



**A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms**

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## **DECLARATION**

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Title of thesis: A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms.

I declare that this dissertation is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as references.

I further declare that I submitted the dissertation to originality-checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Northwest University for another qualification or to any other higher education institution.

29-July 2022

Signature

Date

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## **ABSTRACT**

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is the basis for this Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR) study, which aims to develop collaborative strategies to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour. Attention is focused on the powerful capacity of stakeholders in enforcing discipline in schools when they collaborate. The focus of this research study was guided by the main research question: "What does a support process for dealing with disruptive behaviour developed through a participatory process encompass?"

A total of 12 participants became the co-researchers in this study. The participants represented the various education stakeholders, which included members of the School- Based Support Team, the Disciplinary Committee, the School Management Team, parents, local social workers, and the District-Based Support Team from the Blydeville community in Lichtenburg, North West province, South Africa. They participated in a three-cycle process by engaging in scheduled action learning meetings; in which they collaboratively devised and implemented a research plan; and came together regularly to share and critically reflect on the emerging findings. Participants were thus actively involved in identifying problems and finding solutions. Qualitative data generation strategies applied in this study included focus group interviews, observations, drawings, interviews, and reflective journals. Participation in the action learning process made the stakeholders aware of the value of collaboration, as well as the critical reflection skills of each participating member. They aimed to develop a strategy to support learners and to become better at the implementation of policies and laws applicable to disruptive behaviour.

The results indicated that disruptive behavioural problems in schools do indeed exist. These problems are caused by factors relating to the learners, their parents, their teachers, and their community. The study made recommendations for teachers, parents, and other education stakeholders on how to improve the situation, and suggested aspects for further study.

At the beginning of the PALAR process, participants were all aware of the various forms of disruptive behaviour that occur in the classroom. Participants collectively identified forms of disruptive behaviour that occur in the classrooms, namely

absenteeism, coming late for classes, peer interaction, not writing, and many other aspects. Poor parental involvement and lack of commitment from teachers were identified as factors contributing to the disruptive behaviour of learners. Participants also found that teachers and parents do not have the proper skills to deal with disruptive behaviour.

In gaining an understanding of different forms of disruptive behaviour, participants suggested that schools must profile learners, obtain information on the most common disruptive behaviour occurring at the school level, and identify factors that could be the cause of the disruptive behaviour (environmental factors, limited resources, etc.). Profiling also involves communicating with parents/families to give feedback about learner behaviour, gaining more information about the situation at home, and building a trusting relationship between the teacher and the parent/guardian.

Furthermore, the school must review the school code of conduct with parents and learners, and implement it consistently. There is also a need to workshop teachers on effective methods of discipline, which demonstrate love and care towards the learners when disciplining learners.

Schools must also have positive collaboration with other stakeholders like the Department of Social Development (DSD), the Department of Safety, and others that could help support learners who display disruptive behaviour.

The PALAR process encountered some challenges. Initially, the participants were not keen to share their experiences and knowledge because they did not want to be judged. They gradually started showing more interest in the process and being more open to sharing as they understood that they were going to learn from each other. A further limitation of the study was that during this time the government implemented COVID-19 regulations (social distancing). The scheduled meetings with participants were difficult to arrange, so the number of meetings had to be reduced and participants were required to meet under strict social distancing conditions.

## Key Words

- Disciplined environment
- Disruptive behaviour
- Learner misconduct
- School-Based Support
- School-Based Support Team (SBST)

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AL	–	Action Learning
AR	–	Action Research
CAPS	–	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements
DBE	–	Department of Basic Education (after 2007)
DBST	–	District-Based Support Team
DCS	–	Department of Correctional Services
DDD	–	Data-Driven District
DoE	–	Department of Education (before 2007)
DS	–	Data Set
DSD	–	Department of Social Development
ECP	–	Emancipatory-Critical Paradigm
ELSEN	–	Learners with special needs
NSNP	–	National School Nutrition Programme
NWU	–	North-West University
PALAR	–	Participatory Action Learning and Action Research
PAR	–	Participatory Action Research
RSA	–	Republic of South Africa
SAPS	–	South African Police Service
SBST	–	School-Based Support Team
SEN	–	Special Educational Needs
SGB	–	Schools Governing Body
SIAS	–	Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support
SMT	–	School Management Team

- SNA – Support Needs Assessment
- SNA 1 – Support Needs Assessment form no. 1
- SNA 2 – Support Needs Assessment form no. 2
- WP6 – Education White Paper 6 Special Needs Education: building an inclusive education and training system

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

Research suggests that disruptive behaviour is one of the most severe problems preventing teachers from achieving successful classroom outcomes (Lambert, Tingstrom, Sterling, Dufrene & Lynne, 2015:430). Teachers perceive disruptive classroom behaviour as an unavoidable challenge affecting their teaching experience widely (Sezer, 2017:219). When it comes to South Africa, the problem necessitated research being conducted on the different interventions used by teachers to address disruptive behaviours (Sezer, 2017:219; Abeygunawardena & Vithanapathirana, (2019:152) and the influence of teacher training on curbing disruptive behaviour (Xavier, Jayasuria, & Narayan, 2022). The seriousness of disruptive behaviour in South African schools has sparked a national debate about how to strengthen the educational system so that it can better respond to the fast-changing world. Stakeholders are looking for new ways to improve their children's education.

The concept of disruptive behaviour is a complicated aspect that does not lend itself to only one definition. For example, Sezer (2017:199) defined disruptive behaviour simply as "inappropriate behaviour." Examples of disruptive behaviour may include learners fighting with each other, learners using vulgar language when addressing one another, learners disrupting the delivery of the lesson, and learners who refuse to follow directions. These examples show that disruptive behaviour is not just between learners but also relates to the learners showing disruptive behaviour towards teachers as well, as claimed by De Wet (2016:12). For the purpose of this study, the definition provided by Ali and Gracey (2013:15) is applied; disruptive behaviour is any behaviour that disrupts, interferes with, or prevents the usual activities and functions in the classroom.

In countries, such as Turkey, disruptive behaviour in the classroom is unusual; learners are calm in class, teachers do not have to wait long for learners to settle down, rudeness towards teachers and other types of misbehaviour are rare (Wolhuter & Russo, 2013:1). In contrast, one of the critical roles of teachers in Africa during the school day is to manage disruptive behaviour. In the South African context, the

examples of disruptive behaviour extend to more violent behaviour where learners are armed with dangerous weapons, lack respect for teachers, learners fighting, vandalism, and steal. Schools in crime areas are at risk of experiencing an increase in delinquency. In some instances, this goes hand in hand with inter-school rivalries and gangs. Some learners may develop gangs within the school by joining gangs in the community. The following media reports bear testimony to some of the most serious cases of disruptive behaviour in South African schools: a pupil was robbed and killed by a fellow high school learner (Mngadi, 2018); a teacher was robbed at gunpoint in front of a class (Shaazia, 2017); a learner got up from her desk to hit a female teacher with a book (Xavier et al., 2022).

Various factors, stemming from schools and families, are considered as the cause of disruptive behaviour. According to Oosthuizen (2009), teacher insufficiency as role models; teacher ineptitude; overcrowded classrooms; and a deficient organizational structure are all factors that need to be considered in the schools. On the other hand, Abeygunawardena and Vithanapathirana (2019:152) considered the family to be the most immediate and powerful mechanism impacting learners. Lack of parental direction and unhealthy households raise the likelihood of a child having development issues (Abeygunawardena & Vithanapathirana, 2019:152). Abeygunawardena and Vithanapathirana (2019:152) discovered that some parents are violent, aggressive, and abusive toward school workers, exposing their children to harmful antisocial behaviour. Learners exposed to aggression from adults lead to behavioural problems in the classroom (Sezer, 2017:199).

Some teachers, exposed to disruptive behaviours in their classrooms, experience post-traumatic stress disorder affecting their ability to teach (Jinot, 2018:1). Some teachers are afraid and powerless and may respond violently toward their learners, which can lead to disengagement and unhappiness at work as well as personal issues like alcoholism. Furthermore, Wolhuter, Janmaat, Potgieter, and van der Walt, (2020:1) noted that the demotivation of teachers is one of the adverse effects of disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

Disruptive behaviour makes the school atmosphere less favourable to teaching and learning, to the extent that the environment is unsafe for both teachers and learners. As

a result, the effective teaching and learning process is inhibited. Teise (2015) claimed that successful teaching and learning could only take place in a safe, secure, and pleasant environment. Consequently, it is critical to address the disruptive behaviours as soon as possible.

Most teachers have a negative attitude towards learners who display disruptive behaviour, as they perceive them as learners who show a lack of self-respect and act with no enthusiasm towards the activities in the classroom (Abeygunawardena & Vithanapathirana, 2019:152). Some teachers regard disruptive learners as aggressive and consider their behaviour inappropriate in the classroom (Lambert et al., 2015:430). Other teachers indicated that learners who disrupt the classroom are the most stressful part of their school day (Burke, Oats, Ringle, Fichner & DelGaudio, 2011:218). The perceptions of the teachers result in them ignoring the learners who display disruptive behaviour in the classrooms. School authorities must provide supportive counselling, and prohibit exposing learners to unacceptable disciplinary actions such as yelling, embarrassing learners, and corporal punishment (Sezer, 2017:197). Consequently, these learners can develop negative attitudes towards teachers and fellow learners and even resort to violence.

The reactive technique by teachers when a learner is disruptive is another method that might lead to learners being even more rebellious and hostile. In this case, teachers are unwittingly contributing to learners' anger. As a result, the learner's reaction to discipline may be to attack the teacher or someone else in retaliation. Due to the increasing challenges in schools, Reyneke (2015:4) considered this method ineffective in dealing with disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

According to Reyneke (2015:16), the retributive approach is the most common disciplinary strategy used to discipline pupils who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Additional coursework, privilege revocation, menial jobs, confinement, humiliation, behavioural management contracts, and physical punishment are examples of the retributive approach, which is often illegal. These responses in the majority of schools, although corrective in character, create a climate of dread that can lead to resentment and hatred (Reyneke, 2015:16).

According to Wolhuter et al. (2020:1), reactive disciplinary methods predominate whereas schools should adopt preventive methods to handle discipline concerns. Alternative techniques should be considered to address the issue of disruptive behaviour. This study aims to develop a collaborative intervention technique to address disruptive behaviour in the classroom. The study investigates a participatory process, incorporating action learning and action research, to aid learners with disruptive behaviour.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The studies conducted to date describe disruptive behaviour in the classroom and emphasise the role of the learners (Ali & Gracey, 2013:10) and the teachers (De Wet, 2016:12) but lack the inclusion of all stakeholders. In view of the impact of disruptive behaviour in classrooms on the education of learners, it is imperative to address the problem by involving all stakeholders. This study thus focuses on proposing a support strategy in primary classrooms for dealing with disruptive behaviour developed through a participatory process.

## **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

According to Lau, Wong and Dudovitz (2019:136), a research question is necessary to direct the study. The following research questions guided the direction of the current study.

### **1.3.1 Main research question**

What could a strategy developed through a participatory process aimed at facilitating support for dealing with disruptive behaviour in primary school classroom encompass?

### **1.3.2 Subsequent research questions:**

The following research questions were added subsequently:

- What constitutes disruptive behaviour in the participating primary school?
- How does the participating primary school currently support learners who display disruptive behaviour?

## **1.4 THE PURPOSE, AIM, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

### **1.4.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the study was to enhance the schools' capacity to support learners who display disruptive behaviour, irrespective of the nature of the disruptive behaviour.

### **1.4.2 Aim**

The study aimed to develop a support strategy for dealing with disruptive behaviour through a participatory process.

The aim included the following aspects:

- to explore what constitutes disruptive behaviour in the participating school;
- to investigate how the participating school can support learners who display disruptive behaviour; and
- to develop guidelines to establish a participatory process to support learners who display disruptive behaviour.

## **1.5 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION**

### **1.5.1 Disciplined environment**

A disciplined environment is clear of disruptive behaviour, according to the South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) (RSA, 1996b). It typically refers to learner conduct or activities in the classroom or at any other school activity that may have a detrimental influence on their education or the learning environment.

### **1.5.2 Disruptive behaviour**

Sezer (2017:199) described disruptive behaviour as "inappropriate behaviour." According to Nash, Schlosser and Scarra (2016:439), disciplinary issues undermining the learner's fundamental right to feel secure and treated with respect in the classroom is a cause of disruptive conduct.

### **1.5.3 Learner misconduct**

Learners' behaviour or activity may have a detrimental influence on their education or interfere with a conducive learning environment in the classroom (De Wet, 2016:12). The South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) states that a learner is guilty of misconduct if he or she disrupts or frustrates the teaching and learning in a class, insults or defames the dignity of any learner or other person, or makes racial statements (RSA, 1996b).

### **1.5.4 School-Based Support**

School-based support aids in the identification of efficient methods for reducing undesirable behaviour in children, while simultaneously promoting positive youth development. Support needs assessments (SNAs), according to Logan (2006:93), are frequently assigned to provide assistance and care for a pupil or group of learners who have special educational needs.

### **1.5.5 School-Based Support Team**

According to the Department of Education (DoE), the School-Based Support Team (SBST) is a team that operates or supports a system whose primary goal is to put in place and coordinate learners and teachers' support services at the school level (DoE, 2001:46). In other words, the SBST is a group of people who help teachers and learners by recognizing and addressing learner, teacher, and school needs.

## **1.6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

A theory is a set of ideas, assumptions, and concepts that inform us about the world, people, or aspects of reality and give a framework for understanding and interpreting events. Bronfenbrenner's theory of ecological systems theory is applied in this study to focus on understanding learning and learners' progress, as well as the behavioural elements of connections and interaction among individuals in a variety of contexts (Swart & Pettipher, 2011:11).

Bronfenbrenner (1979:526) recognized the many layers of a social system and outlined how they interact in the development of a child. Swart and Pettipher (2011:11) also

noted that these layers are joined together and pointed out that any changes in any of the layers may also affect the other layers.

The following systems are considered necessary for consideration in this study:

The *microsystem* – Bronfenbrenner's microsystem is the first level of emotional development; emotions detected in a child's home are critical to their growth. As a child matures, his or her emotional range increases to include the effects of changing circumstances. Culture and other external factors influence the development of emotions such as strangers, dread, embarrassment, fury, and dissatisfaction can be influenced the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979: 526).

Leonard (2011) described the microsystem in simpler terms as the place where children go about their regular activities and grow up. The microsystem includes a child's interrelationships with the immediate environment, while the ecosystem encompasses a child's behaviour. For the purpose of this study the *microsystem* is when a child has direct, face-to-face connections with key adults such as parents, friends, and teachers.

The *mesosystem* – serves as a link between the structures in the microsystem of the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Parents talk to teachers, and even though the child does not have direct contact with structures, the teacher and parents must establish a relationship because they have the child in common. Teachers must reach out to parents for assistance in cases where a learner displays disruptive behaviour in a classroom.

The *exosystem* – is a group of people outside the child's immediate family who are involved in the child's development in some way, such as the parents' employers, family health care professionals, or central school officials (Bronfenbrenner, 1979:25).

Parents' with low education levels struggle to find employment and experience varying poverty levels. Learners that grow up in such a home environment will be more inclined to be at risk of misbehaviour (Gyan, Korang & McCarthy, 2015:1).

The *ecosystem* - refers to a larger social structure in which the child is not directly involved. Bronfenbrenner (1979) discusses how the structures in this layer interact with other structures in the microsystem to impact the child's growth. Parent's employment schedules are an example. Although the child is not actively involved at this level, he knows his system's positive and negative factors at work. Their parents' lifestyle

choices influence children's behaviour, and many learners are neglected at home due to their parent's drug and alcohol usage.

The *macrosystem* – is the greatest level of influence, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979). It refers to a person's larger cultural environment, which includes societal belief systems, cultural norms, rules, and laws that affect the individual indirectly (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). If society feels that parents should be fully responsible for their children's upbringing, it is less likely that society will provide resources to assist parents. It has an impact on the frameworks in which parents operate. The capacity or inability of parents to fulfil their obligations to their children is also influenced by the microsystem of the child (Chiu & Chow, 2016:516).

Global impacts on our children are not restricted to environmental and health concerns; economic forces are far more reactive to international events than recent occurrences. When a wage earner is "downsized," changes in employment possibilities due to offshore competition can directly influence a family. When local business shutters or relocates to take advantage of lower-wage prices in another country, communities can face severe economic hardship (Chiu & Chow, 2016:516).

The *chronosystem* – takes into account the temporal dimension of a child's environment. External variables like the date of a parent's death, as well as internal factors such as physiological changes that occur as a child grows older, make up this system. As children get older, they may react to changes in the environment differently, and they may be better able to foresee how those changes will affect them. Dealing with the death of a parent due to HIV and AIDS or COVID-19 causes mental distress in learners, affecting their ability to concentrate and behave in class.

For this research study, stakeholders involved in the support process may foster hopeful thinking to ensure that the strategies identified and implemented for learners who display disruptive behaviour are successful. Stakeholders, involved in the support process, are expected to work according to a schedule that revolves around supporting learners, even though the help might be inadequate. The skills that enable them (stakeholders) to be free of any barriers to learning should also be imparted to enable learners to be free as well. This theory also dictates the level of support that people participating in the support process should provide to struggling families of those

learners who exhibit disruptive behaviour. Learners, teachers, and other stakeholders are encouraged to work together toward a common goal. Professionals, like those from District-Based Support Teams (DBST), should aim to establish long-term and stable ties between a child's family, school, and teachers (DoE, 2001:46).

## **1.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.7.1 Research paradigm**

Creswell and Clark (2007) described research paradigms as the lens to view and interpret reality and further provide guidelines and strategies for conducting research. A paradigm can be regarded more succinctly as a collection of ideas about basic aspects of reality that lead to a certain point of view (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). The proposed study followed a participatory paradigm.

The method of participatory action research (PAR), used in this study, is based on an emancipatory-critical paradigm (ECP). The goal of ECP is to assist individuals in investigating reality to bring about change. Zuber-Skerritt (2011) explained that the new ideas alter or change the setting in which the research is conducted, providing a critical critique of the current teachings

ECP is well suited to research projects primarily focused on community building, participant practice improvement, and critical disposition development. In participatory action learning and action research (PALAR) projects, the researcher is required to collaborate with the participants (Kearney, Wood & Zuber-Skerritt. 2013:113). It implies that the participants are involved in the process of active research.

The ECP is the best choice for this study due to its benefits, as indicated by Zuber-Skerritt (2011). One of these benefits is that the researcher collaborates with the participants as co-researchers to gather, analyse and interpret data for the study. As this study employed PALAR, the experience and actions of the participants help to develop a collaborative process to support learners who display disruptive behaviour. The participants are equal partners throughout the process of PALAR. The participants collaborated to address the identified problems in which they were all directly involved. The common understanding of the problem and the identification of necessary changes

in the existing strategy forged a way to support learners who display disruptive behaviour (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011).

### **1.7.2 Research design**

According to Yin (2008), a research design is a framework that governs how one approaches a study or a plan of action or framework, according to Creswell and Clark (2007). The study must be constructed in such a way that the findings are credible and valid. A research design outlines everything from the philosophical assumptions to the respondents' selection, data gathering procedures, and data processing (Yin, 2008).

According to Baxter and Jack (2008:544), the first element of a case study is a descriptive narrative that describes obstacles and suggests potential solutions. A qualitative case study employs a variety of data sources to speed up the investigation of phenomena in a given environment, ensuring that problems are viewed through multiple lenses rather than a single lens, allowing many aspects of the event to be recognized and identified. Baxter and Jack (2008:544) recommended that the goal is to employ a case study research design with a qualitative research approach. Case study research is a systematic inquiry into an event or a constellation of similar events that are related to a particular phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In this regard, the disruptive behaviour displayed by learners is the focus of the study encompassing the exploration of constituents of disruptive behaviour in the schools and how schools currently deal with disruptive behaviour. A practical study of this nature occurs in naturalistic contexts (Strydom, 2011:227), and has value since schools serve as naturalistic contexts for teachers.

### **1.7.3 Selection of participants**

The term "sampling" refers to selecting a fraction of the population for research purposes (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) and Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, and Hoagwood (2013:1) suggested that when employing qualitative approaches to acquire data, using a smaller sample of the population, which has to do with the aim of the study. According to Strydom (2011:228), qualitative researchers primarily use non-probability sampling methods. A non-probability sampling

method includes the following types; theoretical, deviant, sequential, purposive, snowball, case, volunteer, and key informant (Strydom, 2011:228).

Purposive sampling is an appropriate method of sampling for this study because participants were selected based on their distinguishing characteristics: those who are supposed to be involved in supporting learners who display disruptive behaviours in schools (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:70), purposive sampling is when participants are selected based on a predetermined criterion that defines them as relevant to the study.

The selection of twelve participants to participate in this study was purposeful, based on their position in the school or departmental context. The participants are all involved at a primary school in the Blydeville community in Lichtenburg, North West province. The school experiences many cases where learners display behavioural problems in the classroom. In this study, participants from different strata included: teachers, School Management Team (SMT) members, parents, social workers, SBST, and District-Based Support Team (DBST) members. The participants were selected according to specific criteria, namely:

- they are specialists (SBST and SGB members) with direct involvement in learner support; and
- teachers who have been teaching for more than three years and have experience and knowledge in dealing with learners who display disruptive behaviour.

The selection of twelve participants to participate in this study was purposeful, based on their position in the school or departmental context. An overview of the participants invited to participate in this study is summarised in Table 3.3, presented in Chapter 3 where the details of the Research Method are described.

#### **1.7.4 Data gathering**

In the PALAR methodology, participants are engaged in a cyclic process.

The initial workshop, the construction of action learning sets, and the celebration of participant and project successes are all crucial components that promote relationship

building, reflection, and acknowledgment, as well as participant learning and the long-term success of the PALAR process (Zuber-Skerritt, 2015).

The start-up workshop enables all participants to come together to begin negotiating their purpose in forming collaborative partnerships. Relationship-deepening exercises assist participants in getting to know one another, trusting one another, and recognizing their mutual bonds (Zuber-Skerritt, 2015).

Participants assemble in an action learning workshop regularly to reflect on the development of their projects and build deeper relationships (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). During these meetings, participants collaborate to create and implement a research plan. They gather regularly to communicate and critically reflect on emerging findings, discuss their progress, share ideas and experiences, and ask questions.

Acknowledging participant and project accomplishments is another feature of the PALAR process. Allowing participants to acknowledge and appreciate one another's contributions to the project's success, as well as identify and maybe share their learning publicly, offers a venue for continued discussion of project results and prepares the path for future collaboration (Zuber-Skerritt, 2015).

The data gathering in this study comprised of three cycles (included in all cycles is a reflection), as proposed by (Kearney et al, 2013:113).

During *the first cycle*, the focus is on relationship building, collaborative identification of needs, and setting the research goals. In this cycle, the participants learn more about themselves and how they could contribute to the team (Kearney et al., 2013:113). The participants were engaged in relationship-building activities to enhance their relationships (Zuber-Skerritt, 2015). Group members share information as they learn. They envision what needs to be achieved throughout data collection by drawing symbols (Wood & McAteer, 2017). They discussed the symbols with fellow participants and developed a collective symbol in that group. Once the development of a collaborative vision is completed, then the second cycle could commence.

During *the second cycle*, the focus is on understanding the current situation pertaining to support for learners who display disruptive behaviour. The participants held three

action learning set meetings in this cycle. In the first action meeting, the participants engaged in a focus group discussion and developed criteria for disruptive behaviour, and shared their knowledge of the current situation. The participants reflected on the strengths and weaknesses and discussed ways to investigate how these adapted practices will facilitate support more efficiently for learners. In the second action learning set meeting, the participants collated the information on possible strategies to enhance the support for learners who display disruptive behaviour. In the third action learning set meeting participants analysed data from the previous two sets of meetings.

During *the third cycle*, the data analysis was completed. The participants focus on developing a strategy to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour, which involves two action learning sets. In the first action learning set, the participants discussed the main themes identified in the collected data from the first action learning set, developed a visual interpretation of the themes, and proposed strategies related to each of the themes. The visual interpretation was displayed in the staffroom, and teachers commented on the proposed strategies. In the second action learning set, participants discussed feedback and developed a strategy for the facilitation of support for learners.

#### **1.7.5 The role of the researcher**

As suggested by Creswell and Clark (2007), the researcher entered into a collaborative partnership with participants when collecting and analysing data. The aim was to create a partnership based on understanding the process.

The researcher communicated the necessary information to participants before the commencement of the study, as recommended by Nieuwenhuis (2007:70). All the participants were requested to sign consent forms after the required information was explained and all their questions and concerns were addressed. .

Participants were invited to attend regular meetings. The invitations provided all the necessary information, such as the date, time, and venue. The venue was conveniently located for all the participants, so they were not unnecessarily inconvenienced by travel. The meetings were scheduled so that they did not infringe on work time, considering the responsibilities and duties of the participants.

Data gathered from the meetings was analysed according to the data analysis method agreed on by the co-researchers.

### **1.7.6 Data analysis**

According to Lacey and Smith (2010:42), the amount of information available in action research might be intimidating. According to Zuber-Skerritt (2011), data analysis is a continuous process in PALAR because acquiring and evaluating data is an intertwined cyclical process. Every data collection session included reflection on the conversations in the meetings centred on what the participants had learned from the previous action learning session; consequently, the data was constantly being co-analysed.

Inductive analysis was used in this study to determine participants' attitudes, perceptions, understanding, and beliefs to approximate their creation of phenomena (Creswell & Clark, 2007:99; Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). Creswell and Clark (2007) are adamant that study findings enable vital themes inherent in raw data to emerge. The data were subsequently analysed using inductive analysis after we transcribed the audio recordings from the meetings.

Creswell and Clark (2007:98) and Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) alluded that themes can be identified by evaluating the data collected, similar grouping categories, and linking emerging themes with the aims and objectives of this research. Prior coding was used to identify themes, which implies that the co-researchers would have pre-set codes that they determined using the research aims and data that emerged from the research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Creswell and Clark (2007) advised identifying themes before the data is categorised. The researcher needs to verify the categories. Creswell and Clark (2007) and Nieuwenhuis (2007) were of the opinion that verification of categories should be done by re-reading initial transcripts to see whether all the essential insights have been captured and that data is not misinterpreted. In this study, all members of the learning set analysed data practically, and the researcher analysed data through a theoretical lens.

## **1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE DATA**

Trustworthiness is essential when conducting qualitative research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). Gibbs, referenced in Creswell (2009), defined *trustworthiness* as findings that resonate with participants and are confirmed by including the primary researchers and the participants. As a result, throughout team and learning set meetings, member checking and participant validation were used as part of a continual process of critical reflection. To ensure that data sources were triangulated, the researchers used a range of data-gathering methods.

Trustworthiness, according to Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010:169), is how the researcher demonstrates to the reader that his or her descriptions and interpretations of the findings truly reflect the phenomena, ensuring the quality of the research.

Therefore, the trustworthiness of this study was in line with the concepts mentioned by Lodico et al. (2010:169-174), namely transferability, credibility, dependability, and conformability.

Transferability was permitted by providing descriptions of data collection methods and analysis and employing purposive data sampling.

Credibility was attained by monitoring the data interpretations to ensure it was valid. Dependability was achieved by recording clear, detailed notes in a journal to attain the data received ensuring that all findings and interpretations are supported and confirmed.

## **1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

All research projects must take ethical considerations into account. It is essential to remember that ethical research is more than just a part of the research process. The researcher, authors, and other stakeholders require self-awareness, multicultural competency, and collaborative dedication to the research project (Ponterotto, 2010). These aspects protect human dignity and the rights of the participants. The researcher should strive to protect the rights and welfare of those with whom they work professionally (including those involved in research). If the researchers' ethical responsibilities conflict with law, regulations, or other governing legal authority, the

researcher will clarify the nature of the conflict, make known their commitment to the Ethics Code, and take reasonable steps to resolve the conflict consistent with the General Principles and Ethical Standards of the Ethics Code. Under no circumstances may this standard be used to justify or defend violating human rights.

## **1.10 PROPOSED LAYOUT OF THE STUDY**

### **CHAPTER One: Overview of the study**

The first chapter establishes the study's context and goals. The description of the issue for the research topic, the choice of research design, the study's aim and objectives, the trustworthiness of the research, and ethical considerations are all included.

### **CHAPTER Two: the essence of disruptive behaviour in the classroom**

This chapter will include a review of literature focusing on the insight of the learners' disruptive behaviour, causes and strategies in schools to support learners who display disruptive behaviour, the challenges teachers and other stakeholders encounter in the support process, and the areas of good practice.

### **CHAPTER Three: Research methodology**

This chapter included the research methods utilised in this study, as well as specifics and information regarding the research design. It also covered data-gathering tactics and sampling.

### **CHAPTER Four: Data analysis and interpretation**

The focus of this chapter is the analysis of the information collected. The themes, developed and identified from the analysed data in this chapter, are presented and discussed.

### **CHAPTER Five: Summary, findings, and recommendations**

In this chapter, the recommendations and contributions of the study are presented, with suggestions for further studies. The challenges and limitations encountered in the research study are noted.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

An overview of the topic of the research study is offered, addressing the background, and describing the research question prompting this investigation. Furthermore, the goals and objectives are described, with the research technique including the paradigmatic perspective, research methods, data gathering strategies, sampling, and data analysis. Finally, the function and quality criteria guiding the researcher are provided. The chapter finished with ethical considerations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THE ESSENCE OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR IN THE CLASSROOM**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Teachers in South Africa are frequently challenged to find effective strategies to deal with students' behavioural issues in the classroom while preserving children's rights. In this study the literature reviewed focused on disruptive behaviour in a classroom and its impact on teaching and learning in the school. Furthermore, the factors that cause disruptive behaviour are presented and discussed. The chapter provides insight from the literature about learner behavioural problems in a classroom and ways for these challenges to be approached and managed by the different stakeholders, including parents, district officials, social workers, school principals, and teachers.

#### **2.2 DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR CONTEXTS**

##### **2.2.1 Disruptive behaviour in schools**

Schools define disruptive behaviour as a pattern that disrupts, unsettles, or negates the smooth operation of the school, with negative consequences for both pupils and staff (Desrosiers, 2013). The prevalence and severity of disruptive behaviour in schools are a big concern worldwide (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2016). The United States of America has claimed that disruptive behaviour is one of the biggest difficulties that teachers encounter daily (Nanjala & Ngeno, 2017:128). Learner discipline has long been a source of concern for administrators and teachers in many public schools in many countries across the world.

Learners coming late for school, not wearing appropriate school uniforms, showing disrespect for their instructors and other pupils, harassment of other pupils, bringing hazardous weapons to school, and not finishing their assignments were listed by Dlamini (2016:484). According to Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46), talking out of turn was one of the most common issue behaviours identified in the classroom. According to Bottiani, Duran, Bradshaw and Pas (2019:36), disruptive behaviour frequently includes temper tantrums or physical aggressiveness, disobedience or opposition to authority, which can take many forms including assaulting other classmates, extreme argumentativeness, stealing, and other forms of defiance.

Although Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) discovered that disruptive behaviour did not always lead to poor academic achievement for the other learners in the school, the consequences of disruptive behaviour are described in the literature as harmful to learners in that learning opportunities are reduced, the risk of suspension is increased and the failure rate for the academic year escalates. Bustamante, White, and Greenfield (2018:34) also emphasised that pupils are not able to attain educational goals when a school is disrupted. It has the potential to derail the school's core purpose by obliterating the possibility of a safe and orderly environment.

Teachers lose time to teach learners when they spend too much time dealing with disruptive behaviour. According to Lambert et al. (2015:430), 77% of public school teachers claimed that if they spent less time and energy dealing with disruptive student behaviour, then they would be able to teach more successfully. Disruptive behaviour inhibits involvement with peers or adults, interferes with practical learning, and endangers the physical safety of others (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2016). According to Semali (2016:67), the safety of teachers and pupils is threatened when disruptive behaviour occurs in South African schools, making the school environment a dangerous place to teach and learn.

The prevalence of behavioural challenges or challenging conduct among today's learners, according to Chen, Cho, and Wang (2021:36), often predicts the size of our future jail population, even beyond adolescence. These variables highlight the necessity of early diagnosis of behavioural issues, appropriate prevention measures, and early intervention to avoid the recurrence of behavioural challenges since behavioural problems develop without treatment.

### **2.2.2 Disruptive behaviour in the classroom**

Disruptive behaviour in the classroom is any behaviour that takes the teacher's and classmates' attention away from their on-task goals (Nash et al., 2016:439). Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) defined disruptive behaviour in the classroom as any behaviour that is unsatisfactory to the teacher or other learners. Such behaviour, according to Bottiani et al. (2019:36), disrupts the classroom and impacts the learner's personal and other learners' learning.

Learners display a wide range of disruptive behaviour issues (Bechuke, Assan, Oduaran, & Akpovire (2016:1792). During class, loudness, taunting, annoying or disturbing classmates, roaming about without permission, unfinished tasks, playing with mobile phones, making improper sounds, inattentiveness, and verbal abuse are instances of inappropriate behaviour (Thompson, 2009:39). Carrell and Hoekstra (2010:211) found that lateness, dozing in class, and utilising phones or other technological devices are the less evident disruptive behaviours. Learners storming out of the classroom, noisiness, reluctance to collaborate, showing off, teasing, aggravating, and upsetting other learners are all examples of disruptive behaviour, according to Tiwane (2010).

According to Dlamini (2016:484), disruptive behaviour is more than just a mischievous learner; it extends beyond ordinary classroom disruption. Sometimes a pupil disrupts the entire classroom to the point where neither the disrupting learner nor their peers can learn. According to Bechuke et al. (2016:1792) learners may display disruptive classroom behaviours that negatively affect teaching and learning activities.

Bustamante et al. (2018:34) stated that a lack of teaching resources results in inadequate support for the learners, which teachers claim enhances the negative impact on teaching and quality education. Furthermore, Bustamante et al. (2018:34) stated that teachers struggled with learners who did not have appropriate stationery and did not persevere with classroom activities.

Dlamini (2016:484) indicated that learners who display disruptive behaviour in the classroom show impairment in academic performance compared to their peers (those who do not disrupt the classroom). Additionally, they show decreased cognitive ability and deficits in expressive and receptive language; their intellectual impairment is due to learners being removed from the classroom and frequently referred to the principal's office, which often leads to suspension. Teachers have observed that learners who engage in disruptive behaviour tend to have a lower level of academic achievement and lower level of functional skills than other learners (Bechuke et al. 2016:1792). Inattentive behaviour in the classroom has a strong, negative effect on reading achievement (Nanjala & Ngeno, 2017).

Learners who engage in disruptive behaviour in class can affect the classroom environment radically. Of course, there are implications for the interactions with the other learners in the classroom. Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) found that disruptive learners could lower an entire classroom's test

Teachers with disruptive learners in the classroom must devote more time to behaviour management, limiting their teaching time (Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018:1).

According to Aiello, Puigvert, and Schubert (2018:435), the quality of learner success suffers when teachers cannot correctly control potential classroom violence.

Disruptive behaviour can obstruct teaching and learning and create an unpleasant mood and climate in the classroom. Teachers get frustrated, agitated, and demotivated due to this state of things.

### **2.3 FACTORS THAT CAUSE DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR IN A CLASSROOM CONTEXT**

According to Strydom and Lewis (2016), the reasons for disruptive behaviour can be classified as intrinsic and extrinsic. Learner disruptive behaviour has a multiplicity that emanates from the intrinsic and extrinsic factors, which ultimately influence the behaviour of the learner negatively. As a result, this study discusses both the intrinsic and extrinsic causes of disruptive behaviour.

#### **2.3.1 Intrinsic factors**

Intrinsic factors include the genetic and physiological characteristics of an individual. In other words, traits are “intrinsic” to a person rather than being determined by that person's environment (Jinot, 2018:1).

Learners with genetic problems may suffer from Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which cause learners to have behavioural, social and emotional problems and be disruptive in the classroom. There is an average of one pupil in every mainstream classroom with the ADHD (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46). ADHD is a behavioural disorder that affects children, as they suffer from a lack of attention and inability to concentrate and to remain calm in the classroom and outside it, and the inability to stop their impulsivity that affects them, especially their academic and relational performance with the outside environment (Comfort, 2017:1)

Biological causes of misbehaviour include problems such as the malfunctioning of the central and peripheral nervous system and the endocrine glands, disorders in the hereditary characteristics of individuals, chromosomal abnormalities and genetic defects. Learners with physiological barriers may display low memory, poor concentration and dysfunction of the sensory organs like eyes, ears, nose, etc. Physiological barriers may result from the child's personal discomfort or caused by ill-health. Communication influences the effectiveness of instruction or handling learner disruptive behaviour, it becomes difficult and frustrating when learners have physiological barriers like poor listening skills and poor concentration in class (Gyan et al, 2015:1).

Teachers cannot address intrinsic characteristics, such as autism spectrum disorder or physical and psychological disorders, and teachers have minimal effect on these conditions (Prinsloo & Gasa, 2016). However, teachers must be aware of the inherent and interconnected causes that create disruptive behaviour in primary school learners, as this understanding may help teachers deal with such behaviour more effectively. This behaviour problem is common with children, especially during their school stage; these children display a lack of self-respect and act indifferently towards activities in the classroom (Strydom & Lewis, 2016).

### **2.3.2 Extrinsic factors**

Extrinsic risk factors in the learner's local surroundings, according to Wolhuter et al. (2020:1), include community, schools, teachers, classmates, and family.

Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) pointed out that the causes of learners' classroom behaviour are related to their school experiences and what they encounter in their neighbourhoods. According to Wolhuter et al. (2020:1), exposure to a hostile atmosphere in the learner's surroundings can result in highly disruptive behaviour.

#### **2.3.2.1 Community**

Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) concluded that the community plays a vital role as a determinant of the risk factor affecting learners' behaviour. Community factors like unemployment, political instability, poor housing, and health services are some of the community-based risk factors that could increase the chances of learners' engaging in disruptive behaviour (Gregory, Skiba, & Mediratta, 2017:1).

### **2.3.2.2 Schools**

Schools in South Africa are striving to provide the high-quality education required for a child's holistic and healthy development. The school is the first site where behavioural and emotional problems emerge and social work intervention is required. According to Prinsloo and Gasa (2016), many schools in South Africa are unable to provide a caring atmosphere in which to counteract or cope with disruptive behaviour in the community and family. As a result, classroom discipline suffers and the relationship between learners and teachers deteriorates.

Overcrowding in the classroom has a substantial impact on learner behaviour and achievement. According to Gregory et al. (2017:1), larger classes are noisier and can influence classroom discipline negatively. When their peers are boisterous, learners cannot pay attention or participate as fully as they should. Teachers waste unnecessary class time supervising the learners; leaving less time for actual teaching (Bottiani, et al., 2019:36).

Every part of school life is based on proper discipline and safety. For successful teaching and learning to take place, there must be good discipline in every classroom, as well as across the institution. Gender composition is critical in school discipline; Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) found that girls commit less disruptive behaviour than boys do and concluded that schools with more boys are likely to have more issues that are disciplinary.

According to the National DoE, despite the government's pledge to provide resources (quality infrastructure) and improve school environment conditions, reports reveal that many schools are still not in good working order (RSA, 1996b).

### **2.3.2.3 Teachers**

Teachers have a big influence on the attitudes and behaviours of their pupils and consequently their performance.

Many teachers in South Africa have insufficient expertise in disciplinary tactics, according to Gregory et al. (2017:1). Most disciplinary measures are reactive, punitive, humiliating, and punishing rather than corrective and caring. Teachers, who scream, accuse, or severely scold learners are more likely to enhance the classroom

misbehaviour than those who encourage and applaud them and demonstrate their care and concern for them. According to Archambault, Vandebossche-Makombo, & Fraser, (2017:1702), teachers shouting across the classroom can upset learners and may build a negative teacher-learner connection. The learners usually refuse to comply with teachers' demands, purposefully upset or blame teachers for their failures, and are frequently aggressive, vindictive, touchy, and resentful of teachers. They play a role in academic and social problems and behavioural disengagement. Learner-teacher relationships marked by conflict and acrimonious exchanges are linked with lower learner engagement and negative attitudes toward school, including avoidance and indifference in the classroom (Archambault et al., 2017:1702). Better teacher-learner relationships and increased teacher support, according to Gregory et al. (2017:1), could improve classroom discipline.

Learners despise teachers who conduct classes in an unprofessional manner, and teachers who make rude remarks and show little respect for their learners incite them to act aggressively (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46). Under-qualified teachers who are not able to decide on class routines, activities, curriculum, teaching methods, and other factors influence the learners' unwillingness to learn, which leads to disruptive behaviour (Gregory et al., 2017:1).

Teachers who are frequently away from class or not physically present in the classroom would undoubtedly contribute to learners' disruptive behaviour. Parents assume that the school deals with disruptive behaviour in the classroom when the teacher is absent. In these circumstances, parents may engage in behaviour that is more problematic to express their differing perspectives on dealing with such behaviour (Le Mottee and Kelly, 2017:46).

#### **2.3.2.4 Peers**

Hammond & Cook-Harvey (2018:1) found that peer pressure among learners is a strong factor in the disruptive behaviour of learners; some learners are ill-disciplined because they are trying to impress their peers and to be accepted by other mischievous learners.

While peer relationships are vital among pupils, the connection may also be detrimental to their behaviour. According to Thompson (2009:39), large groups of academically

inferior learners assigned to a class foster discipline problems. Such pupils are more likely to feel separated from their peers and have poor self-esteem, which can lead to behavioural problems. Older learners, especially boys, are alleged to be perpetrators of violence, bullying, and ill-discipline in schools.

According to Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018:1), learners feel threatened by their peers and sometimes do things they never intended to do. For example, learners in gangs force fellow learners to steal or victimise other learners. Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018:1) stated further that learners are used to bad language because of being within hearing range of conversations of their peers.

### **2.3.2.5 Home**

A child's primary microsystem for socialization is his or her family. Tiwane (2010) found that living conditions, such as council housing and informal settlements, unemployment, and female- and grandparent-headed households, have an impact on the child.

Poverty has impacted many families in South Africa, according to Dlamini (2016:484), particularly in informal settlements. The vast majority of learners arrive at school hungry. They have trouble focusing in class, are unmotivated to learn, and misbehave in the classroom.

Learners subject to frequent conflicts with their parents may engage in similar behaviour with their teachers to express their suppressed rage and disillusionment with their parents. Learners may come from shattered households with a single parent who is an alcoholic; according to Dlamini (2016:484); such parents do not contribute to their children's sound and appropriate behaviour.

It was also observed by Tiwane (2010) that family composition is one feature that is linked to learner behaviour; most of the learners were living with their grandparents or their relatives, mostly aunties, and most of the time the household had nothing else to depend on except for the social grants. Many of these learners are at risk of violence as a result of the family settings where they are raised. Learner behaviour may be associated with violence exposure, drugs and weapons at home and family criminality may result in the strongest predictors of learner disruptive behaviour. Children learn behaviour by watching and imitating others, specific individuals in their social contexts, that is family or community members (Gregory et al., 2017:1).

According to Gregory et al. (2017:1), many schools in South Africa are experiencing increased disruptive behaviour in the classroom and a lack of parental participation. Many parents are hesitant to work with their children's teachers to discipline the learners. Many parents appear to delegate their responsibilities to the schools, which are then responsible for all disciplinary issues (Gregory et al., 2017:1). Frequently learners are sent to school with little or no parental assistance. It leads to unacceptable classroom behaviour because they are ill-equipped to cope. When parents are actively involved in their children's education, it is likely to have a favourable impact on academic performance and behaviour. When the family is included in the education process, then the learners achieve higher grades, have better attendance, complete more homework, are more motivated, and are less likely to participate in disruptive behaviour in the classroom (Gregory et al., 2017:1).

Children's well-being greatly influences socioeconomic conditions in the family unit (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:1). Parental income and material resources influence children's outcomes. Parental income and material resources (Park & Holloway, 2018:9) influence changes in children's well-being and, in particular, test score accomplishment. HIV/AIDS, poverty, illiterate or indifferent parents, and dysfunctional family situations are all disempowering to children, according to Noltemeyer, Palmer and James (2017:81).

Poverty, hunger, homelessness, and the fear of a bleak future make it difficult for parents to maintain control over their children's behaviour. Bottiani et al. (2019:36) recommended teaching acceptable classroom behaviour to learners who originate from underprivileged backgrounds, such as squatter camps, the streets, or violent family situations, where language is vulgar and loud, and stealing is a method of survival. Poverty can significantly alter the neurobiology of a developing child, potentially leading to poorer results later in life. Early childhood poverty can indirectly impact adult achievement, behaviour, and health due to parents' monetary and emotional investments. Compared to non-poor children, poor children are less effective in school and participate in other forms of negative behaviour, according to descriptive research.

Onyema, Eucheria, and Obafemi (2020) described two ways in which a child's development is affected by a parent losing a job. Firstly, a parent losing employment can deplete a family's financial resources; and, secondly, a parent losing a job can

cause changes in a family's physical health, mental health, and behaviours, including parenting. Onyema et al., (2020) found that unemployed parents, on average, do not spend more time with their children or engage in educational activities that could lead to higher academic accomplishment.

The review of aforementioned studies demonstrates that learner behaviour issues are caused by both intrinsic and external variables.

## **2.4 DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR IN THE CLASSROOM CONTEXT**

For many years, disruptive behaviour has been a source of concern for school systems. Parents and teachers typically accept disruptive behaviour at first, paying attention only when school performance deteriorates or family and peer connections are affected, as these behaviours commonly worsen with time (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46). To deal with disruptive behaviour in the classroom, it is necessary to comprehend the complexity of learner disruptive behaviour and avoid the continuation of these behaviour issues in the classroom.

### **2.4.1 The importance of handling disruptive behaviour in a classroom**

According to Visser (2012:1), dealing with disruptive behaviour in the classroom is crucial otherwise the teaching and learning process is compromised.

Visser (2012) stated that teachers are unprepared to utilize tactics that assist and accommodate learners' behavioural hurdles. Regrettably, punitive and reactionary methods such as timeouts, office referrals, and schools use suspension as a first line of defense for teachers who may lack the necessary skills to deal with disruptive behaviour (Dlamini,2016:484). Teachers are more likely to adopt less time-consuming interventions than those that require more time or more teacher preparation (Carrell & Hoekstra, 2010:211).

Concrete actions to manage disruptive behaviour in the classroom will increase social interaction and academic performance (Carrell & Hoekstra, 2010:211).

Within the classroom, positive reinforcement and an emphasis on desirable behavioural attributes build a healthy learning environment (Bottiani et al., 2019:36). According to Noltemeyer et al. (2017:81), learners' behaviour tends to be more positive when they feel safe in the classroom and may freely and readily ask questions. Furthermore, the

South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996) (RSA, 1996b) states that a teacher pointing out what one learner is doing correctly can enhance behaviour of other learners by 80%.

### **2.4.2 Managing disruptive behaviour in the classroom**

In South Africa the DoE hires teachers to educate, but they must be able to manage their classrooms to do so. Since effective classroom management boosts learner engagement, reduces disruptive behaviour, and maximises instructional time, teachers should know and understand how to manage classroom learner behaviour (Onditi, 2018:2056). According to Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018:1), the single most common request for assistance from teachers is for help with behaviour and classroom management since trying to moderate disruptive behaviours takes up a lot of time in the classroom and interferes with academic education.

In this study, we define classroom and behaviour management as decisive, proactive, and preventative teacher behaviours that reduce disruptive behaviour and promote learner engagement, as well as strategic, respectful actions that eliminate or minimise disruption when it occurs to restore the learning environment (Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018:1).

#### **2.4.2.1 Respect for authority**

Learners should know that the teacher is the ultimate authority in the classroom, and the learners do not have any recourse on matters of classroom behaviour (Hieronymus Gijsselaers & Gruwel, 2018:1).

When a teacher takes the place of a parent, he or she must also safeguard the learner from harm; this gives the teacher authority (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46). According to South African common law, teachers also have an *in loco parentis* (in the place of a parent) duty of care to ensure the safety of the children under their supervision (Oosthuizen, 2009). The job becomes a 'community, civic, and pastoral role. As a result, teachers are forced to seek support outside the school.

Chiu and Chow (2010:592) contend that the teacher is in charge of the classroom and should enforce his/her authority. With this approach, the teacher makes rules and regulations that govern learner behaviour in the classroom. In this regard, Segalo and

Rambuda (2018:1) believed that teachers and learners make classroom rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are likely to be followed because they are not the teacher's but the class's resolutions. The advantage is that once learners break the rules, they know what the punishment is, and that way, there is bound to be little resentment for the teacher if any at all (Hieronymus et al., 2018:1).

Teachers are responsible for not only the pupils entrusted to them, but also for establishing a disciplined atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. Each teacher's purpose is to inculcate discipline in learners to ensure that school operations run smoothly and that all learners have access to suitable educational opportunities (Semali, 2016:50). The ability of a teacher to keep the class disciplined directly influences the teacher's capacity to educate.

Disruptive behaviour can obstruct learning, so classroom management must include practical measures for promoting positive behaviour (Gregory et al., 2017:1). Learners must be actively involved because they must be engaged to learn. According to Onditi (2018:2056), competent management allows children to obtain a clear image of what is going on and see desired and unwanted repercussions of their behaviour.

#### **2.4.2.2 Punishment**

According to Wolhuter and Russo (2013:1), South African teachers appear to be at a loss when dealing with disruptive behaviour and, as a result, they have mainly resorted to the use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline. Rahimi and Karkami (2015:57) revealed that teachers use corporal punishment to discipline learners due to the stress and frustrations they experience in the classroom, even though they are aware that it is illegal to administer corporal punishment.

Teachers can choose various punishments to reduce disruptive behaviour among learners; some are more acceptable than others (Jinot, 2018:1). Aside from corporal punishment, another type of punishment is emotional punishment, defined as an adult's intentional infliction of emotional pain on a child. Threats and other painful, frightening, humiliating, and degrading statements are examples of punishment. It can involve yelling or flailing a fist in a learner's face or locking them in a dark cupboard. Furthermore, unfair discrimination against a learner or a long refusal period to

communicate/respond to the learner while pushing other teachers to isolate the learner is distressing (Jinot, 2018:1).

Other academics, such as Noltemeyer et al., (2017:81) stated that teachers devoted more time to punishment than classroom instruction due to learners' inability to focus on classroom activities and poor behaviour. However, punishment only works as a temporary deterrent when it comes to troublesome learners. Punishment is also a factor for disruptive behaviour in learners dealing with high-stress levels and trauma, contributing to their feelings of anger and rage (Reyneke, 2015:57).

It suggested that learners subjected to humiliating and violent punishment are less likely to respect the rights of other learners, including their teachers, and are more likely to display disruptive behaviour. Teachers may be unaware that they are committing crimes, either purposefully or accidentally, under the guise of punishing pupils.

Teachers at a successful school, according to Gregory et al. (2017:1), must know how to deal with a disruptive pupil in a non-punitive manner while retaining control of the situation. At the same time, it prepares them for classroom work.

#### **2.4.2.3 Alternative ways to manage discipline**

Punishment and discipline are frequently used interchangeably to express the same thing (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46). According to the DoE (DoE, 2000), teachers' discipline is used to control the educational environment rather than punishing pupils. The idea is to address or regulate the learners' poor behaviour rather than harming them.

When considering disciplinary processes against a pupil, it is also important to consider the learner's constitutional rights. Under Section 9(10a) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, every learner has the right to basic education (RSA, 1996a). The South African Schools Act (84 of 1996) RSA 1996b), for example, sets the particular educational responsibilities in South African schools. The teacher must uphold the constitution while promoting democratic principles and practices in the classroom. It means that teachers should not violate the constitution when disciplining learners, regardless of how they function. Children's rights are addressed in Section 28 of the Constitution, with Section 28(2) saying that adults must regard the child's best

interests in all cases affecting a child. South African schools have banned physical punishment, as stipulated by the Constitution (RSA, 1996a).

Many children enter school with significant impairments in critical behavioural skills, which can have long-term implications for their school engagement and academic progress (Hieronymus et al., 2018:1). Teachers are also important since they spend so much time with learners during the day that they can recognise their behavioural needs (Wolhuter et al., 2020:1).

Teachers should address any behaviour that puts a learner's learning ability in danger (Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018:1). According to Gregory et al. (2017:1), teachers must be aware of and examine their role in controlling inappropriate conduct.

When the learner questions the teacher's authority or shows a general disregard for the teacher, this can also be associated with grades because of a lack of comprehension of a subject (Carrell & Hoekstra, 2010:211). Tiwane (2010) mentioned that an effective way of implementing behaviour modification in the classroom depends upon the teacher's ability. Hieronymus et al. (2018:1) highlighted that teaching involves the following of a curriculum: selecting appropriate materials, explaining, discussing, setting work, marking the work, and a host of allied functions. Therefore, when the teacher performs these duties, he/she is modifying the behaviour of his/her learners. In this context, learner behaviour will change due to the teacher's behaviour; learners will learn following the quality of the teacher's teaching (Hieronymus et al., 2018:1). Hieronymus et al. (2018:1) mentioned that managing the external environment is another way to manage learners' disruptive behaviour. In this regard, the teacher can manipulate the environment to help the learners shape behaviours appropriate to the classroom.

## **2.5 APPROACHES TO ADDRESS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR**

### **2.5.1 Manual work**

Simatwa (2013:374) in Kenya pointed out that manual work is practical as a sanction. However, the following factors should be taken into consideration: the age of the learner concerning the task assigned, the health status of the learners, time available to undertake the task (but not during class time), the lawfulness of the task, degree of severity of the misconduct. Onyango, Raburu, and Aloka (2016:527) explained that

manual work is physical work, which includes forcing learners to stand in painful positions, to sit on an invisible chair to hold or carry heavy objects. Wolhuter et al. (2020:1) stated that discipline strategies, such as manual work, were the most common disciplinary measure in South Africa in dealing with minor misbehaviour. Manual work is regarded as corporal punishment and is banned in South Africa since XXXX. Hence, teachers find themselves powerless in maintaining order in the classroom. Furthermore, Onyango et al., (2016:527) stated that schools in Zambia report a high rate of injury related to manual work and learners were also more disobedient, stubborn, and aggressive than learners not corporally punished through manual work.

### **2.5.2 Withdrawal of privileges**

Withdrawal of privileges entails the removal of a deliberate award that serves as a symbol of acceptable behaviour. Onyango et al., (2016:527) found that teachers took away certain privileges from the learners to encourage them to improve their behaviour. In South Africa, Wolhuter et al. (2020:1) discovered that removing privileges, such as a demotion, was a typical strategy for effective learner disruptive behaviour. Wolhuter et al. (2020:1) said that removing privileges to deal with disruptive behaviour did not seem to have a consistent effect on behaviour modification among learners. Even if they committed the same offense as those in leadership, those not in learner leadership would not be demoted.

### **2.5.3 Detention**

According to Jinot (2018:1), detention is a popular method of discipline in schools, but detention at schools follows a different set of rules. It may be necessary for a learner to visit a specific section of the school during the school day at a specific time (either during break or after school). According to Lau et al., (2019:136), instead of serious offenses like carrying a weapon and substance abuse, learners are detained for minor offenses like disrupting the classroom. To alleviate boredom, a learner may be instructed to bring a homework book, sit quietly, or complete punitive or non-punitive tasks, to other children, detention is time to play. Keeping learners behind requires informing parents prior, the teacher has to be available because learners cannot be left alone without the teacher's supervision (Jinot, 2018:1).

#### **2.5.4 Mediation**

Mediation is a strategy in which parties methodically isolate contested problems with the support of a neutral third person (teacher) to explore options, examine alternatives, and reach a mutually acceptable solution that fits their requirements (Varnham, 2005:87). Mediation is a helpful technique for resolving conflict between learners in the class. Mediation is justified because it encourages students to resolve conflicts constructively on their own rather than rely on the school's disciplinary system (Varnham, 2005:87).

#### **2.5.5 Guidance and Counselling**

Another helpful method for increasing learners' responsibility for regulating their behaviour and making positive changes when they understand the effects of their behaviour on others was talking and discussing the disruptive learner's behaviour individually after class. Guidance and counselling are critical in dealing with learner behaviour issues. (Sun, 2015:94).

The teacher should help encourage learners to think about their difficulties, acquire prosocial skills and ideals, and choose socially acceptable behaviour (Sun, 2015:94). When a learner is agitated and out of control, a teacher can begin by speaking softly and patiently to the learner. Acknowledging the learner's strong feelings may help to calm them down. However, it is critical not to respond emotionally to the learner's speech (such as cursing) (SA Media, 2012).

Britt, Chrystal, Mwangi, and Peralta (2014:1) in Kenya agreed that counselling improves learner discipline by instilling excellent ideals and positivism in developing self-discipline, which leads to behaviour modification.

#### **2.5.6 Praise**

Praise and social recognition are positive reinforcements of excellent behaviour, and many teachers report adopting this strategy to manage behaviour problems (Sun, 2015:94). According to research, disruptive classroom behaviour was reduced when teachers employed more positive reinforcement and less reprimanding (Onyango et al., 2016:527).

### **2.5.7 Referral**

Sun (2015:94) suggested sending a learner for discipline referral if the scenario merits it. Referring disruptive learners to professionally educated experts (such as counsellors, social workers, and psychologists) for help is common in schools where this backup structure expressly supports teachers and learners. However, teachers must be careful not to build mountains out of molehills when learners are out of line. They need to ensure that they are handling and evaluating situations correctly.

### **2.5.8 Hinting**

Non-verbal or verbal disciplining tactics, such as gazing, naming, and questioning, can reduce teacher control. When teachers give few modality signals, on the other hand, student responsibility for directing one's behaviour is maximised. As a result, hinting effectively enables learners to moderate their behaviour by adhering to classroom norms and establishing positive teacher-learner relationships, facilitating student cooperation and involvement (Sun, 2015:94).

### **2.5.9 Seating arrangement**

Classrooms can be arranged to restrict pupil contact in 'high-traffic' areas, such as the area surrounding the pencil sharpener and wastebasket, and by seating easily distracted pupils further away from these places. If teachers relocate pupils with behavioural issues near their desks, they will be simpler to supervise. It makes it easier for teachers to keep track of their pupils' behaviour and make positive affirmations when necessary.

### **2.5.10 Suspension**

Schools worldwide, including South Africa, focus on removing troublemakers or dealing with bad behaviour by suspending and expelling learners (Bechuke et al. 2016:1792).

Suspension is defined by Varnham (2005:87) and Onyango et al., (2016:527) as an obligatory restriction issued to learners as a punishment that can range from one day to several weeks. The learner will be unable to attend regular lessons during this period.

According to Lau et al. (2019:136), suspension can include sending the learner outside the classroom, which makes them feel alone and may cause them to stop misbehaving.

This is confirmed by Wolhuter et al. (2020:1) who found that disciplinary tactics such as ordering learners out of the classroom are perceived as punishment.

In contrast, Lau et al. (2019:136), in Nigeria are against suspending learners. They argued that removing learners from the classroom deprives them of critical educational opportunities that will have a long-term impact on their socioeconomic status.

## **2.6 DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS INVOLVED IN DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR**

Dialogue is a common incentive mechanism that promotes school discipline, according to Onyango et al., (2016:527). They further added that parents must work with teachers and other stakeholders to offer guidance and counselling. In line with the above, the following stakeholders deal with disruptive behaviour.

### **2.6.1 Community**

Cheloti and Gathumbi (2016:40881) described the community as all people who engage with the school, either directly or indirectly, and influence the school's behaviour or climate. Learners who attend schools with dilapidated toilets poorly maintained buildings, and inadequate recreational facilities receive significantly worse grades and have a higher risk of learner disruption (Gregory et al., 2017:1). The community also includes individuals with whom the school interacts, such as the school personnel, school management team, parents, teachers, non-profit organizations, and local companies.

According to Cheloti and Gathumbi (2016:40881), community members, beginning with the family, should develop moral principles in learners to assist them in becoming valuable members of society.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) could also help by offering support for teachers and learners in adapting classroom management strategies, as well as conflict resolution and diversity training. Since teachers are expected to be social workers, psychologists, security guards, and fulfil other roles, the government needs to train more teachers to deal with bullying and violence in schools (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46). Poor classroom behaviour can only improve if the learner has a support structure that includes the learner's immediate family and community. Pastors, former

SAPS officers, social workers, and others with similar goals and visions are among the community's key members (Gregory et al., 2017:1).

### **2.6.2 Parents**

To build self-discipline, parents and teachers must work closely together. Parental involvement and support for teachers are crucial in eradicating the negative consequences of corporal punishment (Wolhuter et al, 2020:1). In this sense, parents or guardians require assistance and advice on using nonviolent alternatives to punishment. Teachers can help by informing parents about the dangers of corporal punishment and the advantages of alternative (non-violent) discipline (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018:1).

To adjust appropriately to the situation, they find themselves in, children require parental love, care, warmth, and great attention; most children's behavioural problems are found in their homes (Okorodudu, 2010:58). Okorodudu (2010:58) said that parents, in the United States of America, play an essential part in monitoring their children's behaviour. Effective school counselling and guidance services, according to Lau et al. (2019:136), should increase parents' involvement in their children's learning environment.

It is sometimes clear that the parents have not had much exposure to positive parenting. Discovering that one of the children is having academic issues, regardless of the family's circumstances, can be a source of family conflict. When it is discovered that the parents/guardians are having difficulty controlling their children at home, the school can assist by providing essential behaviour management guidance, such as establishing behavioural guidelines and using rewards for compliance and consequences for non-compliance (Onyema et al., 2020).

However, the parent/carers' willingness to accept advice will depend on the guidance offered. It is essential to make a special effort to nurture relations with less forthcoming parents than others for one reason or another (Yi Ding, Chen & Cho, , 2021:36).

According to Gregory et al. (2017:1), sending messages to parents to inform them of their child's achievement and deeds on good days is essential to reduce disruptive classroom behaviour. Messages can be conveyed in written form, telephonically, by email, or by text.

### 2.6.3 Teachers

Since disciplined classrooms and effective instruction are inextricably linked, teachers must keep the classroom clean and orderly (Serame, Oosthuizen, Wolhuter, & Zulu, 2013:1).

Teachers play a pivotal role in managing violence and aggression in their schools. Therefore, they need to be trained adequately in positive discipline methods, providing them with skills to help them manage challenging behaviour in proactive ways (Le Motte & Kelly, 2017:46). Nanjala and Ngeno (2017:128) further stated that providing teachers with alternative discipline techniques may lead to their better understanding of the learners' behaviour. Teachers should receive staff development on using cooperative and supportive disciplinary approaches rather than punitive measures, equipping them with the skills needed to administer discipline without resorting to corporal punishment (Wolhuter et al., 2020:1).

Teachers can implement the following proactive strategies to prevent disruptive behaviour and to create a routine of discipline:

- Teachers should also be good role models so that learners can imitate good behaviour, Teachers must have a positive attitude to their profession and commitment to establishing and maintaining appropriate learner discipline. Teachers should also plan and present their lessons interestingly, discipline and order will result. A well-managed classroom results in a good school and disciplined learners and a safe teaching and learning environment (Schoeman, 2015).
- Teachers need to teach learners that there is a set of behaviours and speech patterns that will make them successful at school.
- A working relationship between the parents and the teacher improves the child's behaviour. The background of the learner may contribute to the way they behave. It is, therefore, the teacher's responsibility to take some steps to understand the background of misbehaving learners (Maile & Olowoyo, 2017:1).

#### **2.6.4 Learners**

Learners also need to participate in interventions to reduce aggressive youth toward teachers. Primary prevention strategies, such as skills training, can be aimed at most school populations, even those who do not present with violent tendencies (Segalo & Rambuda, 2018:1). Section 8 (4) of the South African Schools Act states that all learners attending a particular school are to be guided and follow the code of conduct of that school.

Learners must be able to control their behaviour; self-discipline focuses on learners' ability to engage in or refrain from a particular behaviour. According to Ali & Gracey (2013:15), the key to establishing good discipline at schools lies in learners accepting the teachers' authority to manage their behaviour. Learners may be responsible for monitoring the class, and by so doing the disruptive behaviour can be reduced amongst learners thereby enhancing sustainable learning among themselves (Wolhuter & Russo, 2013:1).

#### **2.6.5 Other family members**

The active participation of family members in activities and behaviours at home and school to enhance their child's learning and development is referred to as family involvement (Reyneke, 2015:57). Family participation in children's learning has been connected to several positive academic, and psychological, social, and behavioural outcomes for all children, including those who engage in disruptive behaviours (Hieronymus et al., 2018:1). Family participation activities improve academic results, such as greater academic achievement and motivation for homework, and protect children from developing behavioural problems. Examples of family participation are helping with schoolwork and offering a space for learning activities (Noltemeyer et al., 2017:81).

### **2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a literature review on the disruptive behaviour of learners in a classroom context, defining the disruptive behaviour, then explaining the impact on teaching and learning. Furthermore, the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that cause learner disruptive behaviour are described. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the

theoretical framework, arguing the need for a collaborative approach in dealing with disruptive behaviour among all the structures that affect the child's behaviour.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the research design and methodologies used for this research study. This covers the nature and purpose of the paradigm, the process of PALAR, the research method, sampling, the role of the researcher, the data generation process and analysis, and trustworthiness (refer Table 3.1).

Since the study involved voluntary participants as co-researchers, the process to gain permission for approval to conduct the study is explained.

A summary is provided at the end of the chapter.

**Table 3.1: Summary of the research design.**

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY
RESEARCH QUESTION
What could a strategy developed through a participatory process aimed at facilitating support for dealing with disruptive behaviour in primary school classroom encompass?
SUB-QUESTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What constitutes disruptive behaviour in the participating school?</li><li>• How does the participating primary school currently support learners who display disruptive behaviour:</li></ul>
RESEARCH PARADIGM, APPROACH, AND DESIGN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paradigm: Participatory Action Learning and Action Research (PALAR)</li><li>• The approach of inquiry: participatory</li><li>• Design: qualitative, participatory action research</li></ul>

RESEARCH METHODS AND STRATEGIES	
Participant selection	Twelve participants were purposively selected. 3 School-Based Support Team members (P1, P2, and P3), 2 Members (P4 and P5) of the Disciplinary Committee, 3 School Management Team members (P6, P7, and P8), 2 Parents (P9 and P10), 1 Social worker (P11), and 1 District-Based Support Team member (P12).
Data generation activities	<p>Cycle 1: Relationship-building: (1) Introduction, (2) Walk-and-Talk activity, and (3) Collaborative identification.</p> <p>Cycle 2: Planning: (4) Develop criteria, (5) Share knowledge, discuss strengths and weaknesses and develop an open-ended questionnaire.</p> <p>Cycle 3: Develop strategies for disruptive behaviour, (6) Set Themes, (7) Visual interpretation, (8) Reflection and feedback.</p>
Data generation strategies	Observations, group discussions, diagrams, semi-structured interviews, and visual and reflective journals.
Data documentation	Audio recordings, photographs, field note reflections, and visual diagrams.
Data analysis technique	Inductive content analysis, analysis of themes and sub-themes substantiated by literature review.
ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER	
Collaborative and participatory roles facilitate the methodological process between participants from diverse backgrounds.	

TRUSTWORTHINESS: QUALITY AND VALIDITY CRITERIA
Transferability, credibility, dependability, and conformability
ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS
Protection of confidentiality through adherence to ethical values of respect, beneficence, and democratic justice. Informed consent, visual ethics, and institutional ethical clearance

### 3.2 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the research was to enhance the schools' capacity to support learners who display disruptive behaviour irrespective of the nature of the disruptive behaviour. A PALAR approach to developing a process followed to support learners go beyond the specifics of the behaviour and focus on a proactive and transformative way to support the learners who display disruptive behaviour.

### 3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Creswell (2012) described the following components, which comprise the research methodology in this qualitative study: guiding paradigms, aspects of research design, and data collection and analytic procedures. Each part is discussed for orientation to the study and describes the actions taken.

#### 3.3.1 The nature and purpose of the critical-emancipatory paradigm

A research paradigm examines the study's environment (Lau et al., 2019:136). A paradigm is a strategy that outlines the research's epistemology and theory, as well as the methodologies (Birks & Mills, 2011).

**Table 3.2: Characteristics of the emancipatory-critical and participatory paradigm (adapted from Weber, 2004: IV).**

<b>Meta-theoretical assumptions</b>	<b>Emancipatory-critical and postmodern paradigm</b>
Ontology	Participants and their mutual learning process are inseparable from each other's lived experiences (perceptions).
Epistemology	Knowledge of the participants' learning is intentionally and collectively constituted through emancipatory, meaningful, and participatory interactions during the engagement process.
Research object	The research purpose is interpreted in light of the participants' meanings assigned to their mutual learning on personal, social, cognitive, and emancipatory experience levels.
Methodological approach	Participatory action research—strategy of inquiry into mutual learning experiences.
Theory of Truth	Truth as intentional fulfilment: recognition of changed perceptions, attitudes, and behaviour matched with changes in both groups' learning/lived experiences, reflected on and re-supported with literature.

The approach of participatory action research (PAR) incorporates an emancipatory-critical paradigm (ECP) (Markula & Silk, 2011). The ECP generates new knowledge by influencing or changing the reality in which the study is immersed and critically commenting on what is gained (Mash, 2014:1).

The study's ontological focus was on the participants' participation and mutual learning. They were involved in all aspects of the study process, which added to the emancipatory-critical paradigm's concept of change and critical reflection on learning processes. The participants were not considered as "things to be investigated or subjects to be understood" (Mash, 2014:1), as positivist and interpretative approaches would have it, but as active participants.

Dialogical procedures helped to produce new epistemology. Deliberation and conversations, as well as gaining consensus on different parts of the activities and agreed solutions to the challenges, showed that participants were actively learning. Participants also identified the issues and collaborated to find solutions.

### **3.3.2 The nature and purpose of the participatory action research approach**

Researchers use the research design to frame their investigations and guide the gathering and analysis of data important to answering research questions (Polit & Beck, 2010:1451).

In action research the methodology is a planned yet adaptable procedure for generating supporting knowledge. Participants are encouraged to grow and change due to their newfound knowledge. The activity is organised into preparation, action, and critical reflection cycles to connect practice and concepts. The activity also builds participatory inquiry groups, in which people engage and encourage one another, focus on practical issues, ask questions, and become interested (Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

Action research is not the same as traditional research. In conventional research, a theoretical framework is chosen and the data is gathered to show how the theory applies or does not apply to the issue under investigation (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). In action research, the researcher examines the obtained data, focusing on common themes and assigning codes to them (Mertler & Charles, 2008). Codes are classified into ideas and themes once more data is received and examined. As the investigation progresses, these motifs create the foundation for a new hypothesis (Reason & Bradbury, 2008).

The PAR activities put the knowledge of the participants into effect. The participants need to reflect on the research data and they simultaneously clarify what has been

gained from the experience to generate a new theory supported by propositional knowledge, which can then be put into fresh action (Mash, 2014:1). PAR means constantly 'working with' rather than 'on' people, challenging authority and hierarchy in a courteous, open, and democratic manner (Mash, 2014:1).

The PAR design defies conventional research practices by acknowledging the existence of a diversity of information sources in multiple locations (Kindon, Pain & Kesby, 2007). Another significant benefit is that it broadens teaching and learning practices by encouraging collaborative learning skills and personal and societal improvements (Altheide & Schneider, 2012:91).

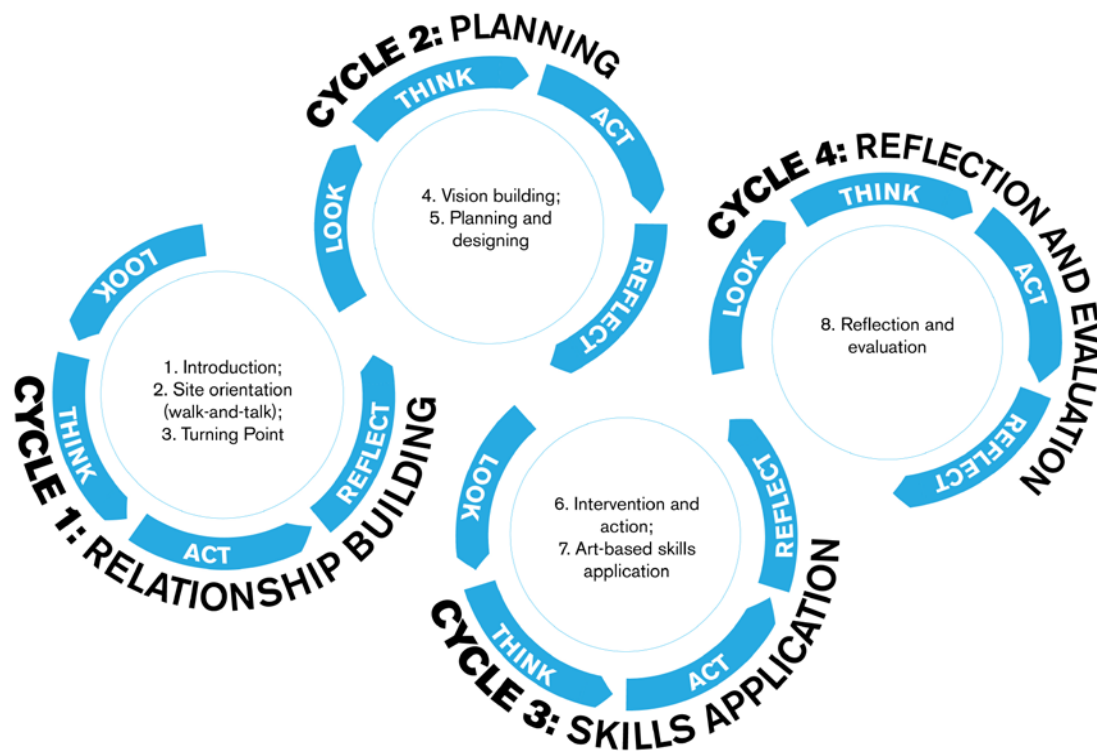
The practical ethos of generating possibilities leads to personal and emancipatory results (Kindon et al., 2007).

The participants in this research study were advised to look at the problem from many perspectives. They met in person to discuss the problem and possible improvements.

### **3.3.3 The process of participatory action research**

PAR is a research method in which participants are actively involved. Group interactive activities are based on the eight-step model proposed by Zuber-Skerritt (2011). The steps were reorganised into four recursive and spiralling loops, which characterised the eight phases of community-wide participation activities. In Figure 3.1, the spiralling loops illustrate each action in the PAR engagement process and guarantee consistency across them. The four cycles represented are: 1) developing relationships, 2) planning and designing, 3) skill application and 4) reflection and assessment.

Following the anticipated outcomes of the preceding phases, the participants moved on to the next activity (Kindon et al., 2007). After commenting on the procedure using field notes, the situation throughout these activities was studied and captured using visual material, discussions, and actions. The behaviour of the participants was watched, and differences in the process and among the groups were recorded as suggested by Zuber-Skerritt (2011).



**Figure 3.1: The PAR methodological design, adapted from Stringer’s action research, shows interacting spiral and activities based on Zuber-Skerritt’s eight-step model.**

### **3.4 RESEARCH METHOD**

The researcher's decisions and actions when collecting data in a qualitative method result in a study design best suited to the research activity at hand (Lau et al., 2019:136). In qualitative research, the term "design" refers to the complete study process, from conception to writing. The qualitative research design is adaptable and one-of-a-kind and changes over time. There are no predetermined actions to take, and it is difficult to replicate the study design (Creswell, 2012). The research is conducted in a real-world setting, relying on spoken words and personal experiences (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2020).

Methodologies for selecting cases, measuring and monitoring social elements of life, acquiring and refining data, analysing the data, and reporting conclusions are examples of research methods (Miles et al., 2020). The PAR process necessitates

methodological innovation to adapt or respond to the needs of unique locations, research issues, and researcher-participant relationships (Kindon et al., 2007). The researcher-participant relationships play an important role during discussions. An acceptable relationship makes participants feel at ease and effectively take part in the discussions. Figure 3.2 is an example of friendly participation where the relations are conducive between the researcher and participants.



**Figure 3.2: Participants' discussion.**



**Figure: 3.3 Visual diagrams from the participants.**

Because visualisation enhances participation, PAR research employs real, vivid, and colourful approaches, activities, and materials (Ebersohn et al., 2010). Figure 3.3 is an example of a visual diagram that emerged from the participants.

The strategies employed in this study were not based on the participants' literacy skills but on their ability to communicate using symbols, drawings, or written material (Miles et al., 2020). These methods, as reflected in Figure 3.3, were used to ensure that everyone could participate in all hands-on activities on their terms (Kindon et al., 2007).

### **3.4.1 Sampling**

A sample is a subset of a statistical population whose features are studied to learn more about the overall population (Creswell, 2012). When dealing with individuals, Creswell (2012) claimed that a sample may be described as a group of participants chosen from a wider population for a survey.

The population of this study involves all stakeholders associated with the school, and the researcher purposefully selected participants to reflect a wide range of opinions from the population. This targeted sample would allow for easier comparisons between various participants, according to the study done by Creswell (2012).

**Table 3.3: An overview of participants at a school and rationale for their inclusion in the case study.**

<b>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</b>	<b>DESIGNATION</b>	<b>RATIONALE FOR INCLUSION</b>
3	School-Based Support Team members	Responsible for overseeing and managing support in the school context
2	Members of the Disciplinary Committee	Oversee discipline and have to conduct hearings when misbehaviour arises
3	School Management Team members	School Management Team
2	Parents	School Government Body members that represent the community
1	Social Worker	Specialist
1	District-Based Support Team member	Specialist

For this study, 12 participants were selected as the sample. Three school management members and three SBST teachers represented the teacher component. All the teachers (except for the Principal) in the sample are class teachers, therefore they have the knowledge and experience on how they can support learners displaying disruptive behaviour. Two Disciplinary Committee members and two parents represented the parent's component and were chosen because they are members of the SGB and are involved in the daily operation of the school.

The Departments of Social Development (DSD) and Education (DoE) for primary education were among the stakeholders invited to participate in the study and were willing to collaborate. Their representatives included one social worker and one district-

based support team official as participants in the study; these officials are responsible for the schools in Blydeville.

Participants participated voluntarily; they were issued letters to explain the purpose of the study and asked to sign consent forms giving the researcher permission to use the data generated during the study.

### **3.4.2 The role of a researcher as a participant**

The responsibilities of the researcher included managing the entire PAR process and ensuring that data creation was done in an organized manner. The researcher interviewed each of the participants one on one, explained their rights and reassured them of confidentiality. The researcher analysed the data collected throughout the interview.

As a participant-observer and participant, the researcher could see the world through the participants' eyes and build connections based on trust. The researcher was required to act as an advocate and engage in the study; as a result, other stakeholders' views had to be heard at times and opinions respected; and their voices eventually supplanted those of the researcher, as the findings will reveal. Throughout the research study, the researcher kept a reflective and descriptive record in a notebook.

## **3.5 DATA GENERATION PROCESS**

The qualitative data gathered by PAR research was designed to demonstrate the possibility for uneven power structures and connections to be transformed into knowledge creation (Kindon et al., 2007).

In this study a relational and interactive method was used to collect data, including the participants, process observations, and analysis. Audio-visual recordings and images, field notes, oral transcripts, and reflection notes were used to document the created content according to the guidelines provided by Neuman and Guggenheim (2011).

Qualitative data for the study was generated using the four cycles that were used in the PALAR method. Zuber-Skerritt (2011) regarded the following procedures to be suitable and relevant.

### **3.5.1 Reflective journals**

Reflective diaries provide subjective insights that must be triangulated with other opinions. Potential impediments are identified, and participants are urged to evaluate and reflect on them (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). Journaling aids researchers in making inferred information obvious and facilitates the development and building of new knowledge.

During each cycle, participants were asked to write in their reflective notebooks about their experiences with the various activities. A diary can help individuals become aware of specific underlying processes that might help them find purpose in their work (Zuber-Skerritt, 2015).

Reflective writing keeps track of observations and practices by documenting and analysing completed actions (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). Each participant was provided with a journal (notepad) to keep track of his/her thoughts and remarks on the process after each session. Throughout the study, the researcher checked what participants wrote in their diaries to keep track of what they had learned.

### **3.5.2 Purposeful discussions**

A start-up workshop was arranged for participants as a relationship-building exercise, participants were each allowed to exchange narratives to convey their life experiences—an exercise suggested by Mertler and Charles (2008). Kearney et al (2013:113) explained that the goal of the exercise was to establish reliable and mutually supportive connections among the participants while avoiding negative personality traits like dominance and shyness, which might cause conflict later in the study process.

Face-to-face engagement during meetings between members aids in collecting rich data and vital information about the issues that participants face in and around the school. It also allows the researcher to observe the world via the participants' eyes (Curtis, Comiskey & Demsey, 2016:20). Good relationships and team spirit need trust, respect, and openness to new ideas within a group (Kearney et al, 2013:113).

### **3.5.3 Observations**

Observation is an important data-gathering strategy since it may provide unique insights into group dynamics (Nieuwenhuis, 2007:70). To acquire an insider perspective of the environment, the researcher was involved in the research process as a participant and observer in this study. The researcher designed and developed interventional strategies with the participants in various settings according to the instructions given by Nieuwenhuis (2007:70).

Systematic recordings of the participant's behavioural patterns were made without talking to them. Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) thought participants should communicate with one another to understand the situation better and address the research question. Nieuwenhuis (2007:70) advocated that the exercises allow for observing and interpreting social interactions between the participants as part of the learning process while avoiding changing the dynamic of the environment. Strydom (2011) confirmed that observation allows all members of the action-learning group to observe, participate, learn, and reflect on activities taking place. In the current study, the participants were particularly watchful due to the nature of the study because disruptive behaviour is a problem that teachers tend to deal with it in different ways. The events introduced the participants to their new surroundings and raised a personal understanding of the community's living and working conditions.

### **3.5.4 Visual mapping and diagramming**

In the exercise for vision-building, participants were asked to create a shared vision to guide the group through the tasks referred to in Figure 3.3. The exercise is designed to bring people together to achieve a common purpose (Zuber-Skerritt, 2011). In social research, mapping activities provide venues for free and open discussion (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2020).

### **3.5.5 Informal and formal group discussions**

Informal group talks were employed throughout the research study to assist visual mapping activities, particularly throughout the planning and designing phases when the process was negotiated and working relationships were formed as suggested in the

work done by Ebersohn et al. (2010). Refer to Figure 3.2. General guidelines for conduct during informal group talks were observed to ensure the success of participatory action learning. Birks and Mills (2011) required participants to respect one another, respect the perspectives of others, and take turns speaking and listening to one another. The participants of the current case study managed to respect each other's opinions and give turns when speaking, participants captured their input on paper and all meetings were recorded.

The participants interacted and collaborated to generate data and analyse it in recurrent cycles of inquiry. In this way, participants in the action learning group generated data for this study.

### **3.5.6 Semi-structured interviews**

Lodico et al. (2010:169-174), found that open-ended questionnaires precipitate a wide range of ideas, attitudes, perceptions, and views. If necessary, the participants can be contacted if any material is unclear to clarify their responses. Mertler and Charles (2008) found that when many 'basic' questions were asked in the semi-structured interview, the follow-up questions were based on the answers.

Zuber-Skerritt (2011) confirmed that semi-structured interviews with participants to assess the effect and changes during the engagement process. Participants' ideas and learning from the PAR process were documented by the researcher in the final session of reflection. Zuber-Skerritt (2011) noted that to conduct productive interviews, participants must be able to convey their actual sentiments about their situation. The researcher of this study wanted to ensure that the participants understood what they had learned, so questions were posed to invoke a response. A few questions were prepared from the reflective notes of the participants' previous encounters and video recordings. The questions were also centred on the study topic, "What does a support strategy for dealing with disruptive behaviour developed through a participatory process encompass?"

The interviews were conducted to respond to the research question and determine whether it was a beneficial learning process for the participants.

### 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

In the PAR process, the perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, values, feelings, and experiences of the participants are explored to find meaning in their responses (Ebersohn et al., 2010). Ebersohn et al. (2010) recommended a systematic qualitative data inductive analysis approach, with the primary purpose of enabling the research conclusions to emerge from common, dominant, or significant themes in the raw data.

As an inductive and iterative strategy, the conventional content analysis was used to look for similarities and contrasts in the text that contradicted or supported the PAR strategy (Ebersohn et al., 2010). The data generated in this study were analysed from many perspectives, including utilising different content (visual, written, and verbal material). Essential aspects in the text were found to support the study's underlying theory. By thinking critically and methodically, the research objectives were addressed.

During the first step of analysing the notes, recurring phrases were colour-coded according to their frequency of occurrence. After highlighting the verbatim words with particular colours, themes were identified from the initial views gleaned from the participant's reflective notes on the engagement process (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). After that, the recurring phrases were double-checked and compared to emerging themes. After spotting the emerging themes in the transcripts, these were related to the research questions. To ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis, the replies from each group member were double-checked. During the second step, a template with all the detected themes was created and connected to the sub-themes that emerged.

The recurring terms were grouped by theme before searching for sub-themes in some of the key topics, which was double-checked against the verbatim transcripts. In the various action phases, several sub-themes were found—some were overlapping; pertinent sub-themes were kept and then organised according to the three primary themes.

To synthesise and comprehend the data and uncover predictable linkages, the data was segmented or categorised by starting with single episodes and gradually developing more abstract conceptual categories. The process followed was described by Bustamante et al. (2018). Various words were connected to colour codes and

research questions, considering how each transcript and topic would respond to the research question.

In the third step, a table was compiled with all the detected themes and sub-themes and a variety of colours was used to illustrate each theme and sub-theme. The transcripts were then matched to the topics. It became evident that some sub-themes would have to be discarded. This is in accordance with the findings of Lacey & Smith (2010:42) who discarded "those that do not fit well in the emergent framework, nor have a lot of evidence in the transcripts".

The themes were summarised in a table according to the grouping of the participants' replies (Bustamante et al. 2018). Quotations from participants and interpretations, as suggested in the work by Zuber-Skerritt (2011), were used to confirm the accuracy of the emerging story. The following actions were highlighted in the transcript analysis: spatial awareness and orientation, relationship building, working processes, and final interrelated meanings; rather than assessing meanings. The aim was to identify changes and the nature of the learning process during the participants' interactions with one another (Akerlind, 2005:1).

Even though data was gathered through informal and formal group conversations, all of the visual data was examined. A holistic method was used to depict the whole and the parts (Akerlind, 2005:1). In conclusion, the researcher endeavoured to confirm that these exchanges were meaningful. The literature references used in Chapter 3 are based on the topics that arose from the PAR process. The work of Kindon et al. (2007) assured the researcher that it needs to be done in great detail so that the reader may assess the correctness of the analyses.

### **3.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

The trustworthiness of the qualitative research was approached rigorously to guarantee the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the results. The criteria employed were aligned with PAR aims and verified the process's outcome, which was dialogic and catalytic (changing) in nature (Osterman, Furman & Sernak, 2014:85).

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is determining if the data obtained answers the study topic. Internal validity refers to using genuine and trustworthy tools to assess the content (Sikolia, Biros, Masom & Weiser, 2013).

### **3.7.1 Credibility**

The term "credibility" relates to how closely the obtained data represents the many facts of the phenomena (Sikolia et al., 2013). Credibility is defined as the extent to which the results of a study mirror reality and therefore can be assumed to be trustworthy and accurate (Polit & Beck, 2010:1451). In this study, the researcher understood that it was essential to be aware of her own bias, assumptions and relationship with the study as these could affect the investigation. To maintain credibility, the researcher ensured that the information from participants was recorded and analysed accurately.

### **3.7.2 Transferability**

Transferability refers to how well the findings may be applied in other situations or with different people (Babbie & Mouton, 2012). Purposive sampling was used in the current study, which allowed for a wide range of specific data to be related to the concepts and theories covered in the literature review. The aim was to extrapolate the results from the sample, but for this purpose, the small sample size has been noted as a limitation of the study.

### **3.7.3 Dependability**

Dependability attempts to account for the change. The qualitative assumption is that the social world is continually being constructed. Negative analysis corresponds to the notion of dependability, in which another person validates that the proper processes were followed (Babbie & Mouton, 2012). Polit & Beck (2010:1451) regarded the notion of dependability as that in which another person validates that the proper processes were followed, particularly when negative analysis looks at cases that contradict the key conclusions (Polit & Beck, 2010:1451). In this study, participants were requested to check (peer review) each other's findings to ensure trustworthiness of the data collected, the supervisor also reviewed the work throughout the study.

### **3.7.4 Confirmability**

Confirmability of results is when the research is repeated with the same or similar participants and in similar circumstances and the results is the same or comparable (Babbie & Mouton, 2012). The researcher attempted to maintain objectivity throughout the procedure, avoiding subjectivity and bias that might have affected the way the findings were interpreted and described. This was accomplished by member checking, which involves returning the interpretations and descriptions of the data analysis to the study participants to confirm their authenticity and reliability. To confirm that every transcript was genuine and accurately captured, the transcribed data were given to the participants.

## **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

According to Bustamante et al. (2018), ethics are moral principles of what we deem reasonable or evil, right or wrong. As a result, ethical considerations are moral standards that a researcher follows to safeguard participants from harm. Ethical considerations should be evaluated and assessed throughout the research process, including planning, research, and reporting findings.

A participatory research project is contextual, relational, and dynamic. Because of the collaborative aspect of this study, the researcher was aware of the opinions of others throughout the research process. To safeguard participants who may have felt they were being ignored, the meetings offered a safe and courteous setting as stipulated by Conrad and Serlin (2011). The roles of all the participants were defined and their duties and the decision-making procedures were explained clearly and consistently. They acquired on-going consent (verbal and written) throughout the process, ensuring respect, concern for fairness, and equity by protecting the welfare and privacy of the participants in a just manner as specified in the work of Bustamante, White, and Greenfield (2018).

This study follows the ethical guidelines for qualitative research, described by Creswell (2009:87-93), as fundamental when undergoing research:

- the Ethics Committee of North-West University's (NWU) Faculty of Education has granted permission to proceed with this study (refer to annexure I);

- the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in North West Province granted permission for the research to be conducted at the school in their district;
- the SGB and the school management team were approached for goodwill permission;
- each person who agreed to participate was provided with an informed consent form to sign and complete;
- consent of participants was required for one-on-one interviews at workshops and follow-up sessions;
- in addition, the permission of the interviewees was requested to record the interviews;
- potential participants were informed about the goal, methods, time frame, and other pertinent details of the research study;
- participants answered all study-related questions to the extent that the research allowed and addressed all concerns before the start of the study;
- participants were assured that the information and experiences they shared would be kept confidential. Their right to anonymity is respected and their personal information will not be divulged without their permission. Their identity was safeguarded by issuing a number to each participant;
- participation in the study was entirely voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time during the study;
- data obtained during the study is stored in a researcher's closed cupboard for a period designated by the NWU;
- Confidentiality was ensured during the data analysis and interpretation;
- access to the information was limited to the researcher and supervisors registered for the study;
- the findings of the study are based on data gathered through an empirical investigation; the researcher avoided employing prejudiced terminology against the participants regarding gender, sexuality, race, ethnic group, or handicap.

### **3.8.1 Permission for research study**

Before a researcher performs a study with a person or a group, approval or permission is requested from the relevant authorities (Creswell & Clark, 2007). The Ethics

Committee at NWU's Faculty of Education granted the researcher permission to proceed. This letter was used to request authorisation from the Ditsobotla Lichtenburg sub-area district's office manager. A letter detailing the study's goal and the research process's protocol was sent to the participating school and addressed to the school administrator.

### **3.8.2 Informed consent**

Cassell and Symon (2012) stated that agreement from the individual or group engaged in the research is required. DePoy and Gitlin (2016) described informed consent as the procedure through which the individual is required to sign a document to acknowledge they have been made aware of the research and its dangers. Before enrolling a participant, informed permission is required (Shahnazarian, Hagemann, Aburto & Rose, 2013). As a result, the procedure extends beyond signing the consent form to explaining to potential participants the protocols and methods of participating in such research. The option must be genuinely free, with no negative consequences if one refuses to participate in the study (DePoy & Gitlin, 2016). According to DePoy and Gitlin (2016), all study protocols must be disclosed to potential volunteers.

The researcher addressed the objective of the study, as well as the data collecting and reporting protocols. Participating in the study had no dangers, according to the researcher. The anonymity of the participants was guaranteed, as was the opportunity to voluntarily engage in and leave the study without fear of penalties as suggested in the work by Shahnazarian et al. (2013). According to DePoy and Gitlin (2016), the researcher must read and explain the permission form's contents, and then ask the participants to sign the form if they are willing to participate in the study. Participants were given information about the study's protocols. Participants' consent was obtained using the consent forms (Annexure A). By signing in to the sections provided, the participants agreed to participate.

All participants in this study gave their consent: principals, teachers, parents, a social worker, and a member of the DDST (Refer to Table 3.3).

### **3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The following participants were selected for this study: three SBST members, two Disciplinary Committee members, three SMT members two parents, one social worker, and one member of the DBST. Participants were provided with information about the study's protocols. Participants' consent was obtained using the consent forms (Annexure A). By signing in the appropriate sections provided, the participants agreed to volunteer to participate in the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4.1 DATA PRESENTATION

#### 4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the data collected from the participants is presented and discussed. Information was acquired using three cycles.

- The *first cycle* was developing and strengthening the relationship. In this cycle, participants were collaboratively strengthening relationships and envisioning the outcome.
- The *second cycle* was planning. This is where the participants developed strategies for dealing with disruptive behaviour.
- The *third cycle* was reflection and evaluation. In this regard, participants reflected on the participatory research process. These cycles guided the participants to identify and discuss the three main themes, which emerged from the data.

The study used a variety of research approaches to collect data, providing an answer to the research question. These include observation (DS 1), group discussion (DS 2), drawings (DS 3), interviews (DS 4), journals (DS 5), and audio recordings (DS 6) (refer to Table 4.1). Data interpretation is supported with examples of written work and oral comments from the participants, visual imagery, and current literature relevant to the data.

The focus of the study was guided by the main research question: What could a strategy developed through a participatory process aimed at facilitating support for dealing with disruptive behaviour in primary school classroom encompass? The following research questions were explored to address the main research question:

- What constitutes disruptive behaviour in the participating school?
- How does the participating primary school currently support learners who display disruptive behaviour?

#### 4.1.2 DATA CODING

Table 4.1 shows the abbreviations used to identify data from different sources. Each participant (P) was allocated a number according to the number of participants in the data set (DS). For example, Participant number 4 from the group discussion in data set 2 is referred to as P4 from DS 2.

**Table 4.1 Abbreviations used to identify data from different sources**

Data set	Abbreviation	Participants	Abbreviation
<b>Observations</b>			
	DS 1	SBST teacher	P1- P3
		Disciplinary Committee teacher	P4-P5
		SMT teacher	P6-P8
		Parent	P9-P10
		Social worker	P11
		District official	P12
<b>Group discussion</b>			
Relationship building	DS 2.1	SBST teacher	P1- P3
Developing a common understanding of disruptive behaviour	DS 2.2	Disciplinary Committee teacher	P4-P5
The origin of disruptive behaviour	DS 2.3	SMT teacher Parent	P6-P8 P9-P10
Developing strategies to support	DS 2.4	Social worker District official	P11 P12

disruptive behaviour			
<b>Drawings</b>			
	DS 3	SBST teacher	P1- P3
		Disciplinary Committee teacher	P4-P5
		SMT teacher	P6-P8
		Parent	P9-P10
		Social worker	P11
		District official	P12
<b>Interviews</b>			
	DS 4	Social worker	P11
		DBST official	P12
<b>Journals</b>			
	DS 5	SBST teacher	P1-P3
		Disciplinary Committee teacher	P4-P5
		SMT teacher	P6-P8
		Parent	P9-P10
		Social worker	P11
		District official	P12

## 4.2 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

The responses of the participants were analysed and summarised according to four main themes: 1) developing a common understanding of disruptive behaviour, 2) dealing with disruptive behaviour, 3) envisioned approach to support learners who display disruptive behaviour, and 4) specific strategies/methods. The themes are explained with sub-themes and discussed in detail in the subsequent sections. The discussion of each theme in relation to the literature review is also included.

### 4.2.1 Theme 1: Developing a common understanding of disruptive behaviour

Theme 1 explored information seeking and understanding through practice and highlighted the realisation of disruptive behaviour in the classrooms. This theme focused on the teachers' shared understanding of disruptive behaviour. Group discussions helped the participants to develop a strategy to support learners who displayed disruptive behaviour in classrooms. Data for developing this common understanding of learner disruptive behaviour was obtained from cycle 2—group discussion (DS 2)—whereby participants discussed what constitutes disruptive behaviour in primary schools, particularly in the participating school. Furthermore, journals (DS 5) and audio recordings (DS 6) were also used for the emergence of a common understanding of learner disruptive behaviour. Discussions were based mostly on the teachers' classroom experiences.

Participants wrote their views in a journal, and audio recordings were made of the discussions. This helped to process the data from participants and form an emerging picture of the findings. All participants had a similar understanding of what disruptive behaviour meant and how it affected the classroom. Group discussion is challenging in that it is time-consuming and difficult to analyse. However, some sub-themes emerged within the theme. These were identified as forms of disruptive behaviour and the origin of disruptive behaviour (refer to Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2 Sub-themes identified for Theme 1.**

<b>Theme 1: Developing a common understanding of disruptive behaviour</b>	
•	Sub-theme 1.1: Identifying various forms of disruptive behaviour
•	Sub-theme 1.2: Origin of disruptive behaviour

#### **4.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1 Identifying various forms of disruptive behaviour**

The participants identified various forms of disruptive behaviour that surfaced in classrooms in the primary school context. The following are described in more detail: a disregard for authority; absenteeism from school and coming late for classes; the interaction of the learner with peers and making a noise in the classroom and on the school grounds; and not writing in class.

## Disregarding authority

This study revealed that learners in the selected school often disregarded the authority of teachers. This disregard for authority goes hand-in-hand with disrespect toward teachers and is evident in the way in which learners' backchat teachers and talk during lessons. It is further evident in the defiance of rules, such as the wearing of a uniform.

Most of the participants were adamant that learners disregard their authority.

Participant (P2 from DS 2.2) said the following:

*“Learners are back chatting and undermining the authority of the teacher and refuse to wear a uniform.”*

Participant (P1 in DS 2.2) gave an impression of sharing the same sentiments as the previous participant on learners who disregard authority. She mentioned the following:

*“Learners are talking during teaching and learning. They are not concentrating on the work given to them by the teacher.”*

Furthermore, participants (P1 from DS 2.2 and P4 from DS 2.2) also noted that:

*“Learners are disrespectful towards teachers, they do not do their classwork and homework and they do not submit their work on time, learners attend some of the classes, and some classes they do not attend. This results in learners being behind with their schoolwork. The disregard of authority also moves beyond the classroom.”*

Participant 9 mentioned another reason for the disregard for authority. It starts outside the classroom and triggers the learners to behave negatively. The participant (P9 from DS 2.2) elaborated:

*“These children steal money at home, they smoke dagga, and they bunk school, they do not listen to their parents. They copy bad behaviour around the community and the media, television is not helping because they see the same rotten behaviour on television and they think it is the right behaviour.”*

Rogers (2015) is of the view that disregard for authority in schools will continue to escalate as long as teachers continue to impose authoritative practices on learners. In

this respect, Rudzani (2020) advised that despite the effort of maintaining a disciplined environment, disruptive behaviour might still occur; teachers must be prepared for this by using different techniques, ranging from counselling to mutually solving the problem of disregarding authority while reinforcing appropriate behaviour.

### **Learner Absenteeism and coming late for classes**

Most of the participants seemed to point to learner absenteeism and coming late for classes as another form of disruptive behaviour that dominates in their school. According to them, the learners disturb the class while the teachers are already giving the lesson, and to some extent, prevent learners from learning effectively. This matter was highlighted when a participant (P 4 from DS2.2) remarked on poor attendance:

*“Teachers often complain about unacceptable forms of behaviour such as coming late for classes in the morning and coming late when learners rotate classes, and their refusal to attend certain lessons. Such learner behaviour disturbs the teachers and to some extent prevents learners from learning effectively.”*

This participant further indicated that misbehaviour is not always the reason for all the learners who come late or absent themselves from class, there are only a selected few. Furthermore, the participant (P4 from DS 5) elaborated on this point by saying:

*“I observed that the first lesson starts at 7:30 in the morning and most of the time, half of the class was not available, COVID-19 regulations made it worse because learners are delayed because of screening at the gate.”*

One participant (P1 from DS 2.2) also supported his colleagues on this point:

*“Learners are always 10 to 20 minutes late in the morning. Our school starts 30 minutes earlier than most of the primary schools in the community. Learners walk from home to school with their friends from other schools. Their friends are delaying them as their schools only start 30 minutes later.”*

This study discovered that teachers experience disciplinary issues among learners, such as tardiness, and this appears to have a negative impact on teachers' discipline. This type of learner behaviour frustrates teachers and, to some extent, stops learners from learning efficiently (Schoeman, 2015). Maile and Olowoyo (2017:1) came to the

same conclusion. They emphasised that a learner who does not attend school regularly confronts learning with issues such as truancy, inability to read, and failure to consult with the teacher. Furthermore, according to Reyneke (2018), one of the most common disciplinary issues in schools are children arriving late for school. Most of them have to travel long distances to school or have to walk to school; bad weather could also make it difficult for these children to attend school. Punishing these learners without knowing and understanding their reasons could lead to aggressive behaviour.

### **Peer Interaction**

Disruptive behaviour in South African classrooms includes fighting, vandalism, theft, and learners armed with dangerous weapons (Jinot, 2018:1). The participants in this study agreed. Most of the participants agreed that fighting and aggression should be documented as disruptive behaviour in the school policy. It has transpired, that learners in this school frequently fight and in some instances, display aggression. Participant (P 3 from DS2.2) said the following:

*“Learners are playing wrestling even during the lesson, climbing the tables, and not following the teacher’s instructions.”*

Participant (P3 from DS 2.2) also emphasised that learners mostly use fighting and aggression to bully their peers:

*“Learners threaten each other, most learners who bully other learners use this type of classroom disrupting style, and this may lead to learner losing focus.”*

### **Making noise**

Participants also highlighted noise as another form of disruptive behaviour in the classroom. In these instances, the participants mentioned that some of the learners, who make a noise, use the classroom as an excellent platform to debrief their challenges. Participant (P 2 from DS 2 .2) mentioned:

*“Some learners would use a classroom discussion as a chance to speak about their unfinished work given to them by other teachers.”*

Participant (P1 from DS 2.2) shares the same sentiments as the previous participant:

*“Other learners use the classroom as a place to communicate details of their personal lives and attempt to use the attention they get from their peers to disrupt the classroom knowing very well that it may be annoying to the whole classroom setting.”*

Segalo and Rambuda (2018:1) found that lowering classroom noise levels can assist in making the learning environment more effective both within the classroom and for classes in nearby rooms.

According to Chiu and Chow (2016:533), learners create noise in various ways. They tap their pencils, click their tongues, sing a song, or crack their knuckles to express themselves. The noises might easily disturb a teacher and other students. While some distracting noises can be ignored, others interfere with the lesson or learners' concentration ability. It requires active participation.

### **Not writing down work**

The study revealed that learners in certain classes (especially in grade 4) do not finish writing down their classwork and do not do homework as instructed by the teachers. Not writing down work goes together with a disregard for authority. Furthermore, it is evident from their results that these learners have academic performance barriers.

Changing grades can be challenging, especially for pupils moving from grade 3 to grade 4. In grade 4, the workload increases substantially. The number of subjects in grade 4 increases to six subjects, in comparison to four subjects in grade 3. Learners are required to work at a faster pace in the classroom to keep up with the rest of the class (Reyneke, 2018).

Participants (P 4 from DS 2.2) mentioned that learners in grade 4 are not writing down work in class.

*“Learners are not writing, maybe is because learners are not used to writing faster and that they are used to one teacher teaching them instead of multiply teachers.”*

“Participant (P 4 from DS 2.2) further stated that

*“some learners do not write because they do not have stationery (pens), they have to constantly borrow from other learners, which is time-consuming, and they are unable to finish the tasks at hand in the classroom.”*

#### **4.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2 Origin of disruptive behaviour**

The participants held strong views regarding the origin of the learner's disruptive behaviour identified in the previous section. Most participants seemed to point to the lack of parental involvement, the toxic community environment, and teachers' lack of commitment as the major origin of disruptive behaviour. This concurs with Bottiani et al. (2019:36) who asserted that most of the disruptive behaviour emanates from poor parental involvement, a community environment that discourages effective teaching and learning, and a lack of commitment from teachers. Each of these origins of disruptive behaviour is discussed in more detail.

##### **Lack of parental involvement**

Firstly, a possible reason for disruptive behaviour seems to be a lack of parental involvement (refer to theoretical framework-ecosystem). The participants linked all the various forms of disruptive behaviour to the parents and the home circumstances of the learners. Participants highlighted that the majority of learners are walking alone to school, without parent supervision. Along the way, they meet with ill-disciplined learners who are usually late for school and try to influence their peers. .

Participant (P 8 from DS 2.3) remarked:

*“Learners come to school late, because parents are not walking the learners to school. Parents are not making sure that learners arrive at school on time.”*

This participant further explained the frustration of a lack of moral values that could contribute to learner disruptive behaviour:

*“Parents talk openly about adult matters in front of the kids, they also use inappropriate language which children copy and use in the classroom.”*

One of the participants (P11 from DS 4) explained that some of the unemployed parents are unable to support their children financially and further engaged in substance abuse:

*“Some of us as parents are not working, there is poverty at home, and we cannot provide financially for our children, like, buying stationery or paying for a school trip. Even when the child needs help with homework, we are always out in the street drinking alcohol or taking drugs (substance abuse). This causes children to be disruptive.”*

Participant (P11 from DS 4) further elaborated to support the previous statement by saying:

*“Children see their friends living a normal life without poverty and substance abuse at home, other children get all the support needed from their parents like food, school uniform and stationery, but disruptive learners do not have those basic needs.”*

The participants also mentioned that in most instances, parents of children who display disruptive behaviour in the classrooms are not coming to school when the school authority invites them. According to them, this exacerbates disruptive behaviour.

Participant (P8 from DS 2.3) stated:

*“Parents of learners who are disruptive are not coming to school when they are called, they show a lack of interest when it comes to their children's schoolwork.”*

*“Furthermore, one of the reasons for parents not being involved in any school matters is because of being illiterate and this encourages learners to behave in unacceptable manners.”*

Participant (P 9 from DS 2.3) alluded to illiteracy and declared:

*“One of the reasons parents do not get involved in the education of their children is because they are also illiterate, they do not understand the curriculum or the right way of disciplining the child. They rather prefer*

*someone else, whether a professional such as a teacher to assist in disciplining the child.”*

According to Segalo and Rambuda (2018:1), the home environment plays a significant role in developing disruptive behaviour; learners bring a variety of concerns, distresses, and established behavioural patterns into the classroom, which are aided by the larger ecological systems in which they live and function. Parents must be included in intervention programs, and there must be continuity between the learner's school and home life.

According to Chiu and Chow (2016:533), rich or working parents are usually better educated and have fewer children; as a result, children with wealthy parents spend more time with their parents because there are fewer competing siblings. Consequently, these parents have more time to teach their children excellent social skills and self-control; as a result, children with employed, rich parents may perform better in school.

Poverty affects parenting in both direct and indirect ways (Reyneke, 2018). Poverty has a direct influence on parents' capacity to give proper support for their children, such as inadequate housing, low parental education, and a lack of knowledge about child development.

Poverty may create a lot of stress, especially if the parents do not have any friends or family to lean on. The parent may get "physically and emotionally drained, feel as if he or she is not functioning, and grow increasingly discouraged and sad" as a result of the stress (Reyneke, 2018). It causes parents to ignore their children and fail to respond to their physical and psychological needs.

### **Resource-constrained environment**

Another reason for the disruptive behaviour seems to be the nature of the community environment. In this respect, it was evident that the unavailability of recreational facilities and poor living conditions may promote disruptive behaviour in schools (refer to theoretical framework – macrosystem).

Participant (P 1 from DS 2.3) was the first to indicate that the unavailability of libraries, museums, and any other recreational facilities promotes disruptive behaviour that starts in the street and is nurtured right into the classroom. This participant mentioned:

*“The community does have recreational facilities— like the library or the museum— where kids can learn constructive things and stop doing bad things. Kids copy bad behaviour from the street then take it to school, disruptive behaviour did not start at school.”*

It was the opinion of the other participants that poor living conditions, such as those in squatter camps and shacks, where a big family shared a small shack, may promote disruptive behaviour. This was perfectly analysed by participant (P11 from DS 4) who indicated that:

*“The living conditions of children are very poor, with some of them living in shacks shared with other family members, most of the parents dropped out of school, which leads to high rate of unemployment or seasonal work.”*

### **Teacher’s lack of commitment**

Another origin of the disruptive behaviour mentioned by participants was teachers’ lack of commitment to their work. Absenteeism of teachers, inappropriate teaching style, and poor class preparations all pose as a vehicle for causing disruptive behaviour in classrooms.

Participants noted that some teachers absent themselves from school, while others do not honour their teaching time. These resulted in learners loitering around the school and being in a position to disrupt some other classes. Participant (P 2 from DS 2.3) commented as follows:

*“Teachers are always absent, sometimes they go to class late, then learners are unattended, then learners run around the school premises, disrupting classes and they also vandalise school property because there is no supervision.”*

According to De Wet (2016:12), a study commissioned by the National DoE indicated that pupil absenteeism is not as severe in South African schools as teacher absenteeism. Segalo and Rambuda (2018:1) found that chronic teacher absenteeism

sends a message that school attendance is not important; the teacher regards it as a form of abandonment or a lack of support.

Reyneke (2018) advocated that there is a great need to ensure the well-being of the teacher, especially since it seems that the high degree of absenteeism among teachers is the result of burnout and other stress-related illnesses brought about by behavioural problems in the classroom.

Furthermore, participants were adamant that inappropriate teaching styles might easily provoke learners to misbehave in the classroom as their way to show dissatisfaction.

For instance, the participant (P1 from DS 2.3) said the following:

*“The style of teaching, which does not accommodate all the learners, especially learners with learning barriers, always ignites class disruption. There is no curriculum differentiation, teachers are using one size fits all model.”*

According to Segalo and Rambuda (2018:1), a strategy that only targets support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in a classroom may not solve the problem. Examining systemic problems in teacher-pupil relations, the teacher's management and teaching styles, the curriculum and the skills required by learners, the order in which activities are scheduled, and many other aspects of the classroom and school ecology may be overlooked if the focus is on the individual learner.

Participants also noted that some teachers attend classes and conduct lessons that are not properly planned. Poor class preparations may lead to learners being disruptive. Participant (P6 from DS 2.3) alluded to this:

*“Teachers end up being disorganised, they make copies of worksheets at the time they should be in class, this cause learner to be disruptive, and end up making noise because the teacher is not in class.”*

### **Disregard for authority and lack of orientation.**

The feeling that learners have no respect for authority and lack orientation seems to be a crucial concern for the participants. This was most evident in older learners in the "intermediate and senior phases. The following quotations are evidence of their frustrations.

*“Learners often disregard the authority of teachers, they lack respect for teachers, and they defy teachers when they give instructions. Learners make noise in the presence of the teachers and they refuse to wear school uniform.”* (P 1 from DS 2.3).

*“The code of conduct is weak, learners do not fear the disciplinary measures that the school is implementing, and therefore the behaviour of learners does not change.”* (P 3 from DS 2.3)

Most participants claimed that learners are disruptive or they misbehave even though they know the school rules and regulations; however, they must be reoriented. The following participants mentioned:

*“Learners fight in class and use inappropriate language even when they reprimanded learners’ countless times, they do not fear authority.”* Participant (P 1 from DS 2.3)

In this regard, Noltemeyer et al. (2017:81) argued that a child must submit to the authority of the person who raises him to grow up properly and become self-reliant, among other things, because she/he has an existential need for authority. Children, he claimed, have the desire to grow up and must learn how to assert authority and obey and follow authority.

### **Minimal support from the DoE and other stakeholders**

The participants regarded the lack of support by the DoE and other stakeholders as a major challenge, which exacerbates the incidence of disruptive behaviour cases in schools. Participants were honest about the insufficient number of human resources that are supposed to help them to curb disruptive behaviour in classrooms. The following participants alluded to this:

*“Because of a large number of behavioural cases and a limited number of resources, social workers and the district office could not deal with all the cases, other matters were not dealt with properly and there is no time to go back and reflect, because of attending to new cases too.”* (P 11 from DS 4)

*“For example, a child might be disruptive at school because of a situation at home. If a (social worker) removes and places the child with foster parents (relative), it has happened that the foster parents are worse than the original parents. This means the situation became worse and there is no alternative shelter for the children because government homes are full. There is limited space which cannot accommodate everyone.” (P11 from DS 4)*

*“We are aware of different stakeholders (social workers, police, or officials from the district office of the Department of Education that should be consulted when the need arises. The problem is that children live in the township area, where professional help is not as close to the required places, this is hampering the effectiveness of the professional services required to solve the problem.” (P 11 from DS4)*

Schoeman (2015) claimed that children from low-income families are more likely to misbehave owing to a lack of resources or a suitable diet, which causes them to be unable to concentrate. School feeding programs can help to alleviate these issues by providing nutritious meals that will enhance learners' behaviour.

Health professionals play an essential role in assisting disruptive learners; in some cases, schools may seek the assistance of health specialists, such as psychologists, to undertake a formal assessment (DBE, 2014). The social welfare stipend is available to help families impacted by unemployment and poverty.

#### **4.2.2 Theme 2: Dealing with disruptive behaviour**

This theme focuses on strategies that are used to curb disruptive behaviour in the classroom and on the school premises. The group identified the following sub-themes: laying the foundation for dealing with disruptive behaviour (sub-theme 2.1), responses when disruptive behaviour occurs (sub-theme 2.2), and seeking support in serious cases of disruptive behaviour (sub-theme 2.3).

Emanating from the data generated from DS 4, DS 2, and DS 5 was the theme to gain an understanding of how to deal with disruptive behaviour in a classroom. However, the data reflected that the participants were not consistent in ways to deal with disruptive behaviour as indicated by the sub-themes (refer to Table 4.3).

**Table 4.3 Sub-themes identified for Theme 2**

<b>Theme 2: Dealing with disruptive behaviour</b>	
•	Sub-theme 2.1: Laying the foundation for dealing with disruptive behaviour
•	Sub-theme 2.2: Responses when disruptive behaviour occurs
•	Sub-theme 2.3 Seek support when a serious case of disruptive behaviour occurs

#### **4.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Laying the foundation for dealing with disruptive behaviour**

Participants felt that teachers battle to deal with disruptive behaviour because a disciplinary code of conduct is not consistently implemented at school. The active involvement of the Schools Governing Body (SGB) in the discipline of the school, classroom rules, wearing of proper uniform, and no class being left unattended, are considered the foundations for dealing with disruptive behaviour.

##### **The active involvement of the School Governing Body**

Participants have highlighted the significance of the involvement of the SGB in all disciplinary matters in schools. However, it is their opinion that the SGB component has ignored matters of discipline at the school, and they are more focused on the school finances. Participants expressed that the effective way to deal with disruptive behaviour is to involve the SGB to help in all matters related to discipline. One of the participants (P 6 from DS 2.3) expressed an opinion:

*“The school should involve the SGB to help to deal with the cases that involve disruptive behaviour. Although the SGB is not actively involved in the discipline of the school, we do not have any choice but to force the SGB to be part of the disciplinary committee.”*

Furthermore, another participant remarked that the SGB has the mandate to develop and adopt the school code of conduct, which does not often happen in most schools.

The perception of the participants is that principals of most schools impose the code of conduct on the SGB and expect the chairperson of this committee to sign for it. Participant (P 1 from DS 2.4) emphasised:

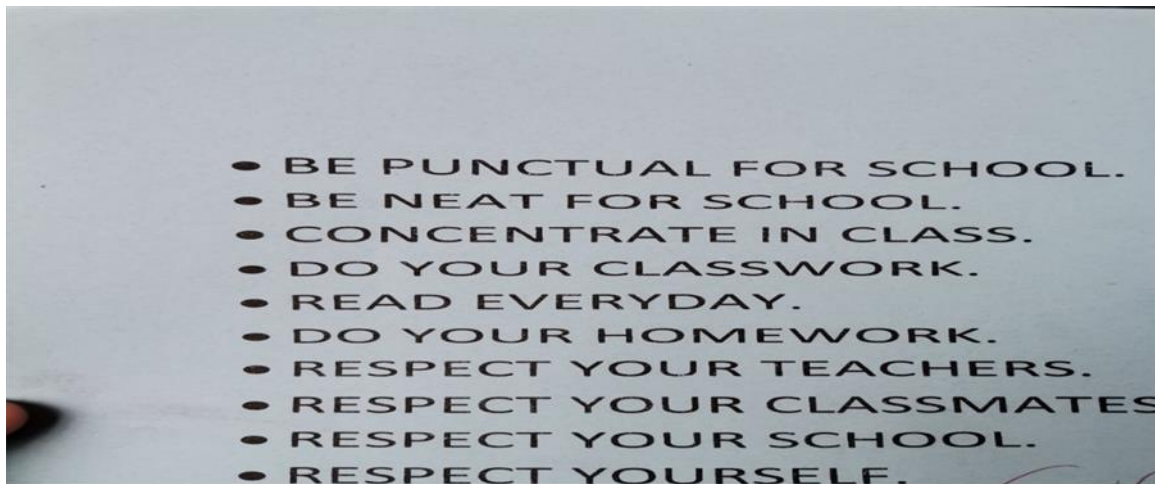
*“The SGB are not involved with the discipline of the learners, there is no sufficient training or workshop to educate the SGB of their duties and responsibilities.”*

According to Sections 8 and 20 of the South African Schools Act, all SGBs must create and implement a code of conduct for pupils that strive to promote a disciplined and meaningful school environment committed to increasing the quality of the learning experience. The code of conduct must have suitable disciplinary procedures for disciplining learners; the code of conduct describes the disciplinary process for learner transgressions and lays out the norms for learners' behaviour. A code of conduct is a consensual document that should be created at school with the input of parents, students, teachers, and non-teachers (Jinot, 2018:1).

Section 8(5)(b) of the South African Schools Act (1996b) gives effect to this right by requiring SGBs to ensure that support measures or counselling mechanisms are provided for learners involved in disciplinary proceedings. Similarly, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996a) states, "the code of conduct must also provide for support measures or procedures for counselling a learner involved in disciplinary processes" (RSA, 1996b).

### **Classroom rules**

Participants mentioned that displaying the classroom rules on a poster is the best practice for managing disruptive behaviour. The participants came up with the idea that teachers should paste the posters of the classroom rules in their classes and learners must be regularly reminded of these rules. An example of a poster of classroom rules that emerged from the DS 1 is provided in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1: List of classroom rules for the school in the Blydeville community**

According to Segalo and Rambuda (2018:1), children learn to discriminate between the behaviours required in a variety of settings and thus, can learn to behave differently if appropriate and desired behaviour is signalled, encouraged, and supported in every setting.

A participant (P 1 from DS 2.3) explained that *“learners must constantly be reminded of the classroom rules, and it helps when those rules are posted on the walls for learners to see; teachers must be consistent in applying the rules, then learners will start to behave as it is required.”*

### **Uniform**

Participants were of the opinion that enforcing the use of a school uniform is a way to address disruptive behaviour. According to them, a uniform instils discipline because learners behave as they physically appear; therefore, teachers and parents must ensure that learners wear the correct uniform. In this regard, the participant (P 1 from DS 2.3) mentioned:

*“If we let learners wear an incorrect uniform and come to school with inappropriate hairstyles then we will not be able to discipline them.”*

Another participant (P 6 from DS 2.3) added:

*“Those learners must wear their uniform; keep the hair and nails neat and in accordance with the stipulations of the school rules.”*

Bottiani et al. (2019:36) maintained that wearing a uniform gives the learner a sense of identity and eliminates chances of competition in wearing branded clothing; Uniforms help to maintain order and prevent bullying. School uniforms, on the other hand, have become a point of contention, according to Bottiani et al. (2019:36), as some pupils refuse to wear them and instead combine the uniform with a fancy, coloured jacket or jersey, which is a violation of a school's code of conduct and has an impact on school discipline.

### **No class left unattended by teachers/prefects**

The participants believed that no class should be left unattended and proposed this as another strategy to deal with disruptive behaviour. In this regard, they recommended that if a class teacher is absent, then teachers from the same school and prefects could be used to oversee the class. One of the participants (P 8 from DS 2.3) alluded to this:

*“Whenever a teacher is not in class, prefects supervise or look after the class. The school also developed a timetable of supervision should one of the teachers be absent.”*

However, in many instances, these prefects are not equipped or capacitated to deal with disruptive behaviour and some of the prefects are the instigators of disciplinary problems in the classrooms. Participant (P 1 from DS 2.3) mentioned:

*“Induction for prefect must be on their roles and responsibilities; teachers must also monitor and supervise the prefect on duty to demonstrate to the learners that teachers and prefects work hand in hand when it comes to discipline issues.”*

According to Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46), prefects are supposed to be efficient and effective in their roles of maintaining learner discipline. Such a level of responsibility is granted because of careful selection, thorough training, proper guidance, and deliberate selling of the school motto and mission to the prefects.

Repeated absences by the regular classroom teacher may have serious consequences for learner discipline in the classroom. Often, in the absence of the teacher, bullying,

and intimidation take place in the classroom. This occurs because of boredom and because of a lack of adequate and effective supervision (Le Mottee & Kelly, 2017:46).

#### **4.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: Responses when disruptive behaviour occurs.**

Participants indicated strategies such as warnings (verbal and written), calling in parents, a disciplinary corner, ignoring a disruptive learner, and recording learners in the transgression book are appropriate ways to respond when disruptive behaviour occurs.

##### **Warning (verbal and written)**

The participant mentioned that the teacher should talk to the child, explain the negativity of the behaviour and the impact thereof on the time of teaching and learning, then give the learner a verbal warning. However, when the problem persists, the learner must receive a written warning. The following participants (P4 from DS 2.3) explained:

*“Verbal and written warning is a good strategy because learners notice that the teacher is aware and not happy of the disruptive behaviour.”*

A written warning also serves as feedback to parents on the child's behaviour; this strategy is effective if the teachers implement it consistently and only if the parents respond and take action when they are notified of the child's behaviour; the school must review the policy and make learners and parents aware of the code of conduct.

However, the participant (P 8 from DS 2.3) alluded to this:

*“This strategy works for older learners and is not effective for learners in the foundation phase, because they repeat the same disruptive behaviour time and again and it will be time-consuming to always give written warnings.”*

##### **Call in parents**

Furthermore, most participants stated that the school should call the parents of the learner involved in disruptive behaviour, to come to the school, and then reprimand the learner with the assistance of the parents. However, participants highlighted that some of the parents do not show up when they are called. Some of the participants adamantly said:

*“Some of the parents give the child a hiding, some talk to their children but most of the time; parents do not show up when called at school. It could be that they did not receive the letter from school or they did receive the letter but they do not care about the educational well-being of the child.” (P 9 from DS 2.4)*

*“Parents must update the contacts details regularly and teachers must encourage parents to be involved.” (P 5 from DS 2.4)*

### **Disciplinary corner**

A disciplinary corner in the classroom is regarded as an effective strategy to curb disruptive behaviour in the classroom because learners are isolated from the rest of the class and still get to be part of the lesson. Nonetheless, the disciplinary corner is ineffective in instances where a disruptive learner is sent out of the class and has to go to the office (disciplinary corner) for further intervention. Participant (P 6 from DS 2.4) expressed her concern:

*“The disciplinary corner is not working because it is keeping the Administrative assistant in the office out of her work, it disrupts the office, and the learner misses the lesson in class.”*

### **Ignore a disruptive learner**

Participants said that ignoring a disruptive learner is another strategy used by teachers. However, this is problematic as indicated by other participants in the sense that some learners enjoy being ignored, thus, their disruptive behaviour increases. Participant (P 3 from DS 2.4) exclaimed:

*“Ignoring learners does not take away the problem, and learners enjoy being ignored, teachers must deal with the situation not ignore them.”*

Teachers should never ignore learners since doing so may cause them to become more disruptive; instead, they should engage in constructive criticism, which can be a powerful healing experience for learners (Chiu & Chow, 2016).

### **Learners recorded in the transgression book.**

The participants also favoured the use of a transgression book as an effective strategy to curb disruptive behaviour. In this manner, learners who commit disruptive behaviour must sign and commit to changing their behaviour. If it persists, parents will now be involved. One of the participants (P 4 from DS 2.4) added:

*“Teachers must use the transgression book to deal with disruptive behaviour; learners must sign and also commit to changing his or her behaviour, if the learner continues with the same behaviour at least 5 times then a parent will be called in to intervene.”*

However, it came to the attention of the participants that some teachers send learners out of the class or suspend them for their class period. This is unacceptable because these learners end up disrupting other classes when they are outside. Participant (P 1 from DS 2.4) mentioned:

*“Sending learners outside is not dealing with the disruption. It makes matters worse. Learners enjoy being outside and then they disrupt other neighbouring classes. It also does not benefit the learner because they lose the lesson and end up failing because of the back log.”*

#### **4.2.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: Seeking support in serious cases of disruptive behaviour**

The majority of participants believe that learners do not receive the support they require at home. Parents do not attend school meetings or visit the school when invited. Even though they write letters requesting them to come to the school to discuss their children's behaviour and academic achievement, this is still the case. However, despite the challenge of poor parental involvement, participants indicated that there is an initiative to involve other stakeholders to address disruptive behaviours.

Participants agreed that the school uses an adopt-a-cop program, which is very effective in dealing with disruptive behaviour in the classroom in this case. The primary goal of this program is to develop and support school-based crime prevention initiatives. Participant (P 4 from DS 2.4) specified:

*“The school take additional steps by asking the Department of SAPS to send a constable who advises us on how to handle some cases that involve learners with disruptive behaviour. We are working hand in glove with the police, whereby we have an adopt-a-cop. Such police officer normally gives us guidance to handle other cases.”*

All participants acknowledged the role of the DSD in offering counselling and addressing social and behavioural issues. The following individuals stated that they were receiving assistance from social workers.

*“The social worker assigned to our school is always available to attend a case of disruptive behaviour at our school, she tries to assist the learners to the best of her ability and in cases that she has limited resources, she always indicates such barriers to her work.”* (P1 from DS 2.4)

*“The social worker is very effective and helpful, even members of the community know about her work. They go to her on their own to seek assistance without being referred by the school.”* (P 2 from DS 2.4)

*“She runs programs, which help learners to deal with their behaviour issues in the community, she visits the homes of her clients to obtain more information about the situation, even if she cannot help all the learners, her work is evident in the community.”* (P 3 from DS 2.4)

Amongst the participants, a social worker affirmed their involvement in schools to address some of the unacceptable behaviours including disruptive behaviour. This participant (P 11 from DS 5) related the following:

*“When we receive a call that a learner is disruptive, we go straight to that particular school to get information about the child. Then we extend our investigations by visiting the home of that child.”*

Some other participants were of the opinion that the unemployed parents from the community should also be involved in assisting the school with extra mural activities after school. One of the participants (P 10 from DS 2.4) mentioned:

*“We should use the unemployed parents to coach learners in some extra mural activities. Learners detained for disruptive behaviour can learn to play soccer or netball. Sports also help to teach children discipline and to keep them away from bad influence and sport could be something they enjoy and excel on even though they do not perform academically.”*

Professionals who are well equipped to provide such a counselling service are school social workers and psychologists. Adults (parents and teachers) in the learner's social environment can help by advising the learner, not just the learner with behavioural problems who need the intervention of school social workers (Reyneke, 2018).

#### **4.2.3 Theme 3: Envisioned approach to support learners who display disruptive behaviour**

In the first cycle of this study, the participant researchers were engaged in action learning sets aimed at strengthening the relationships between them. They expected to envision the outcome of their participation in the research process with specific references to the support provided to learners who display disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

For this theme, participants drew pictures of the envisioned support for learners and it was evident that they envisioned that children should engage with caring and loving adults in the school as well as in the wider community to enhance a sense of connectedness and belonging. The sub-themes that emerged were engagement with caring and loving peers and adults in their community; enhancing a sense of connectedness and belonging, and encouraging positive behaviour and collaboration.

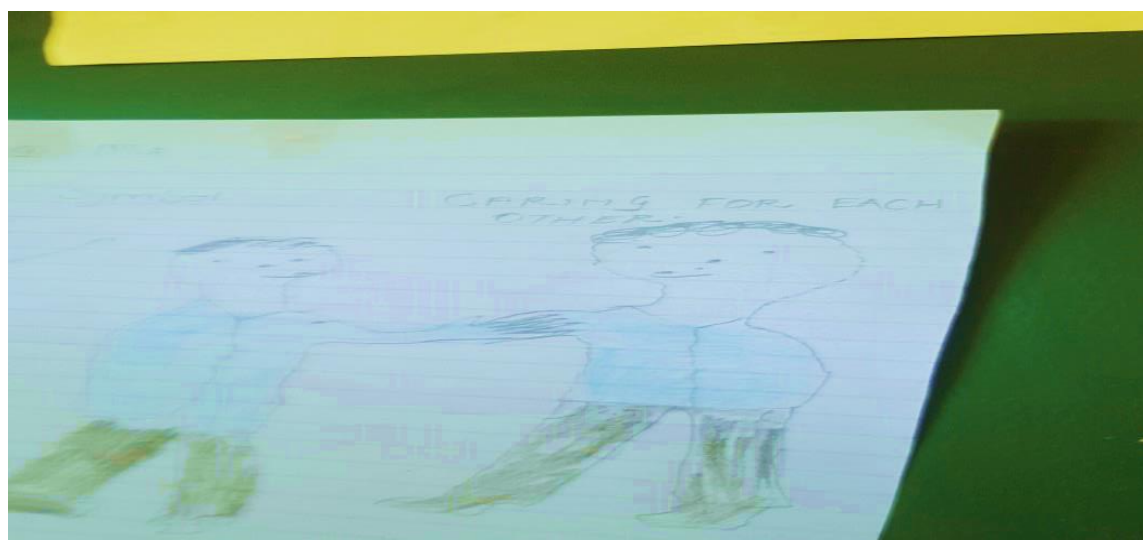
**Table 4.4: Sub-themes identified for Theme 3**

<b>Theme 3: Envisioned approach to support learners who display disruptive behaviour</b>	
•	Sub-theme 3.1: Enhance engagement with caring and loving peers and adults in their community
•	Sub-theme 3.2: Facilitate a sense of connectedness and belonging.
•	Sub-theme 3.3: Encourage positive behaviour and collaboration.

#### 4.2.3.1 Subtheme 3.1: Enhance engagement with caring and loving peers and adults in their community

During the discussions, the participant-researchers emphasised the importance of caring and loving relationships as a prerequisite for dealing with disruptive behaviour. Through the drawings they presented and the discussion that took place afterward, they emphasised that learners should experience care and love from their peers and adults in the community. Most of the participants described their support in terms of providing the child with the necessary love and attention and being there for their child in times of need.

The participant drew a picture in which two children are hugging and both of them are smiling.



**Figure 4.2 Drawing by participant P 1 from DS 2.1**

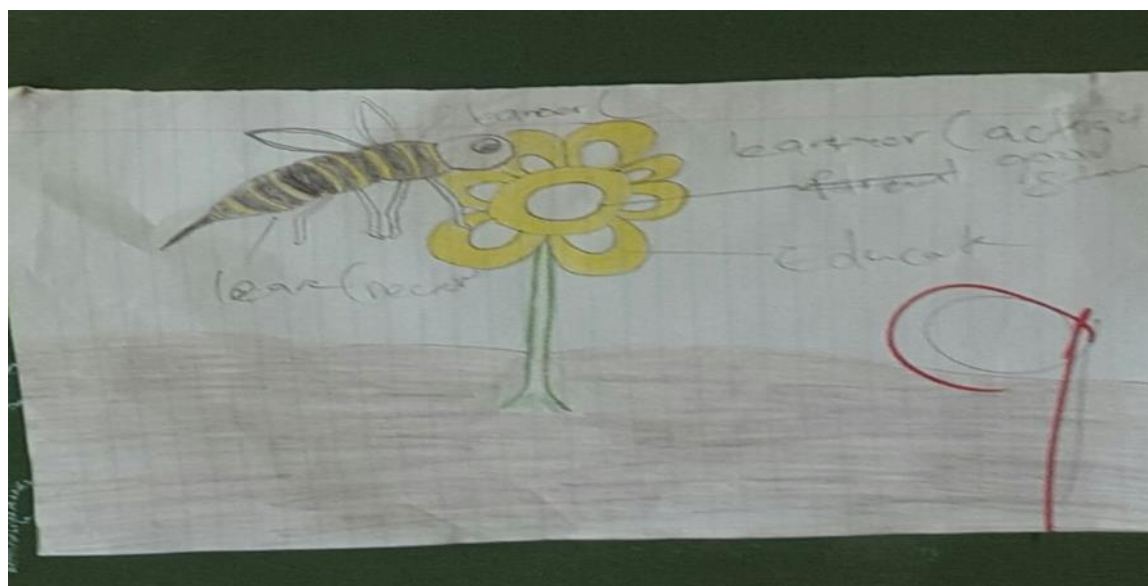
Participant P 1 from DS 2.1 explained the drawing as follows:

*“Learners are happy when they are loved, cared for, and supported. Therefore, we must encourage learners to care for each other, love each other and always be happy. Learners must always create relationships and never be scared or alone in and around the school premises”*

This concurs with the findings of Schoeman (2015) that parents and teachers must show love, support, and care to the learners; they display less disruptive behaviour

when they feel supported and loved by parents and teachers; this helps them to cope with difficult situations at school.

Furthermore, another participant (P 4 from DS 2.1) drew a bee on top of a sunflower.

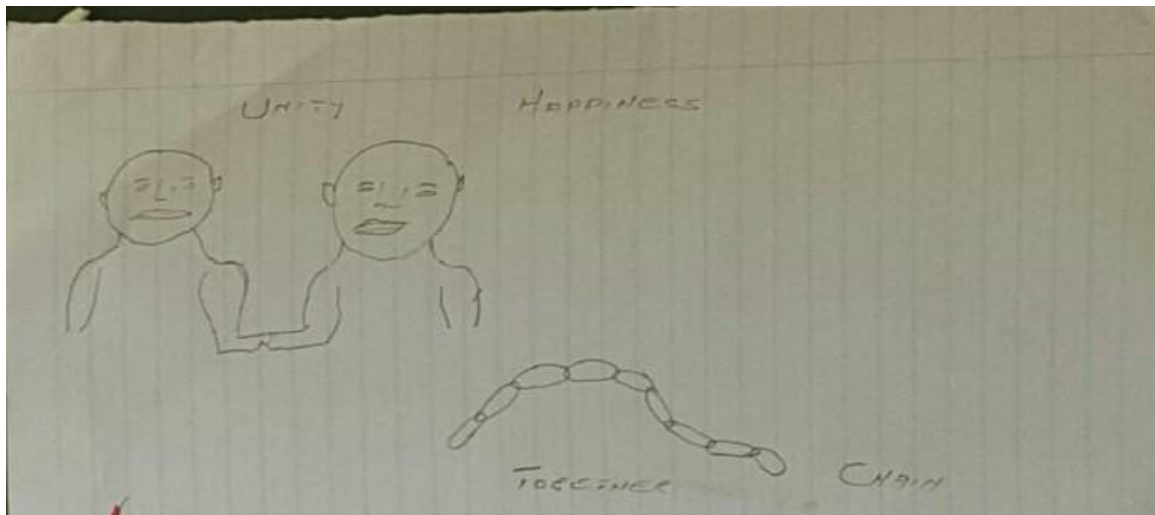


**Figure 4.3 Drawing by participant P 4 from DS 2.1**

This participant (P 4 from DS 2.1) explained the drawing as follows:

*“As you can see from my drawing, a flower represents a teacher and a bee represents a learner. A teacher (flower) feeds the learner (bee) knowledge (pollen), then learners produce good results (honey)., Teachers must give support and be the pillar of strength for the learners. Bees do not destroy flowers and flowers accept bees and feed bee’s good food to survive.”*

In another instance, a participant (P 9 from DS 2.1) drew a picture of two people holding hands, smiling, and a chain alongside them.



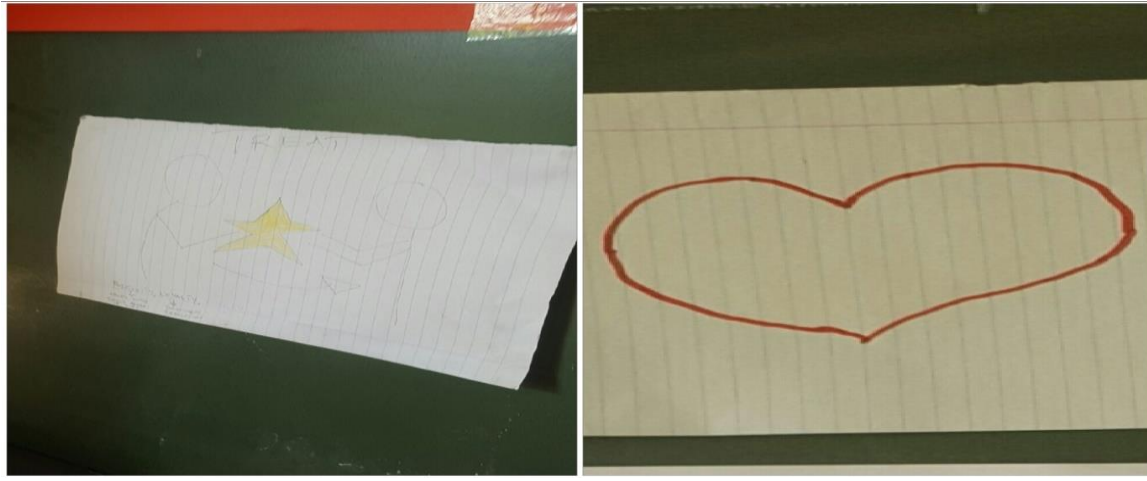
**Figure 4.4 Drawing by participant P 9 from DS 2.1**

The participant (P 9 from DS 2.1) explained the drawing as follows

*“A chain represents a relationship between people working together. Learners want to know that their existence matter, Children and teachers must work together in unity, and love each other, everyone is a link to a chain, and everyone must make sure that they do their part to make the link strong. Parents, learners, teachers, and other education stakeholders must be partners when it comes to the learning process.”*

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996a) Sections 8(1) and (2) states that the school governing body is responsible for developing a code of conduct for learners through a consultation process. The consultation process should include teachers, parents, and learners.

Furthermore, other participants (P 7 from DS 2.1 and P 2 from DS 2.1) drew a picture of two people holding a star and another of a big red heart.



**Figure 4.5 Drawing by participants' P 7 from DS 2.1 and P 2 from DS 2.1**

These participants (P 7 from DS 2.1 and P 2 from DS 2.1) explained these drawings as follows:

*“Learners do not learn from people they do not like. Children deserve an adult who will never give up on them. Most of the learners in my class are not grade ready and they struggle academically, they need someone who will encourage them to work harder not someone who will discourage them.”* (P 7 from DS 2.1)

*“It is evident from these pictures that one cannot give what you do not have, if the parent or teacher is ill-disciplined then they cannot discipline the learner, but if a parent and a teacher have discipline, learners pick that up and also follow a good example. When learners are fearful of the teacher or the school environment, they cannot effectively deal with learning content and experience helplessness and rage.”* (P 2 from DS 2.1)

Positive teacher-learner relationships, as well as the classroom environment, are critical aspects that influence how learners see the school; teachers not only teach information and skills but also assist learners in defining who they are. As a result, how teachers engage with and teach learners is critical in reducing disruptive behaviour among learners (Rudzani, 2020).

The participants alluded that this picture shows that people stand together (teamwork) and do things with the same guided understanding to achieve their goals. If stakeholders can work like ants, there will not be any disruptive behaviour, because

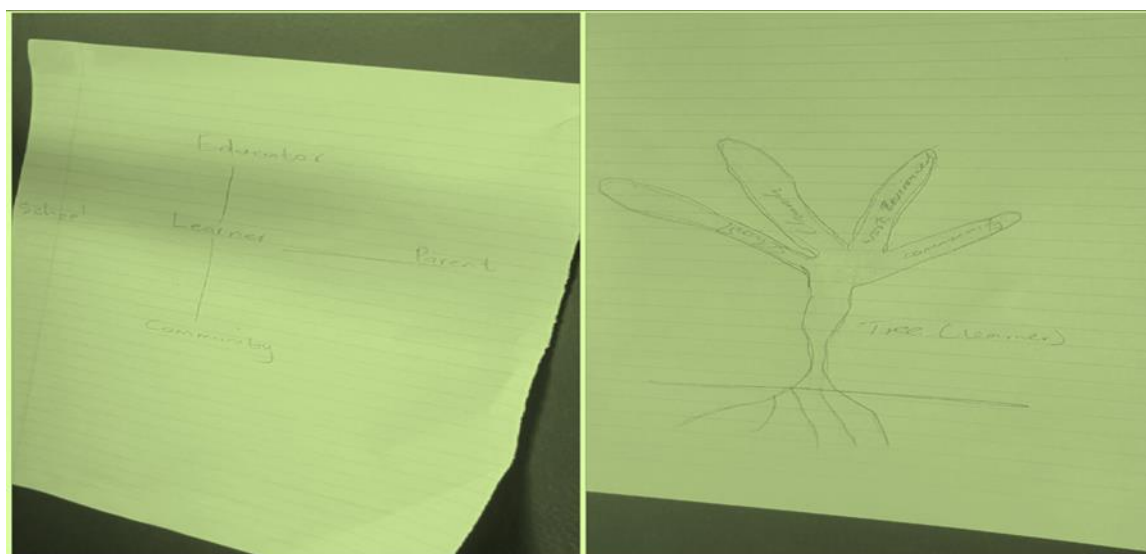
everyone knows their roles, and nobody is neglecting his/her role in disciplining the child.

The home, school, classroom, and peer group, to mention a few, all have an impact on a learner, according to Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46). The dynamic interplay of biological, individual, and societal systems results in emotional and behavioural limitations.

#### 4.2.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Enhancing a sense of connectedness and belonging

One participant drew a picture of a learner in the middle, and parents, teachers, community, and school surrounding the learner; another participant drew a picture of a tree, with the trunk representing a learner and four branches representing the community, work environment, churches, and schools.

These pictures are similar because they depict a learner being the centre of learning; the involvement of stakeholders seems crucial as a support service.



**Figure 4.6 Drawing by participant's P 2 from DS 2.1 and P 3 from DS 2.1, respectively.**

The explanations from the two participants are as follows:

*"The picture shows that community, parents, and teachers must work together towards building the child, and a child belongs to a nation." (P 2 from DS 2.1)*

The participant (P 3 from DS 2.1) noted: *“The drawing is a tree, a learner is a trunk (the main part), then we have branches, community, churches, school and work environment. Learners need teachers who lead by example, who encourage positive and healthy behaviour, relationships and positive interactions, and create a safe environment. Learners want teachers to take time to know them, they want teachers to know when they are having a bad and a good day.”*

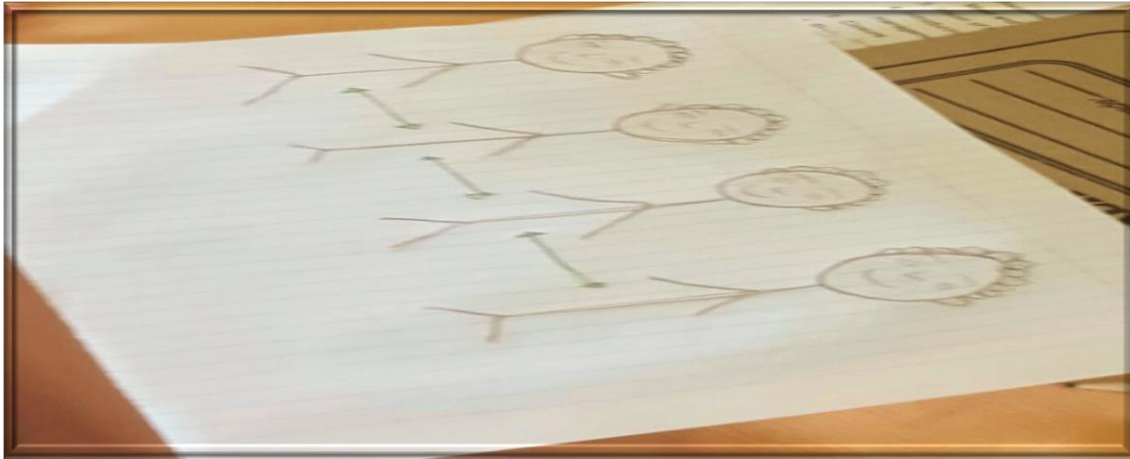
Furthermore, other participants commented on these drawings by saying:

*“Churches: children learn discipline, good behaviour and morals from church, parents must ensure that learners attend church services and not leave children at home when they go to church.”* (P 9 from DS 2.1)

*“Community: The type of society where children live; it influences their behaviour negatively. Adults in the Blydeville community do not use appropriate language to communicate with each other even with the children. High school dropout rate, people do not care and do not take education seriously, the parents do not support their children when it comes to school work, and they do not see anything wrong with their children's behaviour because they also behave in that manner.”* (P 8 from DS 2.1)

The participants indicated that teachers should deliberately engage learners in activities that will enhance their sense of connectedness and belonging. Specific activities that promote interaction are sports, meetings, concerts, and feedback sessions.

A participant (P 5 from DS 2.1) drew a picture of children smiling and being connected with a line.



**Figure 4.7 Drawing by participants (P 5 from DS 2.1)**

This participant (P 5 from DS 2.1) excitedly explained the drawing as follows:

*“A teacher invites learners to an activity, the teacher then determines how that activity will benefit the learner. The teacher can do it with the learners, or learners can do it amongst themselves. This will also make learners feel that they are part of the group and feel like their contribution is noted. This picture also says that the teacher must involve parents; the teacher must work together with the parents to assist learners who display disruptive behaviour.”*

This participant (P 5 from DS 2.1) further added:

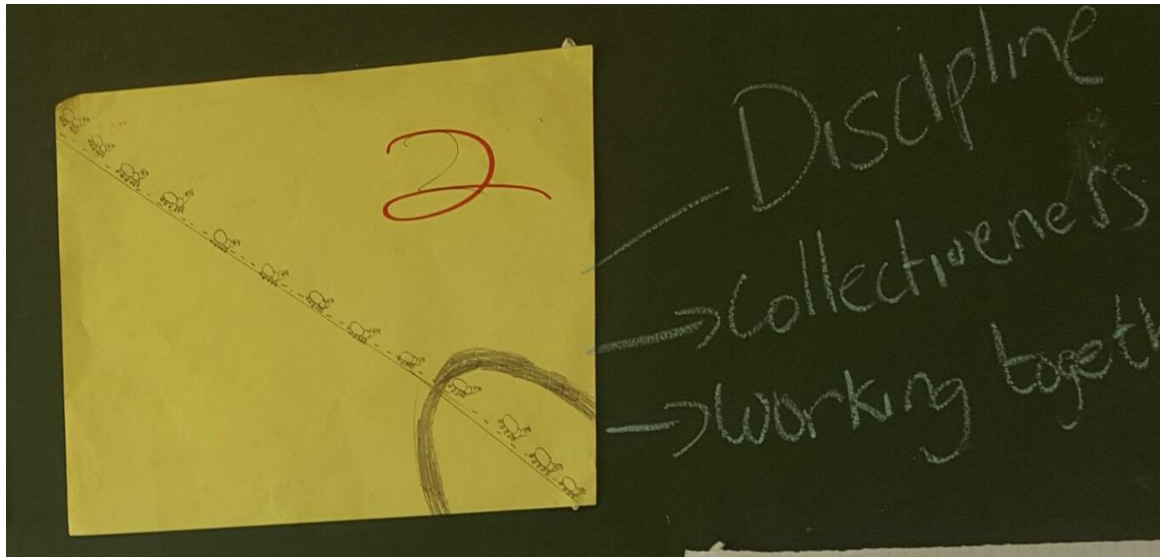
*“In my drawing, you can see that learners are experiencing emotions of happiness when they are together; they also enjoy the interaction with friends as this gives them a sense of belonging. Learners must embrace working together without fighting; they must respect each other at all times. We must encourage children to always be happy, care for, and respect each other.”*

#### **4.2.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Encourage positive behaviour and collaboration**

Participants indicated that the best support for learners is to build a trusting relationship between the teachers, learners, and families. Teachers can also develop a more collaborative relationship with learners. By working together, they will understand when and under what circumstances the disruptive behaviour occurs. They may then create a constructive discipline for educating learners so they become well-mannered and responsible members of society. The most essential social skills that are learned are

encouragement and mutual respect among learners and adults (including teachers and parents) (Somayeh, Sayyemirshah, Sayyednistafa & Azizollah, 2013).

One of the participants (P 10 from DS 2.1) drew a picture of ants lined up and getting into a hole.



**Figure 4.8 Drawing by participant P 10 from DS 2.1**

This participant (P 10 from DS 2.1) explained the drawing as follows:

*“Children must be taught to behave like ants, when they are given work in the classroom, they must be disciplined, they must work as a collective, help each other to complete the task at hand, children will not be disruptive when they are given work to do and when they are taught to follow instructions.”*

It is a common understanding that this picture shows that you teach children good behaviour, and if parents and teachers take time to discipline the child, they will behave in the required manner. According to Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46), to avoid educational disruptions, teachers should be assigned to manage learner discipline. Section 8 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996a) states that "for learners' education to prosper without disruption, maintain discipline in the school and classroom conditions." It implies that, by law, teachers are expected to maintain discipline in schools by their profession. Rogers (2015) also adds that teachers are crucial in maintaining learner discipline. However, they must be assisted by parents and other stakeholders for them to perform their functions effectively.

#### **4.2.4 Theme 4: Specific strategies**

During the action learning meetings, the participants discussed specific strategies for dealing with disruptive behaviour. They looked at all the disruptive behaviours displayed by learners in the classroom, considered the causes thereof, and then discussed the way the school currently deals with disruptive behaviour.

The analyses indicated that participants sometimes use the wrong strategy to deal with disruptive behaviour, and at other times, participants are not using suitable tools to deal with the disruption. Participants have not asked for assistance from other stakeholders, they have not been cooperating (working together); so everyone has been doing their own thing. No time is set to exchange notes and develop an integrated approach to address the problem.

From all the data analyses, a better strategy was suggested for the school to support learners with disruptive behaviour. A transgression book was favoured as an effective strategy to curb disruptive behaviour. In this manner, learners who commit disruptive behaviour must sign and commit to changing their behaviour. If it persists, parents will now be involved. One of the participants (P 4 from DS 2.4) added:

*“Teachers must use the transgression book to deal with disruptive behaviour; learners must sign and commit to changing their behaviour; if the learner continues with the same behaviour at least five times, then a parent will be called in to intervene.”*

The participants agreed to use the following practical strategies to curb disruptive classroom behaviour.

#### **Support in the classroom**

In one data set meeting, participants deliberated on the classroom rules as the critical strategy. Amongst their suggestions, they emphasised that reminding all learners and teachers about the classroom rules should constantly be applied to minimise disruptive behaviour in the classroom. It is further the participants' opinion that teachers should ensure that they involve learners when formulating school and classroom rules and making decisions that directly affect the learners. It is important to note that participants unanimously mentioned that, after all, the learners would only consider the agreements

fair if such agreements are reached amicably. Furthermore, they strongly emphasise that teachers must not have favouritism, should treat all learners equally, and classroom rules must apply consistently throughout the class without biasness. Participants also discussed how to deal with unattended classes. At this point, they warned that teachers must plan their lessons and make sure that all the teaching aids and copies for classwork are ready before class.

*“Learners must constantly be reminded of the classroom rules. It helps when those rules are posted on the walls for learners to see; teachers must be consistent in applying the rules, then learners will start to behave as required.”* (P 1 from DS 2.3)

The broad behaviour norms or expectations to be fulfilled are referred to as classroom rules. They consist of a code of conduct designed to control individual behaviour and prevent disruptive behaviour. Learners' interactions with one another, how they prepare for class, and how they behave themselves during class are all governed by rules. Classroom rules guarantee that the policy is followed in the classroom (Chiu & Chow, 2016),

### **Support from the school at large**

Participants expressed their concerns regarding school policies; they stated that for the school to promote good behaviour, the code of conduct must list the school rules and expected behaviour and consequences of misconduct. The school policy serves as a guideline for all the stakeholders. Furthermore, participants alluded that a school should motivate, encourage and uplift the teachers. It is meant to reduce the teachers' stress, as it can be a root cause for learners displaying disruptive behaviour. Another point highlighted was that the school should ensure that its School-Base Support Team is more functional. This team should be effective in identifying and supporting learners with behavioural problems. For this team to gain its strength, the DBST should be involved and further monitor and support the SBST. Participants also indicated that the school's management should ensure that teachers are well-trained to handle disruptive behaviour and that the SNA forms should be completed as guided by the Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SIAS) policy (RSA, 2014).

Furthermore, the involvement of knowledgeable teachers and SGB was raised as another internal force to curb the alarming rate of disruptive behaviour in school. Participants agreed that teachers with knowledge of counselling, remedial, psychology, and pastoral care should be maximally utilised. The SGB must assist with addressing learners who show disruptive qualities. They must do a background check on the learner to identify the root cause of such behaviour.

The participants also considered calling in a parent as a good idea to deal with disruptive learners. They firmly believed that sometimes parents do not spend a lot of time with their children; therefore, calling parents to school is extremely important. On the same note, participants were emphatic that giving feedback to parents is very important so that they can intervene when the child displays disruptive behaviour. The participants further suggested that the School Governing Body and the Quality Learning and Teaching Campaign (school sub-committee) must liaise with the parents and encourage them to be involved in school matters.

### **Support from outside the school**

The social worker and district official manages several schools in the area; they have a lot of work with limited resources. Cases are only partly solved or not resolved. These participants suggested that since the Department of Social Welfare and the SAPS have some programs to support the neighbouring schools, such programs must be fully implemented. The social worker and the district official indicated the following about teachers disciplining learners:

*“The problem is that there was no training for teachers on how to deal with disruptive learners. Teachers use the wrong strategies to discipline the learner, making the situation even worse.”*

In this regard, the participants (P 11 from DS 2.4 and P 12 from DS 2.4) further mentioned: *“The social worker (program for the safety of children in the community) and the SAPS (adopt-a-cop program) should give the school their year program and need to come to the school regularly to address learners about their behaviour at school.”*

On the other hand, participants advised that personnel from the district, who are the SIAS mentors, must conduct continuous workshops for the SBST members. As a result, the SBST will be able to cascade information about the SIAS down to teachers.

Another argument was that parents should avoid giving children a hiding to punish them for bad behaviour. Parents should be guided to support their children by giving them the necessary love and attention and being there for their children in times of need.

Conducting regular meetings with parents, specifically focusing on equipping parents with the necessary knowledge and skills to have better support for their children, was also entertained as the best option. The participants' opinion is that parents can also form a support group for disruptive children. This group can be facilitated by the school social worker and teachers involved in learner discipline. It is important because the parents are the best support system for children.

Chiu and Chow (2016:533), who stated that the classrooms of more inclusive teachers have less disruption because learners are given support and are less punitive and less aggressive, strengthen this strategy.

### **4.3. INTEGRATIVE DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

The study's findings indicated that participants developed a shared understanding of what they perceived as disruptive behaviour through their engagements with one another. During the engagements with the participants, it became evident that disruptive behaviour has many forms. The most effective forms of disruptive behaviour identified in this study include disregarding authority, learner absenteeism, coming late for classes, peer interaction, making a noise, and not writing work down.

Most of these forms of behaviour have been identified in the South African research literature and mentioned in policy documents. According to Bottiani et al. (2019:36), disruptive behaviour is the most discussed problem in South African schools. Teachers in South Africa are concerned about the learner's disruptive behaviour in schools. Disruptive behaviour that poses a challenge to teachers is name-calling, teasing, fighting, neglecting schoolwork, refusing to follow instructions, etc.

Bottiani et al. (2019:36) identified the following basic categories of disruptive behaviour among learners:

- Pupils interfering with other learners during sessions, daydreaming, ignoring directions, and aggressive behaviour were all instances of behaviour that were shown to be detrimental to teaching and learning in this study.
- Disruptive behaviour stops other learners from learning, such as a learner who interrupts the teacher or converses with classmates during a lesson.

Disruptive behaviour is a complex challenge caused by many factors. Bottiani et al. (2019:36) explained that the roots of such factors lie in social systems whereby the acts of significant others directly influence learners. Moreover, a lack of parent involvement causes disruptive behaviour among learners. When parents do not spend time with their children, it results in moral laxity. As a result, all stakeholders must collaborate to address disruptive behaviour. This aligns with the findings of Ali and Gracey (2013:15), who identified that disruptive behaviour might include fighting and vulgar language when addressing other learners. A learner who disrupts other pupils during class presentations is a learner who refuses to follow instructions or a learner who is confrontational.

According to the findings of this research study, participants perceived the various forms of disruptive behaviour identified in the specific context to originate from a lack of parental involvement: parents of disruptive learners do not come to school when called to the school and do not attend meetings.

Disruptive behaviour also originates from a resource-constrained environment. The community of Blydeville does not have recreational facilities, like a library, sports grounds, and museums, where learners can spend most of their time learning something constructive and using their energy effectively. Chiu and Chow (2016:533) mentioned the community as one of the causes of learner disruptive behaviour. However, it did not go deeper to mention that the lack of recreational facilities (nurturing environment) increases the lack of discipline among the learners.

Furthermore, disruptive behaviour originates from a lack of teacher commitment, and it has been proven by data-driven districts (DDD) that teachers are more absent than learners. Teachers arrive late for work and they leave learners unattended, which increases learners' disruptive behaviour.

The findings resonate with the work of Bottiani et al. (2019:36). They asserted that most disruptive behaviour emanates from poor parental involvement, a community environment that discourages effective teaching and learning, and a lack of commitment from teachers.

**Considering the reasons for disruptive behaviour, the findings indicated the following challenges:**

- The parents and the community are unaware of learners' disruptive behaviour in the classroom. This indicated a gap in communication between the school, the parents, and the broader community.
- Teachers did not clearly understand learners' circumstances and challenges and did not receive sufficient training to deal with the various forms of disruptive behaviour. This indicated an inconsistency in the way teachers deal with disruptive behaviour.
- The school did not have a proactive approach to addressing disruptive behaviour. This indicated that the school should review and implement school policy in discipline consistently.

The complex nature of the challenges that teachers face necessitates the development of guidelines for dealing with the various forms of disruptive behaviour more coherently.

To address disruptive behaviour in the context of this study, the findings indicated the following as critical aspects/elements of a support strategy for the context in which this study was conducted.

**Consultation and collaboration with parents-family-community**

Teachers are the first line of support at the school level for learners. They must work together with parents to understand when and under what circumstances the disruptive behaviour occurs. When the teachers involve parents/guardians, they need to develop a clear picture of the home circumstances and community challenges while developing more trusting relationships with parents. Once people have a clear picture, they can draw connections between the problem and the social context in which it is identified. Once the stakeholders in a school community understand the conditions, they can take

action that involves all the relevant parties to change the situation and promote discipline.

Parents and teachers must also teach learners good behaviour to be mannerly and responsible members of society. Parents and teachers must lead by example; children learn and copy the behaviour they see around them. Teachers must show care, love, and support, and they must be a pillar of strength to our learners and make the environment conducive to learning.

Le Mottee and Kelly (2017:46) mentioned that teachers are responsible for managing learner discipline to eliminate disruption during learning and teaching. Furthermore, Rogers (2015) added that teachers play a vital role in managing learner discipline. However, for them to perform this role effectively, they need support from parents and other stakeholders. The collaboration will enhance discipline for all learners, including those with disruptive behaviour.

### **Enhancing an understanding of the learners' context.**

The findings suggested that as part of profiling, the learners' contexts should be understood. Such an understanding can be enhanced through profiling, obtaining information about housing structure (as in brick or informal structure), the average size of household, the number of individuals per household, and the health status of the learners in the community in which the school is situated.

After understanding the demographic factors, further information is needed regarding the existing strength and available resources within the community and the school to avoid replicating existing support aspects. For example, the teacher involved with the learner should know to which professional a learner with an academic barrier or disciplinary issues should be referred.

### **Profiling of disruptive behaviour**

In this study, the value of learner profiling enabled the collaborating stakeholders to understand disruptive behaviour and develop strategies to deal with learner disruptive behaviour.

Xavier et al., (2022) realised that one mistake made by teachers at schools is failing to recognise the pattern and the linked root cause of learner disruptive behaviour. As a

result, the teachers are not consistent in discipline when dealing with learners who display disruptive behaviour. They do not refer to a similar incident and deal with it accordingly because learner profiling is not done. Therefore, there is a need to profile learners to improve discipline in schools.

The findings suggested developing a recording system (profile) and replicating a 'real-life experience in and around the school. Profiling is not a once-off exercise as the community's dynamic and the school are constantly changing. By recording (profiling), we can identify the most common disruptive behaviour at the school level, how often it occurs, and what could be the root cause of disruptive behaviour in our school. All the gathered data will be discussed with parents, and proper referrals will be implemented.

The participants identified the following strategies for profiling:

- The teachers can use the disciplinary book to record events every time a disciplinary issue occurs, and management must make time to investigate the root cause of such behaviour.
- The profile document for each learner will serve primarily as a tool for teachers to plan interventions and support daily as part of teaching and learning.

These strategies are in accordance with the recommendations of (Jinot, 2018:1). The learner code of behaviour must be adequately enforced by schools. Learner misbehaviour should be recorded as soon as it occurs, and parents must sign a form acknowledging the misbehaviour. Schools must attach to the learner's profile proof of the learner's disciplinary history (Jinot, 2018:1).

### **The role of School Governing Body to support the school**

Sections 8 and 20 of the South African School Act RSA, (RSA, 1996b) make it essential for all SGBs to design and implement a code of conduct for learners, which include suitable disciplinary processes and measures.

It will guarantee that, in accordance with Section 12 of the Constitution (RSA, 1996a), SGBs regulate learners' discipline equitably and justly. Everyone has the right to freedom and security under the law, which includes the right to be free of torture and to not be mistreated or condemned in a cruel, inhumane, or humiliating manner.

The learner code of behaviour must be adequately enforced by schools. Learner misbehaviour should be recorded as soon as it occurs, and parents must sign a form acknowledging the misbehaviour. Schools must attach to the learner's profile proof of the learner's disciplinary history (Jinot, 2018:1).

### **Enhance support for teachers within the school context**

The findings of this research study indicated that the SMT could hold regular meetings to discuss disruptive behaviour for that week and implement proper and consistent strategies based on the code of conduct developed for learners

On-going discussions allow teachers to share their experiences. The PALAR process challenged the teachers to reflect on the wrong and illegal methods to discipline learners and refrain from using such strategies.

Teacher participants were able to change their method or strategy of disciplining learners. They continue to communicate without fear and with a sense of security, which is developed through participatory meetings. It also motivated teachers to look at alternative positive and collaborative methods that could support learners who display disruptive behaviour.

### **Develop a network and referral system.**

Once profiling and consultation between parents and teachers are done, the school must develop a collaborative network, and monitor and provide feedback to the relevant stakeholders concerning disciplinary matters. It will mark the beginning of a collaborative approach that will result in support that is more effective for learners who display disruptive behaviour.

Professionals who are well equipped to provide such a counselling service are school social workers and psychologists. The learner with behavioural problems needs the assistance of school social workers, and the adults (parents and teachers) in the learner's social environment can assist to counsel the learner (Reyneke, 2018).

After the PALAR process, participants understood what disruptive behaviour entails and felt better equipped to support learners who display disruptive behaviour.

## **Creating a caring and supportive environment in the school and community**

PALAR helped participants realise they needed each other to enhance their knowledge and skills. They experienced a sense of belonging and connection, and participants do not feel alone because they can now talk to and support each other with colleagues about disciplinary issues.

Participants who are teachers also indicated that they would give guidance and support to other teachers to ensure that all the teachers in the school will have someone to give them guidance and support.

Connectedness is a sense of belonging to a community, a feeling that you matter, valued contributions, and that others care about you. Connectedness and belonging prohibit negative behaviour and negative moods within people. Learners who feel connected to schools are less likely to exhibit disruptive behaviour and are more likely to inhibit self-esteem and physical and psychological security (Babbie & Mouton, 2012).

The participants collectively agreed that the disciplinary policy must be consistent and fair; it will create a trusting relationship among learners, teachers, and parents.

### **4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter discusses the findings of this research study. The responses of the participants were analysed and summarised according to four main themes: 1) developing a shared understanding of disruptive behaviour, 2) dealing with disruptive behaviour, 3) envisioned approach to support learners who display disruptive behaviour, and 4) specific strategies/methods. Furthermore, the themes were discussed in light of the relevant literature reviewed. An integrative discussion of the findings is presented. The next chapter will present the conclusion and recommendations from the data analysis process.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, the purpose of the study is stated briefly, followed by a conclusive response to all research questions. The recommendations presented apply to the practice and further research. Finally, the study's limitations and the study's contribution are presented.

#### **5.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Due to the rising incidences of disruptive behaviour of learners in schools, this study aimed to investigate a case study to address the concern.

The case study proposed a support strategy to address disruptive behaviour in the school based on the data collected by applying a participatory approach. The objectives were to establish a mutual understanding amongst stakeholders of the definition of disruptive behaviour, and ascertain how the school currently deals with disruptive behaviour by addressing the following research questions:

- What could a strategy developed through a participatory process aimed at facilitating support for dealing with disruptive behaviour in primary school classroom encompass?
- What constitutes disruptive behaviour in the participating school?
- How does the participating primary school currently support learners who display disruptive behaviour?

#### **5.3 CONCLUSIONS**

In conclusion, a strategy to deal with disruptive behaviour through a participatory process allows stakeholders to speak directly about the challenges experienced in schools in the particular context.

The following five key aspects/elements form part of the support strategy proposed in this study:

*Enhancing an understanding of the learners' context* — includes collecting information that could assist the teachers through the profiling of the context and clear documentation of the disruptive behaviour over time so that patterns can become clear to all stakeholders.

*Consultation and collaboration with parents-family-community* — the parents and the community need to be more aware of disruptive behaviour and its impact on teachers and how teachers attempt to deal with it. An overarching discussion is needed to establish how the school and community can collaborate, rather than the school only contacting the parents when children misbehave (refer to theoretical framework mesosystem).

*Enhance support for teachers within the school context* — teachers are at the frontline when dealing with disruptive behaviour. This study concludes that teachers should have on-going support from the SMT and active engagement with colleagues to ensure that they have a space to discuss the challenges they experience and exchange ideas on how to deal with disruptive behaviour. The PALAR approach enhances the participants' understanding of having such a supportive space where they can feel less isolated.

*Develop a network and referral system* — the school must develop a network and a referral system as part of the supportive strategy to address disruptive behaviour problems beyond the teacher's capacity to deal with them.

*Creating a caring and supportive environment in the school and community* — the significant value of connectedness was strongly emphasised as a basis for creating a caring and supportive environment.

#### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE**

The findings of this study address various aspects of the education system in schools with specific reference to all the stakeholders, particularly teachers and parents, with inference to the broader community where the school is located, as well as the government Departments of Education (DoE), Social Development (DSD), and Correctional Services (DCS).

*Firstly*, schools should make an effort to understand the circumstances in which the learners and their families live. A profiling/mapping process will allow all the

stakeholders to get a bigger picture of the contexts underpinning disruptive behaviour in their schools before responding to it.

*Secondly*, the school must involve all stakeholders in developing a strategy to address disruptive behaviour in a school. The interaction should be positive and proactive at all times. This positive reinforcement and encouragement promote a healthy teacher/learner/parent relationship when all are working together for the good of the learner. Teachers need to continue to invite parents in, inform them of classroom activities, and call them regularly, regardless of how their child has been doing. Treat learners with respect, communicate expectations concerning their conduct and performance, and teach critical social skills. Parents, the community, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders, such as law enforcement authorities such as the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), must all work closely with schools. Various stakeholders will collaborate to discuss ideas on how to manage learner discipline. SAPS must collaborate with schools since they are familiar with how to deal with potentially explosive circumstances that may arise at the school.

*Thirdly*, enhance support for teachers more proactively by arranging a workshop for teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to empower them with the skills required to support learners who display disruptive behaviour. The workshop can cover issues like the impact of lack of parental involvement, the importance of collaboration, and specific strategies that can be used to deal with disruptive behaviour.

*Fourthly*, each school should develop a referral network and system that will assist teachers and parents in proactively dealing with behaviour and designing interventions for schools.

*Fifthly*, each school should become a caring and supportive environment.

## **5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The research was conducted at one public primary school in the Ditsobotla sub-district of the North West province in South Africa. As such, it does not fully represent all schools in the community. However, the school represents a typical public school in the region, so the results can be applied in other contexts within the limitations described.

Using PALAR, as a research design, to develop a contextualised strategy also seemed valuable in contextualising a support strategy for schools.

In this study, learners' perspectives on disruptive behaviour were excluded. Therefore, it is recommended that further research focus on learners' perspectives concerning disruptive behaviour.

This study, to some extent, suggests alternative approaches to corporal punishment. Further research to investigate the contribution of the proposed strategy to disciplinary measures should be conducted.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

The research study offers knowledge that will enable schools to deal more efficiently with disruptive behaviour in classrooms by identifying key aspects of a support strategy. The study demonstrates that the PALAR approach can be used successfully as a way to develop a more contextually relevant support strategy. Teachers, parents, and all other stakeholders collaborate to gain insight into the situation, and the problem can be addressed directly in the specific context. Working together, they can improve their engagement with learners who disrupt classes.

## **5.7 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Due to the small sample size and the use of the qualitative method for data collection, the conclusions of this study are restricted in application to other situations. The study's goal, however, was not to uncover broad trends. The purpose was to research a case study to gather detailed information from participants to provide help to learners who were misbehaving and improve disciplinary methods employed by parents, teachers, and other school authorities.

The PALAR team consisted of, amongst others, school management, and PL 1 teachers. One of the initial challenges encountered was that some of the participants were not keen on sharing their experiences and knowledge because they perceived that they would be judged. It was essential to convince them that no one is in a position of power, but we are all at the same level and want to learn from practical situations to find ways to improve discipline. A relationship-building technique was used as an essential icebreaker at the start-up workshop for the participants to understand that we

are all participants. As time went on participants gradually started to show more interest in participating actively and sharing openly with one another and the team began to understand that they could learn from each other.

At the time of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the government introduced new conditions to limit the spread of the virus. The closing of schools made it difficult to continue the study and adhere to the set time frame. The challenge was to arrange all the scheduled meetings with the participants. The number of meetings had to be reduced and when participants met, strict social distancing conditions were implemented.

## **5.8 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This research project aimed to explore how all stakeholders could be involved to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary schools.

The results of the study concluded that classroom disruptive behaviour is affected adversely by the school environment, the community environment (poverty, drugs, and substance abuse), and family instability.

To alleviate the problem of disruptive behaviour in the classroom, the recommendations are to offer teachers and interested education stakeholders support and advise them to adopt effective, proactive interventions.

As a final word, the researcher invites all educational stakeholders to work together to address the causes of learner disruptive behaviour and suggests that additional research be undertaken into disruptive classroom behaviour and strategies to address the problem more effectively.

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ANNEXURE A: GOODWILL PERMISSION: DISTRICT BASED SUPPORT TERM MEMBER



Department of Education  
Disabotile Sub District  
30 Bantjes St  
Lichtenburg  
2740

Private Bag X900, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-0114/2223  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education  
COMBER Research Entity

Tel: 018 910 3075  
Email: [Thabo.Makhailemele@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Thabo.Makhailemele@nwu.ac.za)

15-July-2019

**GOODWILL PERMISSION: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: DISTRICT  
BASED SUPPORT TEAM MEMBER**

**A Participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive  
behaviour in primary school classrooms**

I herewith wish to request your permission for a District Based Support Team member to participate in this research, which involves workshops, meetings and interviews with the participants. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in a primary school classroom.

**ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER**

**NWU-008 73- 19 A2**

**PROJECT SUPERVISOR:** Dr Thabo Makhailemele.

**CO-SUPERVISOR:** Prof Ansie Kitching.

**ADDRESS:** North West University

School for Psycho-Social Education

1174 Hendrick Van Eck-Boulevard

Vanderbijlpark.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 018 910 3075

**MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM** Med-Student: Hope Tshoielo Plata

**ADDRESS:** X 240 Sakhani Street Jouberton

Klerksdorp.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0729957788

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: [Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za), Tel. (018) 299 4856

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education.

## ANNEXURE B: GOODWILL PERMISSION: SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY



School Governing Body  
1516 Peacock road  
Blydeville  
Lichtenburg

Private Bag 30201, 46/Shefolsman  
Souto 0119 2521  
Tel: 018 299 111/2222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education  
COMBER Research Entity

Tel: 018 810 3075  
Email: [Thabo.Makhelemelo@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Thabo.Makhelemelo@nwu.ac.za) 15-July-2018

### GOODWILL PERMISSION: SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY/OTHER RELEVANT BODY

#### A Participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms

I herewith wish to request your permission for parents and teacher of B'ydevilla primary school to participate in this research, which involves workshops, meetings and interviews with the participants. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in a primary school classroom.

#### ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER

NWU-00873-19-A2

**PROJECT SUPERVISOR:** Dr Thabo Makhelemelo.

**CO-SUPERVISOR:** Prof Ansie Kitching.

**ADDRESS:** North West University  
School for Psycho-Social Education  
1174 Hendrick Van Eck-Boulevard  
Vanderbijlpark.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 018 910 3075

**MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM Med-Student:** Hope Tsholofelo Plata

**ADDRESS:** X 240 Sakheni Street Jouberton  
Klerksdorp.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0729957788

#### FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling. E-mail: [Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za), Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education.

# ANNEXURE C: GOODWILL PERMISSION: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



SAWF  
15 Gerrit Maritz  
Lichtenburg

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: 016 299 1111/2222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education  
GDMERER Research Entity

Tel: 016 910 3075  
Email: [Thabo.Mekhalemele@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Thabo.Mekhalemele@nwu.ac.za) 15-July-2015

## GOODWILL PERMISSION: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: SOCIAL WORKER

### A Participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms

I herewith wish to request your permission for a social worker to participate in this research, which involves workshops, meetings and interviews with the participants. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in a primary school classroom.

#### ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER

NWU-00873 19-A2

PROJECT SUPERVISOR: Dr Thabo Mekhalemele.

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof Ansie Kitching.

ADDRESS: North West University

School for Psycho-Social Education

1174 Hendrick Van Eck-Boulevard

Vanderbijpark.

CONTACT NUMBER: 016 910 3075

MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM MEd-Student: Hope Tshoifelo Plata

ADDRESS: X 240 Sakheni Street Jouberton

Klerksdorp.

CONTACT NUMBER: 0729957788

#### FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: [Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za), Tel. (016) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education.

What is this research about?

ANNEXURE D: LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



School Principal  
1516 Peacock road  
Blydeville  
Lichtenburg

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
South Africa, 2520

Tel: 018 259-111/18222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education

COMBER Research Entity

Tel: 018 910 3075  
Email: [Thabo.Makhalemele@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Thabo.Makhalemele@nwu.ac.za)

15 July 2019

**PERMISSION LETTER: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL/OTHER RELEVANT PERSON**

**A Participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms**

I herewith wish to request your permission for parents/guardians and teachers of Blydeville primary school to participate in this research, which involves workshops, meetings and interviews with the participants. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in a primary school classroom.

**ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER**

XXX

**PROJECT SUPERVISOR:** Dr Thabo Makhalemele.

**CO-SUPERVISOR:** Prof Ansie Kitching.

**ADDRESS:** North West University  
School for Psycho-Social Education  
1174 Hendrick Van Eck-Boulevard  
Vanderbijlpark.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 018 910 3075

**MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM MEd-Student:** Hope Tsholofelo P'ata

**ADDRESS:** X 240 Sakhani Street Jouberton  
Klerksdorp.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0720957788


**FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Contact person: Ms Ema Greyling, E-mail: [Ema.Greyling@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Ema.Greyling@nwu.ac.za), Tel. (018) 299 4656

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education.

**What is this research about?**

ANNEXURE E: NORTH-WEST DBE APPROVAL LETTER

 **Lefapha la Thuto le Bokone Bophirima**  
**Noord-Wes Onderwys Departement**  
**North West Education Department**  
**NORTH WEST PROVINCE**

**Corner Nelson Mandela and  
Bantjee Street,  
Lichtenburg 2740  
Tel.: (018) 632-7091  
Tel.: (018) 632-0200  
e-mail: [info@nwed.gov.za](mailto:info@nwed.gov.za)  
e-mail: [info@nwed.gov.za](mailto:info@nwed.gov.za)**

---

**OFFICE OF THE SUB-DISTRICT MANAGER: DITSOBOTLA SUB-DISTRICT OFFICE  
NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT**

**From:** J.W Bantham  
Acting Circuit Manager  
Lichtenburg Circuit

**To:** Ms. H.T Plata  
Blydeville Primary

**Date:** 03 October 2019


**Subject :** Permission for research work.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & SPORT DEVELOPMENT  
NORTH WEST PROVINCE  
DITSOBOTLA SUB-DISTRICT OFFICE  
Lichtenburg Circuit Manager  
**03 OCT 2019**  
Private Bag X12005  
LICHTENBURG  
2740

We hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter on the above matter dated 20.05.2019.

Permission is hereby granted to you to conduct research on the topic mentioned in your letter at Blydeville Primary School.

Thank you



J.W Bantham  
Acting Circuit Manager

## ANNEXURE F: PARTICIPANTS CONSENT FORM



Participants  
15' 6 Peacock road  
Blydeville  
Lichtenburg  
2740

Private Bag X6201, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2620

tel: 018 299-1111/2222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Faculty of Education

COMBER Research Entity

Tel: 018 910 3075  
Email: [Thabo.Wakhalemele@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Thabo.Wakhalemele@nwu.ac.za) 15-July-2019

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

#### **A Participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms**

I herewith wish to request your consent to participate in this research, which involves workshops, meetings and interviews with the participants. Prior to granting permission, please acquaint yourself with the information below.

The details of the research are as follows:

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:** A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in a primary school classroom.

#### **ETHICS APPLICATION NUMBER**

**NWU-008 73-19-A2**

**PROJECT SUPERVISOR:** Dr Thabo Wakhalemele.

**CO-SUPERVISOR:** Prof Ansie Kitching.

**ADDRESS:** North West University  
School for Psycho-Social Education  
1:74 Hendrick Van Eck-Boulevard  
Vandortjilpark.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 018 910 3075

**MEMBER OF PROJECT TEAM MEd-Student:** Hope Tsholofelo Plata

**ADDRESS:** X 240 Satheri Street Jouberton  
Klerksdorp.

**CONTACT NUMBER:** 0729957780

#### **FACULTY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Contact person: Ms Erna Greyling, E-mail: [Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za), Tel. (018) 299 4358

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education of the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines of this committee. Permission was also obtained from the provincial Department of Basic Education.

# ANNEXURE G: INDEMNITY FORM



Private Bag X6001, Windhoek  
South Africa 0600

Tel: 018 295-11 0222  
Web: <http://www.nwu.edu.na>

Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education  
(EduREC)

Tel: 018 910 3075  
Email: [Thabo.Makheanele@nwu.edu.na](mailto:Thabo.Makheanele@nwu.edu.na) 15-July-2019

*The Faculty of Health Sciences Ethics Office and Education, Management, Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMHS-REC) of the North-West University are acknowledged for the use of their document with minor adjustments made by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education (EduREC) of the North-West University.*

## INDEMNITY FORM (EduREC)

I, the undersigned

Hope Tshafolole Plata

hereby indemnify the North West University ("NWU") and/or any of its office-bearers and staff (temporary or permanent) against any liability in respect of personal losses and/or damages suffered by me or any other person arising from or resulting as a consequence of my participation in the research entitled

*A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms.*

(NWU-COB73-19-A2)

(the "Research"), and hereby hold harmless the NWU against above-mentioned liability.

I confirm that I voluntarily consent to participate in the Research, and that I was in no way forced or coerced by the NWU to participate in the Research, and that the waiver and release shall apply to any claims that may arise during and/or after the Research.

I declare that I am aware of the risks involved in the Research, as explained to me, and of the implications of this waiver and release, and agree that this document will also be binding upon my executor, curator or other assigns.

*Participation in this project is completely voluntary. The participant may decline altogether or refuse any questions you do not wish to answer during the interviews and completion of a questionnaire. The participants may also withdraw from participation after beginning with the project as they choose and their decision to participate, decline, or withdraw will have no effect on their current status at or future relations with the school district and the North West University.*

[Signature]  
Signature

[Signature]  
Gatekeeper

29 May 2019

EduREC Indemnity Form

1

## ANNEXURE H: DATA COLLECTION METHOD (SET MEETING)

### AGENDA

Workshop: Special Meeting Workshop      Date: 10 February 2020

Location: Blydeville Primary School      Time: 02:00 p.m

Project supervisor: Dr T Makhalemele      Facilitator: H.T. Plata

### Activities

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Meet and greet session for participants.
3. Vision of the research team.
4. Introducing participants to the PALAR project (Project design, management and evaluation).
5. Closure.

## ANNEXURE I: ETHICS CLEARANCE



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY  
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA  
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT  
POTCHEFSTROOM CAMPUS

Fakulteit Opvoedkunde / Faculty Education  
Privaatsak / Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom  
Suid-Afrika / South Africa 2520  
T: 018 299 4656  
F: 086 661 8589  
<http://www.nwu.ac.za>

3 September 2019

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby confirm that the ethics application, as stated below, is approved by the members of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education on 3 September 2019 and will be minuted at the Ethics Committee meeting on 19 September 2019.

**Ethics number: NWU-006873-19-A2**

**Project head: Dr T Makhalemele**

**Project team: HT Plata; Prof A Kitching**

**Title: A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms**

**Period: 30 August 2019 – 30 August 2020**

Clearance given for only one year. Extension can be requested after a year.

**Risk level: Low**

Should you have further enquiries in this regard, you are welcome to contact Prof Jako Olivier at 018 285 2078 or by email at [Jako.Olivier@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Jako.Olivier@nwu.ac.za) or Ms Erna Greyling at 018 299 4656 or by email at [Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Erna.Greyling@nwu.ac.za).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jako Olivier'.

Prof J Olivier  
Chair Edu-REC

## ANNEXURE J: RESEARCH PROPOSAL APPROVAL



**Faculty Education:  
Research & Innovation - M&D  
Administration**

Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom  
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299 4770 / 018 285 2101  
Email: [20505957@nwu.ac.za](mailto:20505957@nwu.ac.za)

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

27 May 2019

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Student name: **Ms HP Plata**; Student number: **18040276**  
**(MEd – Special Needs Education)**

I hereby confirm that the research proposal of the above-mentioned student was approved by the COMBER Scientific Committee meeting of **22 May 2019**.

The Research title referred to Research and Innovation committee for approval is as follows:

**A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms**

Should you have further enquiries in this regard, you are welcome to contact Ms Ronélie van Staden at 018 285 2101 or by email at [20505957@nwu.ac.za](mailto:20505957@nwu.ac.za), alternatively you may contact Prof L Wood at 018 299 4770 or by email at [Lesley.Wood@nwu.ac.za](mailto:Lesley.Wood@nwu.ac.za).

Yours sincerely

COMBER Scientific Committee

Original details: (20505957) C:\Users\20505957\NWU\Nextcloud\SNTOX\Faculty of Education\Letters\2019\Proposals\COMBER\Confirmation of Proposal Approval.docm  
27 May 2019  
File reference: 9.4

## ANNEXURE K: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

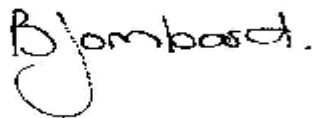
**BRENDA LOMBARD**  
**PROOF READING AND EDITING**

Date: 01/05/2023

To whom it may concern,

This is to confirm that the dissertation, titled *A participatory process to facilitate support for learners who display disruptive behaviour in primary school classrooms*, submitted by TSHOLOFELO HOPE PLATA (Student number: 18040276) has been edited according to the requirements specified for the degree of Master of Education at the North-West University.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B Lombard". The letter "B" is large and stylized, with a loop at the bottom. The rest of the name is written in a cursive-like script.

Brenda Lombard

Honeyrock Cottages 4B  
Kleinmond, The Whale Coast

Mobile: 0836751795  
e-mail: brenlombard@gmail.com

# ANNEXURE L: PLAGIARISM REPORT

7/25/22, 9:23 PM

Turnitin

<p><b>Turnitin Originality Report</b></p> <p>Processed on: 23-Jun-2022 08:07 AMPT                  ID: 18605476268                  Word Count: 22188                  Submitted: 1</p> <p>18040276:Masters_research_for_Turn_it_in_H_T_Plata_21_JUNE.docx By TSHOLOFLO PLATA</p>		<p><b>Similarity Index</b></p> <p>11%</p>	<p><b>Matched by Source</b></p> <p>Student Sources: 0%</p> <p>Publications: 2%</p> <p>Web Pages: 9%</p>
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1% match (student papers from 17-Oct-2014) <a href="#">Submitted to North West University on 2014-10-17</a>
< 1% match (student papers from 11-Nov-2015) <a href="#">Submitted to North West University on 2015-11-11</a>
< 1% match (student papers from 26-Nov-2021) <a href="#">Submitted to North West University on 2021-11-26</a>
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< 1% match () <a href="#">WIPHOOL, Liza Jade. "Exploring parental support for disadvantaged school students". Stellenbosch : Stellenbosch University, 2019</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">SINGO, MICHAAWYI BUNICE. "TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN VUHOHE DISTRICT". Bloemfontein: Central University of Technology, Free State, 2017</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Makhe, Ntshona. "Developing management strategies for promoting learner commitment to the realisation of their right to education in secondary schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyane District, Free State Province", 2021</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Munshi, Anil Prakash. "The role of management and leadership in addressing learner discipline : a case of three secondary schools in Pinetown Education District", 2015</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Thatcher, Colleen Barbara. "The technology learning ages as a catalyst of creativity in foundation phase learners", 2019</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Sogwagwa, Pheliso. "Evaluation of the youth development programme at Swartland Municipality", Stellenbosch : University of Stellenbosch, 2010</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Barnett, Hilou. "Exploring the educational management processes at a former Model C high school in Cape Town", Stellenbosch : Stellenbosch University, 2016</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Khalil Zafar, Neda. "Consumers' informed decision-making in response to direct to consumer advertising of prescription medicines", University of Otago Library, 2020</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Zandela, Vincent Thabani. "The involvement of teacher unions in the implementation of the Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1997", 2006</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Makhebeni, Pevah. "School principals' perceptions and responses to the HIV and AIDS pandemic in schools in the Eastern Cape", Faculty of Education, 2008</a>
< 1% match () <a href="#">Nobhozeno, Thabiso Givis. "Strategies used by the School Management Team in managing learners' late coming in a Cape Town high school", Cape Peninsula University of Technology, 2020</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 19-Jul-2020) <a href="https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/20669/thesis_thabai_om.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1">https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/20669/thesis_thabai_om.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 16-Dec-2021) <a href="https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/28136/4/insertion_majika_a.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1">https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/28136/4/insertion_majika_a.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 03-Apr-2022) <a href="https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/27284/thesis_mogaba_m.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1">https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/27284/thesis_mogaba_m.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 15-Oct-2021) <a href="https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/27274/4/insertion_munib.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1">https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/27274/4/insertion_munib.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 29-Dec-2021) <a href="https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/28217/thesis_mothama's_h.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1">https://ojs.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/28217/thesis_mothama's_h.pdf?file=1&amp;source=1</a>
< 1% match (Internet from 19-Jul-2020)

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1/17

## ANNEXURE M: SECOND SET MEETING

### AGENDA

Second Cycle: Second Set Meeting                      Date :15-October- 2020

Location:Blydeville Primary School                      Time:02:00 p.m

Project supervisor: Dr T Makhalemele                      Facilitator:H.T.Plata

#### Activities

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Collate the information on possible strategies to enhance support.
3. Reflection
4. Closure.

## ANNEXURE N: THIRD SET MEETING

### AGENDA

Second Cycle: Third Set Meeting      Date : 11-Dec- 2020

Location: Blydeville Primary School      Time: 08:00 a.m

Project supervisor: Dr T Makhalemele      Facilitator: H.T. Plata

#### Activities

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Analyse data provided in the previous meetings
3. Closure.

- The Department head will issue a letter to parents, after consulting the office.  
Root cause:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Strategy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Scream at the learners  
Root cause:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Strategy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Isolate the learner from friends  
Root cause:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Strategy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Cool- off period for three (3) days from school (all homework and catch-up class work must be done at home. Class and subject teacher will monitor when learner is back at school. (code of conduct)  
Root cause:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Strategy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Suspend learners ( Send learner out of class)  
Root cause:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Strategy:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Suspend learners for 7 days by the SGB. All steps must be recorded