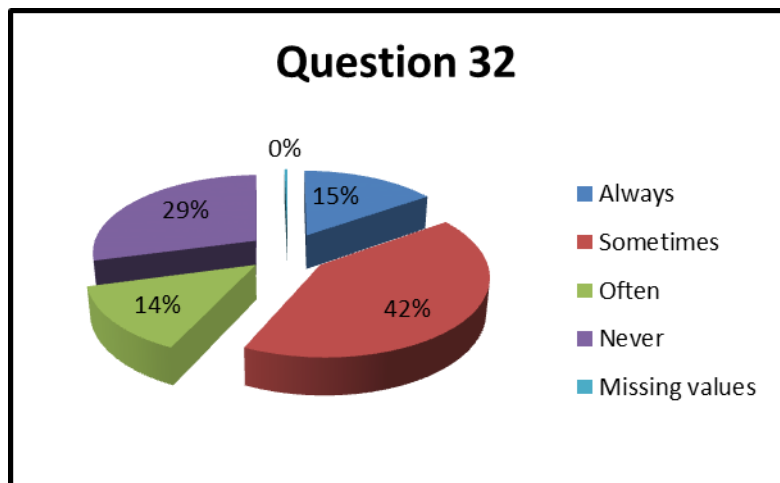
The majority of learners (38%) indicated that their educators warn them when they misbehave while only (22%) indicated that their educators never warn them when they misbehave.

Question 32: Educators shout at learners when they misbehave.

The question was asked to determine whether learners are shouted at by their educators when they misbehave. Results are recorded in table 4.38 below.

Table and graph 4.38

Categories	F	%
Always	85	15%
Sometimes	231	42%
Often	77	14%
Never	160	29%
Missing Values	2	0%
	555	100%



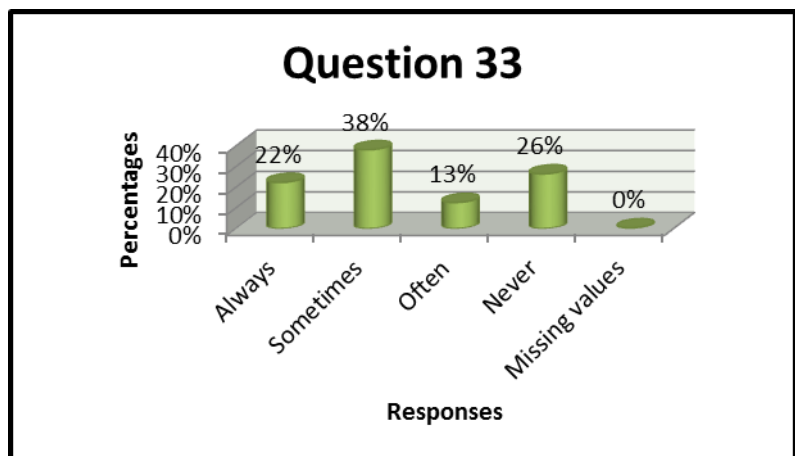
The majority of learners (42%) indicated that their educators shout at them when they misbehave while only (29%) indicated that their educators never shout at them when they misbehave.

Question 33: Educators talk to learners' parents/caregivers when they misbehave.

This question was asked to determine whether educators do talk learners' parents when they misbehave and results are recorded in table 4.39 below.

Table and graph 4.39

Categories	F	%
Always	124	22%
Sometimes	212	38%
Often	70	13%
Never	147	26%
Missing Values	2	0%
	555	100%



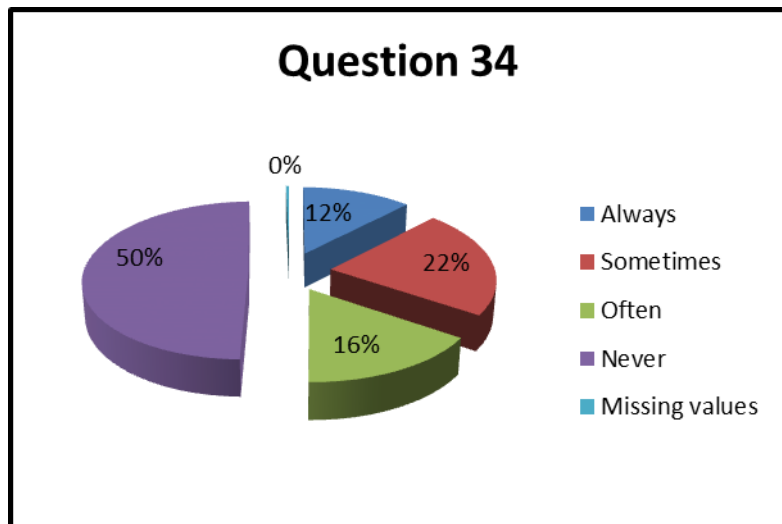
The majority of learners (38%) indicated that their educators do talk to their parents/caregivers when they misbehave while only (26%) indicated that their educators/caregivers never talk to their parents/caregivers when they misbehave.

Question 34: Educators threaten learners when they misbehave.

This question was asked to determine whether educators do threaten learners when they misbehave, and the results are recorded in table 4.40 below.

Table and graph 4.40

Categories	F	%
Always	68	12%
Sometimes	123	22%
Often	88	16%
Never	274	49%
Missing Values	2	0%
	555	100%



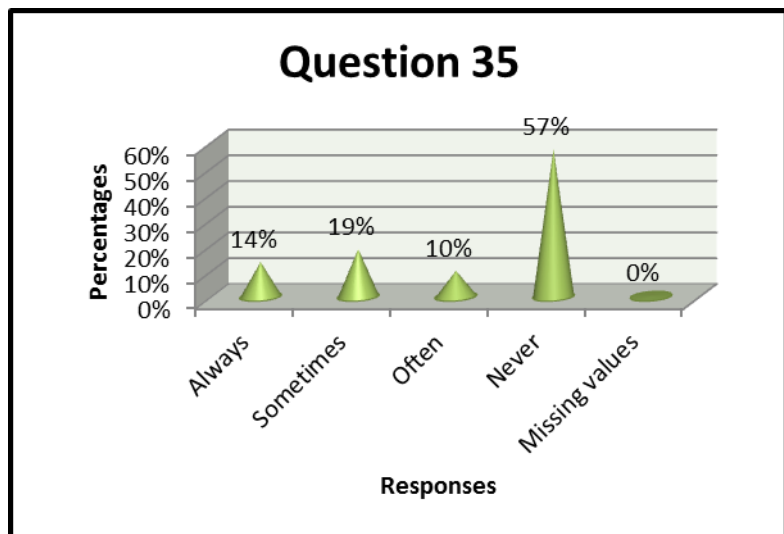
The majority of learners (49%) indicated that their educators never threaten them when they misbehave while only (12%) indicated that their educators always threaten them when they misbehave.

Question 35: Educators send learners to detention when they misbehave.

The above mention question was asked to determine whether educators send their learners to detention when they misbehave and the results are recorded in **table 4.41**

Table and graph 4.41

Categories	F	%
Always	75	14%
Sometimes	103	19%
Often	56	10%
Never	319	57%
Missing Values	2	0%
	555	100%



The majority of learners (57%) indicated that their educators send them to detention when they misbehave while only (14%) indicated that their educators always send them to detention when they misbehave.

4.7 Questionnaire response rate

Table 4.42

	N	%
Handed out	600	100
Received back	555	93

According to the response rate given in the table above the researcher is satisfied as the response rate falls above 60%, as supported by Browne (2005:124) the typical rate falls within the range of 60%-70%. According to the table above the response rate of the participants who handed back the questionnaire was outstanding at 93%. The researcher is of the opinion that the high response could be due to the fact that all the participants knew the researcher as the questionnaires were handed out to the learners that are around the area of the researcher.

The next table below, table 4.43 reports the measured Cronbach alphas and the inter-item correlations of each question according to the sections that is from section B-section F.

Table 4.43

Section B: Classroom rules		
Cronbach alpha	Inter-item correlations	Number of questions
0.883	0.296	9
Section C: Parental/caregiver support		
Cronbach alpha	Inter-item correlations	Number of questions
0.929	0.722	5
Section D: Respect and rights		
Cronbach alpha	Inter-item correlations	Number of questions
0.944	0.394	8
Section E: Tasks and responsibilities		
Cronbach alpha	Inter-item correlations	Number of questions
0.864	0.232	6
Section F: Punishment		
Cronbach alpha	Inter-item correlations	Number of questions
0.948	0.351	7

The Cronbach alpha indicators above are indicated to be acceptable as they followed the reliability criteria as they fell within the suggested ranges of 0.-0.9 according to (Simon, 2008) also the inter-item correlations of the table were also acceptable as they also fell between the suggested ranges of 0.15-0.5.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presented the data analysis of this study. Biographical data, frequency analysed, interpreted and reported.

4.8 PROJECTIONS OF THE NEXT CHAPTER

The next chapter concludes the study by focusing on the summary of findings, recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the findings, highlight a number of limitations, and present the main findings of the research. The problem statement of the study as formulated in chapter 1 will be correlated with the findings as set out in this chapter, and the recommendations arising from the findings will demonstrate that the research questions have been effectively addressed. The chapter concludes with recommendations for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to answer the research question as to learners' perceptions of discipline in school classrooms of the Thabo Mofutsanyana District-Free State Province. In order to answer this question, the following secondary questions were developed:

- How do educators manage classroom discipline?
- How learners' views are considered when classroom rules are developed?
- What procedural process is followed when developing classroom classroom rules?
- What monitoring mechanisms are in place to manage classroom discipline?

The following is a brief outline of how the chapters of the study were structured to achieve the stated goals:

- Chapter 1 provided an orientation and background to the study and defined the concepts classroom discipline, learner, quantitative research, learner perception, classroom management, detention, suspension and code of conduct.
- Chapter 2 presented a review of the research literature.
- Chapter 3 focused on the research design, justified the choice of research methods, and highlighted both the advantages and disadvantages of the methods used.
- Chapter 4 focused on the discussion and interpretation of the results of the empirical study.

- Chapter 5, this final chapter, presents the findings, recommendations, and recommendations for further research.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The research into learners' perceptions on classroom discipline in Thabo Mofutsanyana District in the Free State Province was characterized by a series of challenges. Firstly, schools were reluctant to participate in the research because of the possible implications of the research results. Secondly, some of the stakeholders found it very difficult to be truthful about the reality at their schools and to provide unfettered access to information. The sensitivity of allowing an outsider to pursue the disciplinary process of the school created an unsettling situation. Despite the shortcomings and limitations, and the constraints of the generalization of the results in particular, the researcher believes that it is possible to draw conclusions that make a significant contribution to the growing body of scientific knowledge of school discipline in general.

5.4 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY BASED ON THE FOUR SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

5.4.1 Findings with regard to research question 1: how do educators manage classroom discipline?

This section first restates the research question posed in Chapter 1, in respect of how educators manage classroom discipline. The section then defines the construct of classroom management with reference to the literature, and compares these with the findings of the empirical research.

In order to answer the research question, it was important first to define classroom management from the perspective of the research literature, and then to compare the literature definitions with definitions from the empirical study.

Discipline continues to be one of the most puzzling and frustrating problems confronting educators today, more so than ever before. The reality of the matter is that while most educators are struggling to deal with learner misbehaviour, there are some educators who are able to establish discipline in their classroom (see chapter 2, par.2.5).

Classroom management is referred as a democratic process in which rules are made with special emphasis on the importance of participation and involvement in the thinking and decision-making process within a classroom (see chapter 2, par.2.6).

The following findings were found on the current discipline management in the Thabo Mofutsanyana District- Free State Province:

The findings suggest that classroom management has an impact on how learners learn and how educators manage learning in a classroom situation. The preamble of the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA) states that South Africa seeks to “provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a foundation for development of all people’s talents and capacities” (see chapter 2, par.2.14.2).

Numerous discipline problems are identified and this goes with causes and how these are handled. Sections that emerged from the questionnaire captured the essence of the findings better namely:

Parental involvement – there is generally a lack of parental involvement in the disciplinary problems displayed by learners at schools (see chapter 2, par.2.13). The research also uncovered the parental resistance to involvement in classroom management (see chapter 2, par. 2.13.2) and a model for their involvement (see chapter 2, par.2.13.3). Based on the above important facts, it is clear that educators and schools would want parental involvement and see it as one amongst the possible solutions to this problem (see chapter 2, par.2.13).

Affiliation – this relates to developing, maintaining, and strengthening associations with others. Some learners have a very strong need to be close to each other, but often they also have an intense desire to be close to the parent and they need someone in whom they can confide and trust thereby making them feel secure and special, and will do anything to have

such an affiliation. Affiliation is thus a normal drive to ward off loneliness and find the “you are special person” affection (see chapter 2, par. 2.10).

Educators’ teaching approaches and conduct towards learners – these can be seen as contributing to learner indiscipline and confirm literature assertions about in-school causes of indiscipline (see chapter 2, par. 2.12.1).

Need for a whole school approach to discipline – this seems like the most viable approach to dealing with discipline in schools. This collaborated by literature on dealing with school discipline problems (see chapter 2, par. 2.12.1).

Gregariousness – this relates to learners’ need to associate with a group and is strong in learners who really want to be part of a particular group at school or in the neighbourhood. This need, if unmet, also causes learners to be very upset if they are left out of the party, not chosen for a committee, not asked for input on family activities or if decisions are imposed on them with no explanation (see chapter 2, par. 2.10).

5.4.2 Findings with regard to research question 2: how learners’ views are considered when classroom rules are developed?

The essence of discipline lies in its intention. A pertinent question to whether discipline intends to correct behaviour, to control or simply to punish? In terms of the school context, it is important to consider learners’ developmental stages in the enforcement of discipline. These are learners whose ages range from thirteen to eighteen years. It is however not uncommon to find learners of ages are below thirteen years as well as those whose ages are above eighteen. This very age composition lays the ground for an understanding of discipline issues in the school context.

Within this context, it must be understood that enforcing discipline by way of exercising control and or punishment is a short term solution and is mostly ad hoc. It is therefore argued that there is a need to address the causes of indiscipline at schools and thus embark on a

holistic approach that focuses on the short term discipline challenges as well as on the long term causes (see chapter 2, par. 2.12.1).

Misbehaviour is often a symptom of underlying problems. Adults need to find out the contributing causes and the way in which they manifest themselves in external and internal noncompliance. Home environment and parenting style, peer group association, stage of development, societal expectations or cultural influence, and previous experiences with authority figures learner behaviour and teacher response to that behaviour can all influence learner behaviour (see chapter 2, par. 2.8).

The following guidelines are suggestions to educators when developing disciplinary codes namely:

- Establish a school standard
- Develop a forum for community involvement
- Provide staff development
- Examine curriculum
- Establish a support and referral system for variety of stakeholder needs
- Develop appropriate school and class discipline practices and
- Employ effective instructional practices.

Implementing this approach as a discipline management approach requires a school to establish a visible, effective, efficient and functional leadership team. It is also important to review existing information/data, monitor practice implementation and progress toward outcomes and modifying practice implementation based on analysis of progress data.

5.4.3 Findings with regard to research question 3: what procedural process is followed when classroom codes?

The findings with regard to this research question will be discussed according to the following three main themes namely:

(a) Discipline policy and procedures

Before a discussion of school disciplinary practices affecting learner behaviour can begin, examination of the current state of behavioural trends in education must occur. Each organisation and management skills that ensure safety and order are prerequisite for effective instruction. Order and discipline in the classroom can be ensured by a classroom policy that is jointly set by the educator and the learner. Effective rules and procedures for the classroom will lead to the smooth course of teaching-learning situations (see chapter 2, par.2.11)

The results confirmed that policy formulation is the management function whereby guidelines for behaviour are set, and according to which objectives can be realised. Findings also suggested that by means of a classroom policy, an educator can use rules and procedures to regulate all aspects of the classroom environment and all the actions and behaviour within the classroom (see chapter 2, par.2.11).

(b) Characteristics of a classroom policy

The findings confirm that the following issues are pivotal to schools when developing classroom policy: a good classroom policy must clearly reflect the objectives (long-term) and aims (short term) for which the class is striving. The policy should also be consistent, flexible (it must be possible to adapt the policy when circumstances change), should be put in writing and pinned up on a notice board in the classroom. Furthermore a good classroom policy should be explained to learners (they must be familiar with its contents), be acceptable to the majority, facilitate decision-making about certain matters and make provision for the class rules and procedure (see chapter 2, par.2.11.1).

(c) Classroom rules and procedures

Classroom rules and procedures ensure that the classroom policy is carried out. Rules and procedures represent acceptable behaviour in the classroom. Rules indicate acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, while procedures indicate the way in which specific tasks or activities in the classroom should be carried out. The findings provide some guidelines to be

followed in drafting class rules and procedures, namely: keep rules reasonable and necessary, consistent with instructional goals and keep rules to a minimum. Rules must be functional and practical, formulate rules positively, keep rules short and clear. Class rules must be clearly displayed on the notice board and allow learners to take part in formulating the rules (see chapter 2, par.2.11.2).

5.4.4 Findings with regard to question 4: what monitoring mechanisms are in place to manage classroom discipline?

It is clear that responsibilities for managing discipline are not well defined. Principals seem to be expected to shoulder the entire scope of discipline. For instance, there should be clear procedures regarding classroom discipline. In this regard, educators should be capacitated in terms of classroom discipline, which should include specific problems as against a “one-size fits all” approach to classroom discipline. The findings provide three approaches that must be put in place to manage classroom discipline namely: The process approach, the product approach and an outcomes-based approach (see chapter 2, par.2.12.1).

(a) The process approach

According to this approach, planning done in this way is usually more “general”. The educator can see the advantages providing certain learning experiences, but can only plan them in a general way, allowing for things that could happen to change what, when and how the learning experience will be conducted. This allows for more spontaneity and flexibility and learners are given an opportunity to influence the learning that is taking place.

(b) The product approach

The other end of the continuum can be labelled the product approach. Educators who use this approach feel better when they have a detailed plan. They are willing to sacrifice some flexibility and spontaneity in order to feel more certain that learners are likely to gain some specific knowledge and insight. So, in contrast with the process approach, learning

experiences are carefully structured to ensure that learners will succeed in reaching important goals.

(c) An outcomes-based approach

An outcomes-based approach to planning enables learners to develop a range of competencies that will serve them in good stead for the rest of their lives. It also provides educators with essential knowledge they need to guide learners in the right direction. Outcomes are ultimately guidelines that can lead learners to self-realisation, high achievement, learning satisfaction, emotional stability, enduring relationships and personal fulfilment.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY BASED ON THE FOUR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This section discusses the recommendations according to the four research questions as stated in chapter 1. Based on the findings of this study, and according to the four research questions, the following recommendations can be made.

5.5.1 Recommendations with regard to research question 1: how do educators manage classroom discipline?

Recommendations to address this challenge that educators are facing with regard to management of discipline in their classrooms are presented below:

(a) Benchmarking against best practices

There is a need for schools to benchmark their practices against the practices of other schools in order to establish best practices. For example, schools within the same district should establish a forum in which the school administrators and their staff could collectively share their challenges and come up with possible solutions to the challenges that are faced by educators with regard to management of discipline in their respective schools. This recommendation is based on the findings that some schools use discipline systems that enable

them to establish discipline whereas other schools are struggling severely with discipline. This endeavour can be achieved through district workshops. Thus Thabo Mofutsanyana District need to coordinate workshops on a regular basis so that individual schools do not operate in isolation but come together to discuss and share best practices with regard to systems that could be effective in establishing discipline in the contemporary classroom.

(b) Internal workshops

Individual schools also need to hold internal workshops where educators could come together to find and share better discipline strategies in their classrooms. This recommendation is informed firstly, by the finding that some educators are struggling severely with discipline while others are fairly able to establish discipline in their classrooms and secondly, on the finding that there is no consistency in the application of disciplinary alternatives. Some educators are using alternatives that have been proven to be ineffective by other educators within the same school. Fellow educators can provide support in several ways. Another way is to schedule regular meetings where Grade Heads share behaviour management solutions with educators of the same grade. Beginner educators need to be taken through an existing programme to equip them with the disciplinary system that is employed by the school.

(c) Skills development programmes

Skills development programmes need to be developed and be rolled out in every school in the district to build the capacity of educators in the effective use of proactive discipline strategies rather than control-orientated strategies. This will assist educators to see prevention as the most effective form of behaviour management and to focus on prevention of learner misbehaviour rather than reacting on learner misbehaviour. In this way educators will be equipped with appropriate skills to prevent the occurrence or escalation of learner misbehaviour from the beginning and will thus focus on teaching appropriate behaviours rather than eliminating negative behaviours.

5.5.2 Recommendations in regard to the research question 2: how learners' views are considered when classroom rules are developed?

Educators need to understand the three major models of classroom management and the principle that they are founded on when disciplinary codes are developed (See chapter 2 par. 2.5.3). Knowledge of these models which were discussed above, namely, assertive discipline, logical consequences, and teacher effectiveness training is seen as critical to equip educators with the understanding of the continuum represented by these models in terms of the amount of educator versus learner control. Understanding of these models will enable individual educators develop personal theories of discipline which will act as a guide and help eliminate problems that stem from having to take decisions without the benefit of a firm set of principles. This is regarded as important because the best system of discipline must be established by educators themselves, and thus be tailored to meet their particular personality, the realities of their learners, school and community they serve.

The following proactive discipline strategies must be taken into consideration by educators when developing classroom rules:

(a) Educator-learner relationship

Creation of a good educator-learner relationship is essential because successful discipline also depends on the educators' ability to establish positive relationships with their learners. Educators should employ a humanistic approach by speaking to individual learners, knowing their learners and developing mutual respect. Educators should know that respect given leads to respect gained.

(b) Empowerment of learners and responsibility training

Empowering learners to make intelligent decisions, to accept consequences for their decisions and be equipped to make better decisions in future. This can be achieved by providing learners with opportunities to think, act and take responsibility. Educators need to understand that choice empowers. Educators should empower learners to be in charge of their own

behaviour and learning and to feel confident that their needs are met. In this way, they will be fostering self-discipline. When educators teach learners to make valid decisions in the context of free choice and to be held accountable for the decisions they make, responsibility is fostered.

(c) Character development and inculcation of values

Discipline is not possible without the inculcation of values and the development of learners' character. Inculcation of values develops character and thus enables learners to be able to distinguish between right and wrong. It is thus the role of the educator to inculcate values and to be good role-models around learners.

(d) Involvement of family and other structures in behaviour management effort in developing disciplinary codes

Educators require a disciplined approach that permits them to work cooperatively with learners, their parents, and other support structures in behaviour management. Therefore partnership with parents and other support structures in behaviour management need to be strengthened. In this way, learners' behavioural problems can be attended to at an earlier stage. Educators also need to make use of the available psychologists and social workers to help learners to become responsible adults as envisaged by the South African society.

(e) Democratic teaching style

In developing disciplinary codes for learners, educators should adopt a democratic style of teaching, thus abandoning autocratic and permissive styles of teaching. This means that educators should provide firm guidance but should not promote rebellion. Learners should be allowed to make decisions. Educators should help learners to understand that making decisions is tied to responsibility. This means that learners should be helped to internalize that they are expected to assume responsibility for what they do and for the consequences of their actions. In this way learners will assume self-discipline.

5.5.3 Recommendations in regard to research question 3: what procedural process is followed when developing classroom codes?

In paragraph 5.4.3, several factors contributing to the procedural processes to be followed when developing classroom codes were identified. It is therefore recommended that these approaches be used when developing classroom codes. The implication is that the careful use of the above mentioned approaches may result in a sustainable improvement in schools in as far as classroom discipline is concerned.

5.5.4 Recommendations in regard to research question 4: what monitoring mechanisms are in place to manage classroom discipline?

In paragraph 5.4.4, three main approaches to planning were identified as monitoring mechanisms to manage classroom discipline in Thabo Mofutsanyana District. It is therefore against this background that recommendations are made for educators to follow the above mentioned approaches in managing disciplinary problems in the district. Again, the implication is that the careful use of this approach may result in a sustainable improvement of discipline in classrooms.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Although this research strove to provide a comprehensive account on learners' perceptions on discipline, it could not deal in any detail with other variables such as the race of learners, the political influence at schools, and the socio-economic circumstances in the area where the school is situated. The effect of these variables on school discipline and improvement should therefore be further investigated, also in other districts of the Free State Province. Again, the following research topics must be investigated further:

- Research should be undertaken on reasons for lack of or poor parental involvement in so far as learner discipline in schools is concerned.
- Research could be undertaken such that it involves parents, community members and educators in its population.

- The discipline problems in rural and township schools could be explored so as to come up with specific recommendations directed at the particular circumstances of these areas.

5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provided a summary of the study, outlined the research findings, and highlighted the limitations of the research. The findings were discussed with reference to each of the four research questions. The chapter concluded with recommendations derived from the study, and mentioned a number of specific recommendations for further research.

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P.O.BOX 34
PETRUS STEYN
9640
05TH JANUARY 2013

The Director: STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY & RESEARCH

Room 319

Old CNA Building

Maitland Street

BLOEMFONTEIN

9300

Dear Sir/Madam

Request to visit schools in order to complete research studies

I am currently registered for MED 98405 (a script in Educational Management) in fulfilment of the demands for the M.ED. Degree at the University of South Africa. The title of my study reads; “Learners” perceptions of discipline as management tool in school classrooms. Thabo Mofutsanyana District, Free State Province”.

I kindly request permission to visit schools in order to distribute questionnaires. For more information about my studies please contact study supervisor, Dr J.Nyoni at 0124294474 or at nyonij@unisa.ac.za

Yours truly

Mabea MM (08767963)

mabeamm@gmail.com

084 245 4527



2013 – 01 - 13

Mr M. M. Mabea
3067/8 Seapoint
Mamafubedu
PETRUSTEYN
9640

Dear Mr Mabea

REGISTRATION OF RESEARCH PROJECT

1. This letter is in reply to your application for the registration of your research project.
2. Research topic: **LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANAGEMENT TOOL IN SCHOOL CLASSROOMS, THABO MOFUTSANYANA – FREE STATE PROVINCE.**
- 3 Your research project has been registered with the Free State Education Department.
4. Approval is granted under the following conditions:-
 - 4.1 The name of participants involved remains confidential.
 - 4.2 The questionnaires are completed and the **interviews are conducted outside normal tuition time.**
 - 4.3 This letter is shown to all participating persons.
 - 4.4 A bound copy of the report and a summary on a computer disc on this study is donated to the Free State Department of Education.
 - 4.5 Findings and recommendations are presented to relevant officials in the Department.
5. The costs relating to all the conditions mentioned above are your own responsibility.
6. **You are requested to confirm acceptance of the above conditions in writing to:**

**DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY AND RESEARCH,
Old CNA Building, Maitland Street OR Private Bag X20565, BLOEMFONTEIN, 9301**

We wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely

**M. M. MABEA
DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING, POLICY AND RESEARCH**

Directorate: Strategic Planning, Policy & Research - Private Bag X20565, Bloemfontein, 9300 – Room 301, Old CNA building,
Maitland Street, Bloemfontein 9300 - Tel: 051 404 9283/ Fax: 086 6678 678 E-mail: research@edu.fs.gov.za

P.O.BOX 34

Petrus Steyn

9640

15th January 2013

Dear Sir/Madam (Principal)

Re: Request to visit school in order to complete research studies

I am currently registered for MED 98405 (a script in Educational Management) in fulfilment of the demand for the M.Ed. degree at the University of South Africa. I am currently conducting research on “LEARNER’S PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANAGEMENT TOOL IN SCHOOL CLASSROOM THABO MOFUTSANUANA DISTRICT, FREE STATE PROVINCE”

I kindly request permission to visit your school in order to distribute questionnaires. For more information about my studies, please contact my study supervisor, Mr Jabulani Nyoni at 0124294474 or at nyonij@unisa.ac.za

Yours truly,

Mabea MM (08767963)

.....

mabeamm@gmail.com

INFORMED CONSENT: PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am a student at the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA working on a Masters Degree in Education Management. I am conducting a study entitle LEARNER'S PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANANGEMENT TOOL IN SCHOOL CLASSROOM THABO MOFUTSANYANE DISTRICT, FREE STATE PROVINCE. The purpose of the research is to study aspects of school discipline practices that influence learner's views about behaviour and their behavioural choices.

Your child's participation will involve taking a 20 to 30 minutes anonymous survey at school after school hours or non-academic time. The survey has no identifying information on it (i.e. no name or student numbers) and completed surveys will remain confidential. Your child will not be penalized by his/her classroom educator in any way for participation. There will be no further contact by the researcher regarding your child's responses nor will you or your child's educator be contacted about responses. Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to consent or if your child wishes to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The results of the research study may be published but names will not be used at any time and results will be maintained in confidence.

In this research, there are no foreseeable risks to you or your child except if your child typically experiences anxiety in testing or surveying situations. Although there may be no direct benefit to you or your child during this school year, the possible benefit of your child's participation is that the data collected and analyzed may help local school and district administrators develop effective teacher training programs that may help improve learner's behaviour and continue learner's positive behaviour choices.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at 0842454527 or via email address at mabeamm@gmail.com

Yours sincerely,

Moses M Mabea

ANNEXURE D: Informed consent from learners/learners

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

INFORMED CONSENT: PARTICIPANTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

I,....., understand that my parents (e.g. mom and dad) have given permission (e.g. said it's okay) for me to take part in a study. I understand the study is about classroom discipline and will be under the direction of Mr Mabea MM.

I am taking part because I want to. I have been told that I can stop at any time I want to and nothing will happen to me if I want to stop.

.....

Child's Signature/Date

LEARNER'S PERCEPTIONS OF DISCIPLINE AS MANAGEMENT TOOL IN SCHOOL CLASSROOMS, THABO MOFUTSANYANA – PROVINCE.

Learner questionnaire

Dear Learner

I am busy with my Masters Degree in Education Management study at the University of South Africa (Unisa). Your help in finishing this questionnaire would be highly appreciated. Please try to be straight to the point, because the aim is to collect information about your perceptions of the discipline in the classrooms at your school.

Thank you for helping me in this regard.

INSTRUCIONS

- Please answer every question.
- Do not write your name or the name of your school on the document.
- Indicate your choice by making a cross [X] in the blocks that you choose.
- Your answers will be kept confidentially.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Age (in years):

2. Grade:

3. Gender:

Male	Female
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4. Type of school:

Primary	Secondary
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5. District:

Thabo Mofutsanyane Education District

SECTION B: CLASSROOM RULES

Remember to make a cross [X] to show the degree to which you agree/disagree with each of the following statements.

Indicate how you feel about classroom discipline at your school:	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
1. I help to make classroom rules	1	2	3	4
2. The educator makes the classroom rules.	1	2	3	4
3. Only leaders help to make classroom rules.	1	2	3	4
4. My classroom rules are clear.	1	2	3	4
5. I obey the classroom rules.	1	2	3	4
6. The classroom rules are written clearly.	1	2	3	4
7. The classroom rules are on the wall.	1	2	3	4
8. The educator reads the rules to us in the classroom.	1	2	3	4
9. I understand my classroom rules.				

SECTION C: PARENTAL/CAREGIVER SUPPORT

Remember to make a cross [X] to show the degree to which you parent/caregivers do the following things.

My parents/caregivers...	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly

10. ...talk to my educators.	1	2	3	4
11. ... support my school 's discipline	1	2	3	4
12. ... go school meetings.	1	2	3	4
13. ... help me with my homework	1	2	3	4
14. ... support me at school.	1	2	3	4

SECTION D: RESPECT AND RIGHTS

Remember to make a cross [X] to show the degree to which you agree/disagree with each of the following statements.

Indicate how you feel about your rights:	Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
15. I respect the rights of other learners	1	2	3	4
16. I respect the rights of my educators	1	2	3	4
17. The other learners respect my rights.	1	2	3	4
18. The educators respect my rights	1	2	3	4
19. I feel safe in the classroom	1	2	3	4
20. I feel respected in the classroom	1	2	3	4
21. I feel free in the classroom	1	2	3	4
22. I understand my rights.	1	2	3	4

SECTION E: TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Remember to make a cross [X] to show the degree to which you agree/disagree with each of the following statements.

Indicate how you feel about taking	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree
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part in your classes:	Strongly			Strongly
23. My educator treat all of us the same in class.	1	2	3	4
24. I do my classwork.	1	2	3	4
25. I do my homework activities	1	2	3	4
26. I answer my educator's questions in class.	1	2	3	4
27. I Carry out tasks in my class.	1	2	3	4
28. I have responsibilities in my class.	1	2	3	4

SECTION F: PUNISHMENT

Remember to make a cross [X] to show how often the following things happen to you.

When I misbehave, my educators.....	Always	Sometimes	Often	Never
29.....hit me	1	2	3	4
30.scold me.	1	2	3	4
31.warn me.	1	2	3	4
32. ...shout at me.	1	2	3	4
33.talk to my parents/caregivers	1	2	3	4
34.threaten me.	1	2	3	4
35.send me to detention.	1	2	3	4