

**MANAGING CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE NGAKA
MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT**

BY

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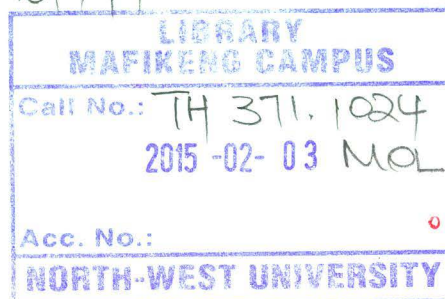
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DECLARATION

I, Patricia Keamogetse Molefe, hereby declare that this mini-dissertation for a Masters degree in Educational Management in the Faculty of Education at the North West University Mafikeng Campus is indeed my original work and has never been submitted before. All the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



.....
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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Mother Otsile Georginah Lebatlang and my two daughters Kelebogile and Boitumelo. My success in life rest on the support and encouragement they gave me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks and gratitude goes to the Almighty God for giving me strength courage and wisdom to complete my studies.

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ABSTRACT

This study was underpinned by the view of the researcher that classroom discipline is gradually collapsing in South African schools. Learners seem to be uncontrollable thus affecting the quality of teaching and learning. Educators worldwide have many responsibilities in managing classroom discipline and shaping the behaviour of learners in schools. For educators to undertake these many responsibilities there is need for them to carryout effective teaching and learning through maintaining a disciplined classroom without enforcing corporal punishment. This might seem difficult from the view of certain attitudes learners display in classroom, but it is possible if educators are groomed with contemporary classroom discipline strategies which conform to the demands of the Department of Education.

The study investigated the phenomenon of managing classroom discipline in Ngaka Modiri Molema District to determine the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline and to determine strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom. The study also state and describe disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators in the classroom and make recommendations and guidelines on the findings with regard to managing classroom discipline.

A literature review was done on conceptual literature relating to issues on managing classroom discipline. Learner's misconduct in class, causes of disciplinary problems and how to prevent and manage classroom discipline by applying the legal framework in class was also reviewed.

The research approach was qualitative. Purposively selected participants included experienced teachers and student members of school student governments (prefects) of two purposefully selected schools. Views and experience of participants to this study were captured and explained through interviews, observations and document analysis. Results are discussed in relation to relevant literature, allowing the flow of an open coding process in inductive qualitative analysis.

Findings from the research indicated that participants are experiencing varying forms of continued ill discipline in their classrooms. Some of which are; learners not doing their school and homework, absenteeism, disruption of classes by noise making, learners bullying fellow learners and even educators. Literature review revealed that there are nationwide guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in schools as embedded in SASA. Participants know the guidelines and a legal framework for managing discipline in classrooms that has been used to design a school code of conduct and classroom rules. Most educators are not very conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline except for the fact that they know they are not allowed to use corporal punishment. The findings of this study suggested that educators, through the help of the Department of Education, should familiarise themselves with legal documents on managing discipline in order for them to establish and maintain positive classroom discipline management.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

DoE	Department of Education
NEPA	National Education Policy Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SGBs	School Governing Bodies
SACE	South African Council of Educators
EEA	Employment Equity Act
ELAA	Education Laws Amendment Act
SASA	South African School Act
HOD	Head of Department
APO	Area Project Office
RSA	Republic of South Africa
NWDE	North West Department of Education
EMGU	Education Management and Governance Unit

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Educators worldwide have many responsibilities in managing classroom discipline and shaping the behaviour of learners in schools. Campbell (1999,vii) maintains that “student discipline is a major area of concern for all teachers”. Coetzee (2008:215) supports Campbell by stating that discipline should suggest a range of practices that contribute to a well managed classroom in which learners go about the business of learning in an environment conducive to teaching and learning, because without appropriate classroom discipline, teaching and learning might be difficult.

In general and in line with the statement ‘charity begins at home’, disciplinary powers are vested with the parents. The educators assume these powers only as they *operate in loco parentis* or on delegated authority. This authority is, however, limited by law as it does not allow corporal punishment or psychological or physical abuse in South African Schools. Hence, if the educators exceed their powers by failing to execute within the legal framework, they may obviously be liable for damages and may be prosecuted (Coetzee, 2008: 219).

There is therefore the need for educators to carry out effective teaching and learning through maintaining a disciplined classroom without enforcing corporal punishment on learners. This might seem difficult from the point of view that certain attitudes are displayed by learners in the classroom, but it is possible if educators are groomed with contemporary classroom discipline strategies which conform to the demands of the Department of Education.

1.2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The study is motivated by the general view of the researcher that classroom discipline is gradually collapsing in South African schools. Learners seem to be uncontrollable thus affecting the quality of teaching and learning. This ultimately results in poor results at the end of the year. According to Naong (2007:297), schools must rethink their discipline policies and seek new ways to address today's unprecedented behaviour problems.

The researcher's interest in classroom discipline has been influenced by the manner in which learners behave during teaching and learning. The frequent recurrence of unacceptable behaviour in the classroom is a cause for concern for the whole schooling environment. It makes Campbell (1999: viii) to emphasise that the most important objective of any system of classroom management is the prevention of disciplinary problems. It is important to identify the nature of the discipline problems in order to effectively address the problem.

Discipline ensures the safety of educators and learners and create an environment conducive to teaching and learning. In terms of Section 8(1) of the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996a:8), discipline must be maintained so that the culture of teaching and learning should run smoothly without any disruptive behaviour.

1.3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool is illegal in South Africa (RSA, 1996a 5-6). The outlawing of corporal punishment has some negative consequences on classroom discipline. Thus, to improve the situation, educators sometimes risk setting very rigid classroom rules instead of considering individual situations.

According to Tiwane (2010:1), managing learner behaviour has become one of the most problematic and contested areas in schools since the banning of corporal punishment. I agree with Tiwane's statement as educators are discouraged and demoralised by the way learners behave as they are accountable for learners' academic performance and achievement. During teaching and learning periods, learners dodge classes and show no passion for their school work.

It is general knowledge that In South African schools, particularly during the apartheid regime, the 'Christian National Education philosophy' encouraged educators and parents to believe that corporal punishment was the only way to discipline learners. Therefore, corporal punishment during the era was an integral part of South Africa institutions of learning. It was sanctioned by the statutory laws and encouraged by institutions of educators' training, high tertiary institutions, parents associations, and even religious institutions (Naong, 2007:286-287).

In the wake of the new dispensation in South Africa in which corporal punishment is considered unlawful in schools, it is seen to be an infringement of the learner's human rights, in terms of section 10 Of South African Schools Act (RSA1996b: 9-10). The researcher is concerned about the misbehaviour of learners in the classroom as well as what could be done from an educational management perspective to reduce disruptive behaviour during teaching and learning and to propose strategies for effective teaching and learning in a disciplined classroom free of violence and corporal punishment.

1.4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004:25) define theoretical framework as a theory that helps the researcher to make explicit assumptions about the interconnectedness of the way things are related in the world. They further state that a theoretical framework provides an orientation to the study in the sense that it reflects the stance the researcher adopts in his or her research.

Porteus (2001:59) maintains that a way to achieve effective classroom discipline is to put emphasis on the importance of participation and involvement in the thinking and decision – making process within a classroom. In this way Porteus (2001:60) advocates for a democratic approach to classroom discipline that emphasises shared responsibility between learners and educators. Rogovin (2004:54) concurs with Porteus (2001) and maintains that educator’s goal should be to have learners be responsible for their own behaviour within the rules and procedures agreed upon.

Joubert and Squelch (2005:17) indicate that when educators maintain discipline in the classroom, they should exercise care not to infringe the learner’s right to human dignity. They further state that effective educators are able to create an orderly, harmonious classroom environment and lead by examples. Joubert and Squelch’s theory clearly suggests that educators who lack classroom management skills have less control over learners and as a result cause most discipline problems occurring in the classroom.

1.5. RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

In this study, an attempt will be made to illustrate classroom discipline management as a challenge for teachers in the democratic South Africa, especially in Mahikeng and to highlight some techniques the teachers could use to address this challenge. According to Bush (2007:300), educators have delegated authority as classroom managers to manage classroom discipline but they lack classroom management skills, support and professional development from the department.

Kayikci (2009: 57) and Bush (2007:297) confirm that the majority of disciplinary incidents that take place in the classroom originate from insufficient classroom management skills. Educators seem not to be conversant with the legal framework which they should apply for managing

classroom discipline. At the beginning of 2011 academic year, the Department of Education invited principals to attend training and workshops based on learner discipline where they were to acquire knowledge and strategies on how to discipline learners (DoE, 2011, Circular 37). This shows that the government realizes that discipline is a problem in schools. However, educators as classroom managers were not part of the training. This places educators behind in terms of learner discipline despite the fact that they are the ones experiencing discipline problems in classrooms.

According to Oosthuisen (2007:1), abolition of corporal punishment left a definite vacuum in methods of dealing with learner misconduct. Masitsa (2007:3) concurs and states that:

From the time learners realised that corporal punishment was abolished, their misbehaviour increased, and lately they appear to be out of control. Many schools especially in Mahikeng area, learner's misbehaviour is so serious that numerous educators consider that the use of corporal punishment should be permitted in schools once more, since its abolition has left them with no effective methods of enforcing punishment.

Based on these challenges of classroom discipline, the main aim of the study is:

- To find out the challenges of classroom discipline in selected school within Mahikeng APO and suggest strategies for effective classroom discipline management practices in schools.

In view of the above statement, the following sub-problems or research questions are formulated to guide the study:

- Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators?
- What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?
- What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?

- Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?

1.7. RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The research aim of the study is to investigate the phenomenon of managing classroom discipline in Ngaka Modiri Molema District.

The following objectives are formulated to attain the general aims:

- To determine the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline in Ngaka Modiri Molema District.
- To determine strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom.
- To state and describe disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators in the classroom.
- To explore and investigate the causes that contributes to classroom discipline problems.
- To make recommendations and guidelines on the findings of the study with regard to managing classroom discipline.

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In terms of section 3(n) of the National Education policy Act (1996:9-10), learners should have self –discipline, and an educator at the school level shall have the same rights as a parent to control and discipline learners in the classroom or in any extra-curricular activities. The importance of this study might assist to clarify for educators the legal framework regarding classroom discipline.

According to Agba and Ogaboh (2010:180), a classroom learning environment can be made effective by interrelationships among learners and their teachers. This is so because the school has a duty to equip learners with the necessary knowledge and skills for a better future. Without relevant disciplinary measures, skills and knowledge cannot be achieved.

The findings and recommendations could provide information and insight to the DoE on challenges educators are facing in managing classroom discipline. Different ways of upholding classroom discipline will be suggested from findings and the literature review. The findings should also benefit all schools in Mahikeng. It is on the basis of these expectations that the study is significant and justified.

1.8. EMPIRICAL REESESEARCH

1.8.1. Research Methodology

Henning, Van Rensburg, and Smith (2007:36) state that research methodology refers to the coherent group of methods that complement one another. Johnson and Christensen (2004:29), support the statement above by defining research methodology as a systematic and purposeful framework for conducting research through scientific methods in order to yield data on a particular research question and to expand knowledge in a particular field of study. This study was an undertaking from a complete qualitative research underpinning which according to Creswell, Ivankova and Plano Clark (2010:259) a understanding where a researcher develops a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting .The researcher preferred this method because it enabled her and the participants to discuss and describe the situation of classroom discipline in depth, openness and in detail. However, the researcher employed a qualitative research design because she wants to focus on person's lives, behaviour as well as organisational functioning.

1.8.2. Research Design

Research design, according to Niewenhuis (2010:70), is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumption to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done, produces for this study the descriptive data in the participants own written or spoken word. It involves identifying the participants' beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena and is concerned with understanding than explanation, with naturalistic observation than controlled measurement.

1.8.3. Data collection techniques

The major tools of data collection were observation, interviews and document analysis. The observation method with scheduled face-to-face interview was used to gather information on how teachers deal with overtly unacceptable behaviours in the classroom by learners. The researcher chose the interview method because it is a two way process whereby she will be able to have an individual discussion with the interviewers. The researcher used structured open-ended interview to collect data because such interview offers a versatile way of collecting data and it allows the interviewer to probe with a view to ask for elaboration in cases of incomplete responses. On observation in the study, the researcher focused on a participant as observer method. The observer is a participant in the situation being observed and will not intervene in the dynamics of the situation and even try to alter it. Since documents enrich what a researcher see and hear by supporting, expanding and challenging perceptions, in this study the following documents were analysed: the school policies, learners' code of conduct, classroom rules and school discipline policies.

1.8.4. Population of the study

Barbie and Mouton (2001:173) define study population as an aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected. The population for this study is learners and educators of all primary schools within the Mahikeng APO. There are 54 primary schools in Mahikeng area office and are all involved in this study. Central focus is on discipline management in the

classroom amongst learners and educators of the 54 primary schools in the Mahikeng APO. Since qualitative research is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling, this research focused on purposive sampling. The common characteristics that is used for purposive selection of participants is educators who have at least five years experience in classroom teaching and are members of the disciplinary committee of the school and learners who are prefects at school. This was verified prior to meeting them as participants. The intention of the purposive selection was to get participants who have rich in-sight information pertaining to disciplinary management. The criterion for selection of participating schools for the study was also through purposive sampling.

1.8.5. Data analysis

Data analysis (Niewenhuis,2010: 99) is an ongoing and interactive process, implying that data collection, process, analysis and reporting are intertwined and not merely a number of successive steps. This was done through a qualitative method of open coding.

1.9 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The result may become distorted because of the perceived special attention given to classroom discipline as an issue in selected schools .This will be influenced by time constraints, which in turn may influence the feedback from the respondents. The researcher focused only on two primary schools in Mahikeng, thus the findings of the study can and may change with a larger number of schools.

1.10 RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

Merriam in (Maree 2010:38) describes reliability as “results which are consistent with the data collected”. In qualitative research, the issue of quality can be addressed by dealing with issues of validity, practicality and effectiveness. It requires the use of various strategies to enhance

validity including obtaining the service of an external coder to verify the quality result (Maree, 2010:38). The researcher needs to facilitate quality assurance which is data verification.

In qualitative research, validity and reliability are referred to as trustworthiness and can be obtained through attending to aspects such as the period of data collection, doing interviews in the participants own language, conducting research in natural settings, providing verbatim accounts of transcripts and recording interviews mechanically (Maree, 2010:80). Trustworthiness was achieved by ensuring the validity and the reliability of data through mechanical recorded data and participant reviews.

1.11 ETHICAL ISSUES

Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2010:41-42) state that it is important to highlight the ethical considerations in regard to the research. An essential ethical aspect is the issue of the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants' identities. This could include obtaining permission to be interviewed and an undertaking to destroy audiotapes. It is also important as a researcher to familiarise with the ethics policy of the relevant institutions in Mahikeng.

1.12. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Classroom discipline

According to Mabebe and Prinsloo (2000: 34) discipline refers to learning, regulated scholarship, guidance and orderliness. Campbell (1999: viii) maintains that classroom discipline is reactive and is a response to the violation of an established classroom rule or procedure.

For this study, discipline has been used as a condition of respect and obedience among learners in the classroom for the realisation of effective teaching and learning.

Classroom management

Kayikci (2009: 121) defines classroom management as the process of arranging the classroom environment and its physical structure in a good and attractive teaching and learning in order to satisfy the expectations of the educational system, the curriculum, the lesson and administration of class in order to prevent learners' undesirable behaviour. Classroom management requires a skilled manager or educator who is conversant with the legislative framework. (Campbell, 1999:viii) indicates that classroom management is proactive and includes the establishment of appropriate rules and procedure.

In this study 'classroom management refers to those regulative tasks that are executed by the Department of Education with a view of allowing teaching and learning to take place in an orderly way in the classroom.

Misbehaviour

Weeks (2008:249) regards misbehaviour as the type of behaviour that is very difficult to change, namely disciplinary problems, inappropriate behaviour within a certain set of circumstances, and assaulting educators. Tiwane (2010:13) confirms that misbehaviour relates to the breaking of classroom rules, including coming to school late, absenteeism or vandalizing school equipment. In essence, a learner who is uncooperative and commits unacceptable deeds in terms of classroom rules is misbehaving.

1.13. CHAPTER DIVISION

This study is divided according to these chapters.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL ORIENTATION

This chapter covers an overview of the study. These include rationale for the study, background and context, problem statement, aims and objectives, methodology and design, significance, justification of the study and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter covers the literature review related to classroom discipline. Learner's misbehaviour is reviewed in great details. Causes of disciplinary problems and how to prevent and manage classroom discipline by applying the legal framework in the class.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with the discussion of the research design, methodology and recording of raw data. It explains the empirical study which comprises of sampling and selection.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the research result are analysed, presented and compared to what has been written on literature on ways of managing classroom discipline. The findings will be stated as part of the chapter summary.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter covers the conclusions of the study; recommendations are provided and summary of the study.

1.14. SUMMARY

Classroom discipline remains one of the major challenges that educators are faced with. This chapter introduced the research study. The most important aspects discussed in this chapter include, statement of the research problem, research design, ethical issues, significance and justification of the study, research limitations and division of the chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

MANAGING LEARNER DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the orientation of the study. The following aspects were included in that chapter: Rational for the study, background and context, research questions, theoretical framework, problem statement, significance study as well as validity and reliability of the study. In this chapter, a literature overview of the management of learner discipline in the classroom situation will be discussed.

According to Moore (2009:360), classroom management is the process of organising and conducting the business of the classroom relatively free of behaviour problems. According to Morrell (2001:292), the South African education system historically has used corporal punishment to maintain discipline. Criticism of its effects in 1996, led to the banning of this form of punishment, but this legislative intervention did not end the use of corporal punishment in some schools.

It is clear that the climate in the classroom has to be positive and safe, rules should be systematically taught and correlated with the school's mission and vision, and the management principles of behaviour should be understood and practiced by all staff members (Taylor 2004:580). In this study the following research questions are addressed (see par 1.6):

- What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?

- Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?
- Which disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators?
- What are the causes that contribute to classroom discipline problems?
- What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?

This study is approached from three angles that are presented in three sections as follows: Firstly, an attempt is made to provide an overview of the concept *discipline* and to provide a categorisation of disciplinary problems in classrooms. In this section, an exposition of the causes that contribute to disciplinary problems in classrooms is also provided. The second angle is explained in the section that deals with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline. In this section school discipline policies and school rules that regulate classroom behaviour are discussed. The measures and procedures that are prescribed to handle misconduct regarding suspension and expulsions from a public school are also explained in this section. The third angle deals with classroom management style and disciplinary strategies employed by educators to establish classroom discipline. The overview that is presented in this chapter covers the three above mentioned aspects.

2.2 THE NATURE AND CATEGORISATION OF DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN CLASSROOMS

The concept “discipline” was defined explicitly in paragraph 1.12. Maag (2004:12) confirms that discipline is training that is expected to produce a specific character or pattern of behaviour, especially training that produces moral or mental improvement. Classroom discipline is defined as creating and maintaining a learning atmosphere in which teachers can teach and learners can learn in an environment that encourages respect for teachers and classmates. Classroom discipline according to Morrell (2001:86), is a conformation to rules. It is an intrinsic and educative process that deals with self-control for the sake of self-actualisation. It should not be forced upon a learner. The aim must be to eliminate inappropriate behaviour among learners.

Kruger and Schalkwyk (1997:114) state that discipline does not refer exclusively to the enforcement of a list of behavioural rules, but rather to the establishment of acceptable norms of behaviour which will make efficient cooperation in the classroom possible, and which will gradually result in learners being self –disciplined.

Oosthuizen, Roux and Van der Walt (2003:375) point out that discipline can be regarded as the over-arching goal of schooling and education in general and that it means guiding learners on the right road, to correct deviant behaviour in loving and caring way, and to warn and support where necessary. Mabalane, Fritz and Nduna (2007:2-3) define discipline as training that is expected to produce a specified character or pattern of behaviour or controlled behaviour, and it can also be punishment intended to correct misbehaviour.

In the same context, George (2004:1) defines classroom discipline as creating and maintaining a learning atmosphere in which teachers can teach and learners can learn in an environment that encourages respect for teachers, classmates and administrators. Classroom discipline according to Sulich (2004:87) is a conformation to rules, supervisors' orders and the demands of the institution. Campell (1999: viii) views discipline as a reaction and response to the violation of an established classroom rule or procedure. In this regard, self-discipline which means that a learner is capable of using his or her own reason to determine the best course of action and does not merely give in to his or her desires is required. It could be said that learners should behave in a particular way because they believe that it is the correct way and not simply because they are forced to do so.

Though common in education institutions and classrooms, discipline problems vary from time to time and from place to place. Naong (2007:286) believes that discipline problems refer to the manifestations of the behaviour that interferes with the teaching process and can seriously disrupt the normal teaching. Gordon and Browne (2004:639) as quoted in Marais & Meier (2010:43) also see disciplinary problems as merely inappropriate behaviour.

Mabebe and Prinsloo (2000:24) agree that disruptive behaviour is attributable to disciplinary problems. Yariv (2010:31) maintains that discipline problems are common annoying phenomena in elementary, secondary and higher education institutions. In addition, Yariv (2010:33) cites McManus (1995) that discipline problems have probably existed since schools were first established and they pose the most stressful experiences teachers may face throughout their professional careers.

In a practical way classroom discipline can be summarised as rules that, among others, determine the expected standard of clothing, times, social behaviour and work ethics in a classroom context. It also deals with the correction of learner's behaviour in order to adhere and follow agreed instructions. In addition, it deals with instructions, training and correction of learner's behaviour in classroom situations.

Another aspect of classroom discipline that could be described as being theoretical in nature is highlighted by Naong (2007:286) when he refers to the manifestations of behaviour that interfere with the teaching process and seriously disrupt the normal running of the classroom and the school. Mabebe and Prinsloo (2000:34) also assert in this regard that discipline problems are disruptive behaviour that affects one's fundamental rights to feel safe, to be treated with respect, and to learn. In this context, discipline can be defined as a particular kind of training namely that which is expected to produce a specific character or pattern of controlled behaviour to correct certain misconduct and as a business of enforcing and practicing acceptable patterns of behaviour that facilitate learning and minimises classroom disruption.

As a next step in the discussion of classroom disciplinary problems, it is proposed to look at different ways in which these behavioural-discipline problems can be categorised or placed into groups. Levin and Nolan in (Marais & Meier (2010:79) indicate such a classification by devising four basic categories:

- behaviour that interferes with the teaching and learning act (e.g. a learner who distracts other learners during lesson presentation, who refuses to follow directions, or displays aggressive behaviour);
- behaviour that interferes with the rights of other learners to learn (e.g. a learner who continually calls out while the teacher is explaining content);
- behaviour that is psychologically or physically unsafe (e.g. leaning on the back legs of a chair, unsafe use of tools or laboratory equipment, threats to other learners, and constant teasing and harassment of classmates);
- Behaviour that causes the destruction of property (e.g. vandalism in the classroom).

Charles (2002:131) identifies four broad categories of discipline problems:

- verbal and physical aggressive acts;
- immorality (acts such as cheating, lying and stealing);
- defiance of authority;
- class disruptions (talking loudly, calling out, walking in and out of the room, clowning around and the like)

According to De Klerk-Luttig and Heystek (2007:1), disciplinary problems varied from physical abuse to disruption of classes as a result of constant chatting, abusive remarks, playing with cell phones, and a negative and disrespectful attitude towards learning and teaching. In summary, the following four categories of classroom discipline problems seem to be very evident in the South African school situation;

- Verbal and physical aggressive acts
- Immorality
- Class Disruption
- Defiance of Authority

2.2.1 Verbal and physical aggressive acts

These involve issues like learners fighting one another and situations in which learners use abusive words against each other. According to Marais & Meier (2010:50), fighting in the classroom and on the playgrounds, apart from verbal aggression, mostly manifests as pushing, slapping, kicking, and aggressive play-fight, all of which are part of everyday school events. It also included learners verbally assaulting educators regularly, stealing belongings of one another in class, cheating during examinations, and lying in many instances in order not to be victims of certain unacceptable behaviour which are against the classroom rules. Some educators blame parents and say parents do not teach their children manners. In view of the above, verbal and physical aggressive classroom acts (Flannery, 2005:22) are an attempt to blame parents that many children come to school with little knowledge on how to obey rules.

2.2.2 Immorality

Immorality, as a classroom disciplinary problem in South African schools, involves acts such as cheating, lying and stealing. Learners steal pens, lunch box in the classroom. Sometimes learners fail to do their homework and prefer to lie to their teachers as to avoid punishment. This misbehavior further includes lack of concentration, disrespect for authority, physical violence, graffiti, and rejection of reasoning. According to Mecoamere (2000:3), an environment that is conducive to learning is where there is no vandalism, crime or abuse. Thus the presence of immorality in classroom is a threat to whole school performance, management, administration and culture of the school.

2.2.3 Class Disruption

It involves talking loudly, calling out, walking in and out of the classroom and clowning around.

Learners talk, laugh or make jokes, stand up and walk around, while the educator is trying to teach or while learners are supposed to work on their own; learners also talk while a fellow learner is answering or ask questions. These disturbances are often caused on purpose and intended to disrupt the class or to attract attention to them by being rude.

Classroom disruption can be classified as behaviour that a reasonable person would view as sustainable or repeatedly interfering with conduct of the class (Malone, 2010:1). Generally, disruptive behaviours interfere with the teachers' ability to conduct the class, or the ability of other learners to profit from the instruction. Classroom disruptions normally involves sleeping in class, inappropriate use of electronics devices, cell phones, entering class late or leaving early without permission. Tom (in Malone 2010:2) indicates that classroom disruptions play a critical role in the success or failure of learners and their teachers. Meyers (in Malone, 2010:2) further mention that classroom disruption contributes to further educator stress, discontent and eventual burnout.

2.2.4 Defiance of Authority

Learners use their cellphones, play games or are involved in electronic discussions by means of mix it while the teacher is teaching. It becomes problematic because learners do not pay attention and when asked a question about the content of the class, they are not able to answer.

Learners not only show little respect for teachers but also show a lack of respect for fellow learners. This lack of respect is considered to be by far the most important reason for the disruptive activities in classes.

According to Adams (2007:1) oppositional defiant children share many of the following characteristics: They possess a strong need for control and will do just about anything to gain power; they typically deny responsibility for their misbehavior and have little insight into how they impact others; a deviant child is socially exploitive and very quick to notice how others respond. He then uses these responses to his advantage in class or school environments, or both. These children tolerate a great deal of negativity – in fact they seem to thrive on large amounts of conflict, anger and negativity from others, and are frequently the winners in escalating battles of negativity.

The continuous four categories of classroom discipline in practicum in South African schools are all aspects of learners' behaviour whether co-operative or unacceptable and it is maintained and structured by interaction in the classroom. The misbehaviour or problem behaviour of learners in the classroom leads to classroom disciplinary problems. Mabebe and Prinsloo (2000:34) refer to these as disruptive behaviours that affect a person's fundamental right to feel safe, to be treated with respect and to learn.

2.3 CAUSES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS IN CLASSROOMS

Rossouw (2007:416) points out that the extent and seriousness of learner misconduct in South Africa should not be underestimated. He indicates that some South African schools are increasingly beginning to resemble war zones. It has become clear that all teachers are not free to teach and all pupils are not free to learn. The reasons why learners behave inappropriately range from a lack of respect and manners to attracting attention of their peers (De Klerk-Luttig and Heystek, 2007:8). Another important point to note is that learners can also misbehave intentionally because they believe that they are protected against punishment by their constitutional rights.

The following factors can be presented as a summative discussion of the reasons for learners' misbehaviour in classrooms:

- Classroom related factors;
- family related factors;
- educator related factors;
- social factors ; and
- the abolishment of corporal punishment.

2.3.1. Classroom related factors

According to Agba and Ogaboh (2010:180), classrooms that are characterised by high-pitched tension where the teacher behave as ringmaster, putting learners together through their acts with military precision often result in learners' needs in the class being at odds with the group norms as determined by the teacher. This means that in malfunctioning schools, where a culture of learning and teaching is absent, discipline may also have a negative effect on learner's behaviour in classrooms. Taylor (2004:580) contends that classroom climates have to be positive and safe. Rules should be systematically taught and correlated with the school's mission and vision, and the management principle of good behaviour should be understood and practiced by all staff members.

2.3.2. Family related factors

Marais and Meier (2010:47) state that the family is the most immediate and perhaps the most influential system affecting the individual. Lack of parental guidance and dysfunctional families are continually emphasised as risk factors concerning classroom discipline. Parents displayed violent and aggressive behaviour towards school staff and that their children also showed signs of violent, aggressive and anti-social behaviour in the classroom. Some learners often see their parents verbally or physically fighting (Marais & Meier, 2010:47). Oosthuizen, Roux and Van der Walt (2003:454) mentioned that from a learner's perspective, lack of parental involvement is the biggest cause of disciplinary problems. The lack of ethical role models, respect for parents, and lack of discipline at home are also important reasons for disrespectful behaviour by learners. Children are not disciplined at home and the parents do not instill social values, such as respect for persons and property. (Oosthuisen et al., 2003:376).

The researcher further knows from experience that lack of supervision at home is a common problem in society. Most of learners come from single-parent homes or from homes where both parents are too busy with their own lives to be concerned with their children. Learners might even stay out late at night, or watch television until late at night. These learners often fall asleep

in the class or are inattentive. Other learners might live on junk food or come to school without breakfast. These learners sometimes lack the energy to carry out assignments or pay attention in their classes.

According to Rogovin (2004:37) family involvement can have a direct and positive impact on learners' behaviour and academic achievement. He points out that some schools take steps to involve parents of learners with behavioural difficulties in their children's education.

2.3.3. Educator related factors

Kruger and Schalkwyk (1997:116) state that teachers may be the cause of some behavioural problems among learners in the classroom. Teachers might apply faulty teaching methods, whereby learners become bored and lose interest in lessons. Poor classroom management in which there are no classroom rules, learner's behaviour is out of control and there is no disciplinary measures applied by the educator. Coming to class late is a poor example to learners discipline (Kruger & Schalkwyk, 1997:116).

According to Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001:38) it is extremely important for educators to model good behaviour. They argue that children learn from the role –models around them. An educator who is effective at working with learners is a living example of good behaviour and caring values. Educators must always lead by example.

2.3.4. School factors

According to Wolhuter and Steyn (2003:528) school related factors influence and determine learners' behaviour in classrooms. A negative classroom climate will have the same effect on learners as a negative school climate. Lack of shared values and ill-discipline among learners are contributing factors of a negative climate. Effective schools on the other hand seem to have a

positive atmosphere based upon a sense of community and shared values in the classroom. In such schools the management usually strive to establish an environment in which discipline is maintained. Prefects and monitors normally support and encourage other learners to behave appropriately in classrooms. As such, a shared value base is an important prerequisite in promoting good behaviour and in reacting against ill-discipline, when it occurs.

2.3.5. The abolishment of corporal punishment

In Section 10 of the South African Schools Act (RSA, 1996a) it is stated that no person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner. Furthermore, section 12(1) (e) of the constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996b) prohibits the treatment of individuals in a cruel or inhumane and degrading way. Tiwane (2010:22) states further that the end of apartheid and the establishment of a human rights culture in the 1990s laid the foundation for the ending of corporal punishment as a means to learner discipline.

In summary, there are varieties of related factors stemming from different sources that account for learners' misbehaviour in the classrooms. Not always are these causes related to classroom factors affecting learners alone, but learners' misbehaviour could also stem from family related factors such as parental misconduct and other social factors. The personality and qualification of educators, their teaching style and evaluation techniques also are of influence of learners' misbehaviour in the classroom.

2.4. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGING CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

In this section an exposition is provided on different policies, rules, regulations and legislation that pertain to the phenomenon *classroom discipline*. This is followed by an explanation of the measures and procedures that apply to discipline in terms of these legal documents. Lastly, the process whereby formal disciplinary hearings are to be conducted is explained.

2.4.1 School rules and policies

School rules are normally used to regulate all aspects of behaviour in schools (Roos, 2003, 486-487). Rules are not merely intended to promote order but to assist learners to become followers and to encourage positive learner behaviour. They are not supposed to prohibit misbehaviour but rather to provide for a prohibition of specific negative occurrences. Thornberg (2008:37) also emphasised in this regard that school rules are usually associated with classroom management and remain guidelines for evaluating action in terms of good or bad behaviour. School rules are indispensable in establishing and maintaining an environment conducive to learning as well as to create order, non-violence, and safety in the playground and in classrooms.

School rules must further be based on the core values of the school and on expectations of learners, such as safety, respect, kindness and caring. Du Plessis and Looock (2007:2) state in this regard that school rules provide a balance between the organisation's intent and the freedom of learners. According to Porteus, Vally and Ruth (2001:23) learners should respect and abide by school rules as long as the rules are clear and reasonable. Therefore, for effective classroom discipline, rules should be aimed at the development of responsibilities.

It is also imperative for schools not only to put rules and policies in place but also to continuously and consistently articulate those rules, expectations, and procedures in classroom related situations. Hence, school rules must be clearly specified and communicated to learners and parents by means of newsletters, parents meetings and handbooks. In this regard Bray (2005:133) further points out that in terms of SASA, governing bodies of public schools have to adopt a code of conduct for learners. The code of conduct deals with learner discipline and prescribes disciplinary measures for learner misconduct. In essence, the code of conduct can be seen as a document that encompasses all the rules in the school that applies to learner disciplinary matters. It must be drafted and adopted in the correct manner, setting out the

disciplinary rules applicable to all learners and formulating measures for punishment in case of misconduct (Pienaar, 2003:264).

A code of conduct must also inform learners on the way in which they should conduct themselves in the classroom (Roos, 2003:489). It further promotes positive and good behaviour and sets standards for such behaviour. The disciplinary measures that are included in the code of conduct serve the purpose of promoting and maintaining a well-disciplined school environment and simultaneously, prohibiting and punishing unacceptable conduct through measures that also encourage the culprits to improve their behaviour (Bray, 2005:305). A school's code of conduct is a lawful way of limiting fundamental rights. A code of conduct promote proper and good behaviour and to set standards for positive discipline.

According to Morrell (2001:292), throughout the education system there had been an apparent reluctance to prosecute teachers, and it was only late in 2000 that the national Department of Education moved beyond public condemnation of teachers who continued to use corporal punishment.

In addition to the code of conduct Mestry, Moloi and Mahomed (2007:179) state that every school should have a disciplinary policy to ensure an effective teaching and learning environment. A disciplinary policy is a necessity for effective teaching and learning. Van Wyk (2001:198) says in this regard that many educators in South Africa have limited knowledge of disciplinary strategies and that most disciplinary measures tend to be reactive, punitive, humiliating and punishing rather than corrective and nurturing. It seems as if teachers continue to use corporal punishment. According to Mabebe and Prinsloo (2000) the use of these outdated and illegal methods of disciplining is strengthened by assertive and rebellious learners who challenge traditional concepts of classroom authority in particular.

2.4.2 The South African School Act, Act 84 of 1996

It is a well known fact that School Governing Bodies (SGBs) were constituted as a major vehicle for the democratic transformation of schools in terms of SASA and that parents constitutionally comprises the majority of SGB members (1996b:9-10). SGBs are not involved in the day-to-day running of schools, but they have to play a key role in policy matters such as the development of a code of conduct for learners as well as other school and classroom rules (Van der Bank, 2000:315). In the Department of Education's booklet (2000b:7), parents are informed that they have the responsibility to assist with the discipline of their children in schools. They should help to draw the code of conduct for learners.

SGBs are also involved in dealing with serious matters of discipline such as expulsion and suspension that also apply to classroom situations (Van Wyk 2001:200). Examples of these matters are discussed in more detail in paragraph 2.5.5.

2.4.3 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996

All learners have equal access to public quality education. In terms of section 29 of the constitution (RSA, 1996a:14) learners are guaranteed the right to free basic education. The bill of rights also contains specific protections of individuals against certain behaviour that could threaten a person's dignity and fundamental rights. In this regard section 28 of the constitution stipulates that every child has the right to be protected from abuse and maltreatment and to only be detained as a last measure of resort (RSA, 1996a:13-14).

Rossouw (2007:79) states in this regard that the founding values of the constitution, such as dignity and equality, are important when instituting learner discipline in schools. Obviously these rights and values apply to the classroom situation as well. In terms of section 12(1) (a) to (e) of the constitution (RSA, 1996b) everyone has the right to freedom and security, which includes the right not to be deprived of freedom arbitrarily or without just cause, to be free from all forms of

violence, not to be tortured, and not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhuman or degrading way. In line with this clause, corporal punishment has been abolished in South African schools. It is therefore imperative that educators make use of alternative and more humane disciplinary methods in their classrooms.

2.4.4 The South African Council of Educators Act, Act 31 of 2000

In terms of section 3(9) of the South African Council of Educators Act, Act 31 of 2000 (RSA, 2000b), an educator should use appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interaction with the learners, and act in a way that will elicit respect from learners. According to this clause, each learner has the right to respect from educators, other learners, administrators, and other school personnel, and may not be subjected to ridicule, harassment, or any punishment that is demeaning or derogatory. It often happens that educators make use of sarcasm in their classrooms, thereby subjecting the learners to ridicule. This is against the law, and if it is found that an educator is a perpetrator of disruptive behaviour through the use of sarcasm and physical abuse, he or she could be charged and disciplined according to sections 17 to 24 of the Employment of Educators Act (RSA, 1998), as amended by sections 11 to 15 of the Education Laws Amendment Act a. (RSA, 2000a).

2.4.5 The Education Laws Amendment Acts (2002, 2005, and 2007)

The Education Laws Amendment Acts of 2002, 2005 and 2007 amended section 8 and section 9 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, to strengthen measures and procedures for handling school ill-discipline. The Education Laws Amendment Act of 2002 (RSA, 2002:4) requires school governing bodies to ensure that learners are accompanied by parents during disciplinary hearings.

The Education Laws Amendment Act of 2005 (RSA, 2005:4) also requires school governing bodies to suspend a learner, who is alleged to have committed a serious misconduct only after a

fair hearing as a correctional measure. In the Education Laws Amendment Act of 2007 (RSA, 2007:6), it is further stipulated that the code of conduct for learners must provide for support measures or structures for counseling a learner involved in disciplinary proceedings.

2.4.6 Measures and procedures to handle misconduct

Kung and De Waal (2007:105) discuss the importance of having measures and procedures, such as section 9 of SASA in place that can be used in serious cases of misconduct in schools. The stipulations regarding suspension and expulsions from a public school are contained in this section. One must however keep in mind that suspension and expulsion are the last disciplinary resorts and are not always successful. The following requirements apply with regard to suspension and expulsion:

2.4.6.1 Suspension

Suspension refers to temporarily withdrawing a learner from normal classes. It is usually assigned to a learner as a form of punishment that can last from one day to a number of days during which time the learner cannot attend regular school lessons. Learners may be suspended by a school governing body after a fair hearing (Joubert & Squelch 2005:40). Learners' parents must be notified as to the reason for suspension. In terms of South African School Act 84 (1996: 11) offences that may lead to suspension include repeated violations of school rules and the code of conduct, infringement of examination rules, disrespect, objectionable behaviour and verbal abuse directed at educators or other school employee or learners, possession use, or unauthorised drugs, alcohol and intoxicants of any kind.

2.4.6.2 Expulsion

Expulsion is the removal of a learner permanently from the school. This action is generally only used as a last resort. According to Joubert and Squelch (2005:90), expulsion may be used in the case of very serious offences, and the Head of Department may remove a learner on a permanent basis from the school. Wolhuter and Steyn (2003:394) explain further that a learner may be expelled from a public school if he/she is found guilty of serious misconduct in terms of the

schools code of conduct. Typical examples of such cases of misconduct could include conduct which endangers the safety of others, fighting, assault or battering , bullying and intimidation of other learners (DoE, 1997:90). Expulsion of a learner is mostly carried out by SGB's of schools who act according to the norms of SASA.

In terms of South African School Act (RSA, 1996:12.1), a governing body may, after a fair hearing, suspend any learner who has been found guilty of contravening stipulations of the code of conduct:

- For a period of one week;
- for a reasonable period not exceeding one week, pending a decision by the Head of Department on the recommendation of the governing body as to whether or not the learner is to be expelled from the school;
- the parent of a learner who has been expelled may appeal against the decision of the Head of Department to the Member of the Executive Council, within seven days of the decision;
- in cases of disciplinary transfer, the Head of Department must find a school place for a learner until the learner is beyond compulsory school-going age, as the right of a learner to basic education cannot be violated; and
- all decisions leading to suspension or expulsion must take cognizance of applicable laws, example, a learner whose parent is unable to pay the school fees determined by the governing body may not be suspended from classes or expelled from the school.

2.4.7 Instituting formal disciplinary hearings

In the previous sub section it was mentioned that the processes of suspension and expulsion may only be instituted after a fair hearing has been conducted. The South African School Act 84 (1996: 13) makes provision for due process including a fair hearing before a learner may be suspended from the school by the governing body. Due process guarantees a learner a fair hearing before a learner may be suspended.

A formal disciplinary hearing should be instated in accordance with prescribed procedures which are based in the relevant legal framework. The principles of fairness and reasonableness do not apply only to the process to be followed, but also to the way in which arguments must be presented. The Department of Education (2001:20-27) states the following prescribed procedure and guidelines for formal disciplinary hearings.

2.4.7.1 Investigating alleged learner misconduct

The DoE (2001:27) states that the alleged offender must be given the opportunity to request the support of parents when making statements which could be self incriminating. Any learner alleged to have violated any rule that may require suspension or suspension, must be brought to the principal (RSA, 1996:13).

The principal must communicate the alleged misconduct brought against the learner to the SGB and inform both the learner and parents of the alleged misconduct. The principle that a person is innocent until proven guilty, must be maintained throughout the investigation. The tribunal (SGB representative, parents and victim learner and principal) must not be intimidating to the learner. In the case of young learners, special arrangements must be made for the hearing and the parents could represent the learner.

2.4.7.2 Issuing notice of the formal hearing

The accused learner and his/her parents must be given proper notice of the charges and formal hearing. A notice about the charges and formal hearing must be delivered in writing to the parents and the learner at least five working days before the actual formal hearing. The notice must include information about the alleged offence, as well as information about the time, place and date of the formal hearing. The principal must also warn the learner and his/her parents that

the hearing could result in the learner's expulsion from the school if found guilty of the offence (DoE, 2001:27).

2.4.7.3 Instituting a disciplinary committee

The disciplinary committee must conduct all hearings in accordance with the provincial regulations laid down by the member of the executive committee council. A disciplinary committee, consisting of at least three members from the governing body or community members must be instituted to act as impartial in the formal hearing. They must listen to both parties, maintain an open mind and be unbiased.

In terms of South African School Act 84(RSA, 1996:13.4) a learner should get the opportunity to be heard and to present the relevant facts. A learner should be treated with dignity during the process. A learner also has the right that only relevant information should be taken into consideration and that only reasonable decisions that are based on facts be taken. Decisions made by the tribunal must be made in good faith and without prejudice (DoE, 2001:27).

2.4.7.4 Conducting the hearing

The chairperson must determine whether the learner and his/her parents received a written charge and that they had read and understood it. The learner must also be given enough opportunities for questions and the clearing up of anything that is unclear.

A learner and his/her parents should be offered access to information in the possession of the school, which could be used in defense. Copies of affidavits must also be given to them. The seriousness of the charge and the possible punishment that can be given should be explained to the learner and his/her parents. They must also understand that all evidence can be tested through cross-examination (DoE, 2001:27).

During the hearing, the person in charge of the investigation must act as the prosecutor and read the charge aloud for record purposes. The chairperson must then give the learner the opportunity to plead “guilty” or “not guilty”. Should the learner plead “guilty”, the chairperson must still ask questions to obtain information in support of the plea. Should the learner plead “not guilty”, the following steps must be followed:

- The prosecutor must present the evidence from statements given by the witnesses and give them the opportunity to confirm their statements.
- Where the accused learner gives evidence, the prosecutor has the right to cross-examine the learner, or any other witness for the defense.

The parents and the learner must be informed in writing about the outcome of the hearing. In the case where the committee has recommended the expulsion of the learner, approval and endorsement of the verdict of expulsion of the learner must be received from the Head of Department (DoE, 2001:27).

2.5. MANAGEMENT OF CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

According to Moore (2009:360), classroom management is the process of organising and conducting the business of the classroom relatively free of behaviour problems. Classroom management is one of the most important management tasks that an educator is required to perform. An effective educator should create and maintain a classroom that communicates safety and order. This could be done through by modelling self- control, respect, caring and encouragement (see paragraph 2.2).

This section is linked to research question 1 and 2 that was defined in par 1.5 as the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline and which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom.

These research questions are addressed by an exposition of the following aspects that apply to the management of discipline in classrooms:

- Classroom management styles;
- classroom management processes; and
- classroom management strategies.

Management style has to do with the approach in which educators manage discipline in their classroom whereas management processes deal with the manner or steps which educators use to manage learner discipline. Management strategies deal with how educators put their management styles and processes together to manage classroom discipline in the context of this study.

2.5.1 Classroom management styles

Squelch and Lemmer (1994:56); Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1997:20); Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:142) as well as Zabel and Zabel (1996:124), distinguish the following three kinds of educator classroom management styles, namely autocratic or authoritative, democratic or participative, and a *laissez-faire* or permissive classroom management style.

2.5.1.1 An autocratic classroom management style

According to Squelch and Lemmer (1994:7) the educator who adopts this classroom management style prefers to do things his way, using his authority to get things done. This is because autocratic educators have a low opinion of human nature, and believe that learners cannot control their own behaviour. They believe that they must use their authority to control

learners by determining and enforcing standards of behaviour in the classroom. In this management style the educator becomes an authoritarian figure who exerts too much control, imposes strict rules, makes a great fuss over the most minor infringement of the rules, and tends to be paranoid about opposition to his /her authority.

While this style of leadership is characterised by one-way communication between the educators and is/her class and lack of harmonious relations, Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:144) maintain that it has the advantage of good performance. This management style implies that that learners work well in a strictly controlled learning environment; they do not take responsibilities for their actions; they tend to 'fear' certain educators, especially those who are authoritative; they lack self-control; and continue to misbehave despite the being subjected to beatings and sarcasm in their classes. This management style encourages learners to be rebellious, as they retaliate and show off their resistance.

The teaching-learning process revolves around these teachers. They play a leading role in the classroom situation. The authoritarian teacher assumes the sole responsibility for making all decisions. This kind of teacher often uses punishment and criticism and expects compliance from learners. The autocratic leader uses commands and is very dogmatic. Jackson (2002:57) argues that the approaches used by autocratic educators do not teach learners personal responsibility or self management. Instead, learners become ill-disciplined and uncooperative, and develop a negative attitude towards the learning areas, and some may refuse to go to school.

In this kind of atmosphere learners often develop a fear of failure, and show low self-esteem. They tend to give up when they encounter a new or difficult task. It is evident that an authoritative teacher demoralises learners to contribute to the smooth running of the classroom.

2.5.1.2 Democratic classroom management style

According to Zabel and Zabel (1996:124), democratic educators believe that learners can develop responsibility and self control. They use instructional approaches that establish an orderly and structured environment, and encourage learner involvement and participation. Squelch and Lemmer (1994:7) contend that an educator who adopts this classroom management style prefers shared decision –making and group problem solving methods. Such an educator motivates the individuals and encourages them to cooperate and be part of the decision –making process.

Zabel and Zabel (1996:124) argue that democrats balance the educator –directed and learner –centered activities so that they can assume more directive approaches to determine content and learning activities, while in some other instances learners would assume active roles in determining content and the nature of learning activities. In a democratically –led and managed classroom there is always sound and effective discipline .Furthermore, Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1997:22) contend that an educator who adopts this management style will let his /her learners take part in decision -making, in classroom policy, rules and procedures, the organisation of class activities, and the maintenance of order in the class. Learners should be involved in all issues that relate to them so that they may also regard themselves as part of the solutions to classroom-related behaviour problems. Educators should use instructional approaches that encourage learner –participation in the learning process so that their attention is not easily diverted, but remains focussed on the learning content.

According to Porteus et al. (2001:59) good classroom discipline is characterised by a democratic approach to discipline which emphasises shared responsibility in the thinking and decision making. They maintain that educators who effectively practice this democratic approach have more peaceful classrooms, they are firm yet kind.

2.5.1.3 A *laissez-faire* or permissive classroom management style

Permissive educators believe that if left alone, learners will make good decisions and behave favourably. Under this management style few rules are set and learners are allowed a great deal of freedom. They do more or less as they please. According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:142) the *laissez-faire* leadership style is characterised, among other things, by little attention to policy making, which leads to poor discipline. These educators realise too late that the *laissez-faire* approach of freedom without responsibility can lead to classroom chaos. This classroom management style, according to Kruger (2002:30), over-emphasises the human aspects of the teaching-learning situation. While it is true that no single classroom management style is 100% better than the others, the *laissez-faire* management style is more destructive, as it gives learners a free reign to do as they please. It is an undesirable approach, as it may lead to ineffective learning.

According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:142) these leaders are completely permissive. The classroom is often disorganised, which causes frustration. Learners do whatever is best for them irrespective of whether it is positive or negative. This leadership style tends to have a direct impact on the teacher classroom management and learner discipline.

It is quite glaring that all the above mentioned classroom management styles and approaches may be appropriate to use at different times depending on different situations in the classroom. According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:144), different people in different situations should use different styles. There is no particular classroom management style that is most perfect at all times in the classroom. During a group activity, for example, it would not be appropriate for an educator to apply the stringent rules as advocated in autocratic management style. An appropriate style would be *laissez-faire*, as it would afford learners the opportunity to make their own decisions at their own pace. Therefore, in applying suitable classroom management styles to foster teaching and learning, educators should be flexible enough to switch from one approach of classroom management style to the other as the different situations

demand. This flexibility of educators to classroom management styles could be referred to as the situational perspective of classroom management style.

2.5.2. Management processes in the classroom

Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1997:20) mention that there are three managing processes in the classroom which includes; planning, organising and control.

2.5.2.1 Planning

According to Coetzee, Van Niekerk and Wydeman (2008:27), planning is the point of departure for the teacher. It determines in advance which learning outcome must be achieved at a specific time in the future and how they will be achieved. For each learning area, the DoE predetermines the outcomes to be reached at the end of a certain level or grade. When planning, the educator has to work backwards from these outcomes, guiding learners towards achieving them at some or other stage in the future.

Educators should be well prepared, and they should know exactly what and how they will teach and have all required materials ready for learners

2.5.2.2 Organising

According to Coetzee et al. (2008:27) organising can be described as the creation of a mechanism to implement the planning previously discussed. Issues such as which activities to put into action, which resources to apply, how it should happen and who should be responsible, must be attended to for the educator, the management function amounts to the creation of an environment for effective teaching and learning.

According to Moore (2009:372), effective classroom management precedes organisation. Teachers do not have to select one approach over another. Classroom managers are able to blend together the best parts of different approaches.

2.5.2.3. Control

Coetzee et al. (2008:216) define control as discipline or order exercised over people, the system of rules used to maintain this control, and it is also equated with 'punishment'. It can be confusing if we want to distinguish between discipline and punishment. Perhaps it would help to regard punishment as part of discipline in that it constitutes the measures used to enforce and ensure discipline.

According to Moore (2009:360) controlling learners is one of the biggest concerns of most teachers. They fear classroom chaos and defiance. The teacher should give learners a voice in decision making. Learners can be given the opportunity to provide input in establishing classroom rules. This shared decision making, gives learners a stake in the educational process and a sense of ownership. Shared control does not mean learners do whatever they want, limits are established.

The manner how educators manage the processes of the classroom will determine whether the outcomes of the lessons will be achieved, and the climate of the classroom, which in turn will have influence on the attitudes and inclination of the class. Planning which serves as a point of departure for classroom management process covers a classroom discipline plan which clearly spells out the kind of behaviour educators expect their learners to display. Once planning is put in place, it provides avenues for setting the stage to organise strategies to implement the planned ideas. Through these two management processes can educator have control of the classroom in order to ease the achievement of learning outcomes in a disciplined classroom.

2.5.3 Management Strategies in the Classroom

Jones (1987: 9) regards management strategy as the ability to articulate a coherent framework, a set or over-arching to all the members of the classroom. This definition implicitly entails planning to be central to strategy. Davies (2003:295) regards strategy as a specific pattern of decisions and actions taken to achieve classroom goals. It deals with both medium and long term dimensions of the classroom rules. Sanyal and Martin (1992:1) define strategy as the determination of the basic, long term goals and objectives of an education system, the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out those goals.

This section provides the strategies employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom. It is important to note that strategies employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom will be based on knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that they acquired in one way or the other.

Disciplinary strategies in the classroom involve various and numerous strategies such as:

- Building a positive classroom climate;
- assertive discipline;
- teacher effectiveness training;
- negative discipline;
- detention;
- loss of privileges;
- isolation; and
- verbal violation.

2.5.3.1 Building a positive classroom climate

Kruger and Van Schalkwyk (1997:86) define classroom climate as the emotional and social state of the classroom situation that is related to aspects such as acceptance of the learners among themselves as members of the class group, the spirit of the group, the sense of the meaningfulness of the group and individual activities in the classroom, the nature of the structure and order in the classroom. Tiwane (2010:39) also states that the school climate will certainly influence the climate of each classroom, but each educator has the power and ability to create a particular climate within her classroom. Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:18) contend that effective educators create environments which maximize opportunities to learn.

Taylor (2004:58) advocates for the creation of positive and safe school and classroom climates where rules are systematically taught to all learners and correlated with the school's mission statement. It is also on the basis of the above that educators should establish discipline plans that clearly spell out how they expect their learners to conduct themselves in and outside their classroom.

According to Naong (2007:287), teachers are confronted with the challenge of trying to maintain discipline without unnecessary harshness, encouraging reasonable moral, thought and behaviour without indoctrination and maintaining order and control within the classroom and without adopting a pose of infallibility.

According to Agba and Agabo (2010: 184), teachers should endeavour to make their classroom a home where every learner is made to feel accepted and an important component of the classroom learning process. They can do this by ensuring a positive relationship between them and their learners. When this is done, it will enable learners to develop positive attitude and consequently associated high performance in accounting. Classroom rules could also build a positive classroom climate.

2.5.3.2. Setting Classroom rules

Coetzee et al. (2008:217) define classroom rules as rules that regulate the relationship between the educator and learners in the classroom. The Act (RSA, 1996b:5.1) also indicates that learners should be involved in the formulation of classroom rules and must conform to such rules. It must be consistent with the schools code of conduct and be posted in the classroom. Rules should be stated positively wherever possible. For example, the rules stating that learners must not run in the classrooms can be phrased positively by saying learners must walk in the classroom.

Barbetta, Norona and Bicard (2005:11) contend that classroom rules play a vital role in effective classroom management .They say that rules alone exert little influence over learner behaviour. They suggest that for classroom rules to be more effective, it should have four –to six rules that could govern most classroom situations.

They maintain that too many rules can make it difficult for learners to comply and for educators to enforce. Rules should be written at a level and in style that learners can understand .It is also important that learners not only accept rules but also feel positive about them (Edwards, 2000:208). In order to achieve this, educators need to help learners understand the values and necessity of the rules they create.

According to Edwards (2000:208) the following list of classroom rules might be created in this way:

- Treat all property with respect.- Protect textbooks and library books from damage ,ensure that school furniture and equipment are not abused, and ask permission to use someone else's property.
- Respect the right and needs of others.-When a learner works independently, he must do the work, be courteous to classmates and educators and use appropriate language.

- Take responsibility for learning.- complete all assignments on time, come prepared for examination, carefully listen to teachers and compare own thinking with what is taught, keep track of materials and bring them to class as directed, and do your best in all activities.
- Act in safe and healthy way. - Follow the laboratory safety rules, avoid tripping or hitting other learners, and go home after school.

2.5.3.3 Assertive discipline

Assertive discipline requires that educators should establish a systematic discipline plan prior to the start of the school year and then communicate expectations and consequences to the learners. Malmgren, Bervely and Peter (2005:36) provide the following four main components of assertive discipline:

- A set of consistent, firm and fair rules.
- A predetermined set of positive consequences for adhering to the rules.
- A prearranged set of negative consequences to be applied when rules are not followed.
- A plan to implement the model with the learners.

This strategy is based on the notion that learner's misbehaviour is an outcry of their unmet needs. One of the underlying assumptions of this model is that all learners desire and need social recognition (Malmgren et al. 2005:37).

2.5.3.4. Teacher effectiveness training

Charles (2002:86) urges educators to strive for cooperation with learners, while avoiding power punishment, praise and reward. Edwards (2000:152) supports Charles and says that when power-based discipline is enforced, learners engage in various coping mechanism in a quest to achieve some degree of autonomy or at least to make life more miserable for those trying to coerce them. Learners use resisting, defying, being negative, rebelling, breaking rules and bullying.

The new curriculum was introduced whereby teachers developed a new perspective and view of learners and their rights. Teaching methods also became more informal. These changes contribute to the inability of teachers to maintain discipline in their classes. According to Lessing and Dreyer (2007:120) teachers experience difficulties to cope with the lack of respect and responsibility, disobedience, aggression and rejection of authority manifested by some learners in their classrooms.

Toso (in Lessing and Dreyer, 2007:122) states that teachers need to develop a positive attitude towards classroom interaction and need to make a mind shift to enhance the development of responsibility in learners instead of applying rules to control learners.

Mestry, Moloi and Mahomed (2007:180) state that a variety of tools and strategies of learner discipline in the classroom should be applied. These include detention, additional homework, isolating learners from their classmates or suspension.

2.5.3.5 Negative discipline

Jaarsveld (in Lessing & Dreyer, 2007:121) indicates that learners receive twelve negative messages for each positive message per school day. These are disciplinary measures and ways of interacting with learners that may lead to rebelliousness and negativism.

However, in the real world, discipline and classroom rules are the responsibility of the teacher. Individual learner should realise that behaviour create both positive and negative consequences. The teacher's responsibility in this situation is to assist learners to learn self-discipline. This means that self-discipline can be learned. The teacher is developing good discipline amongst learners, and they should be able to produce desirable behaviour. Detention, loss of privilege, verbal violation and isolation are negative discipline.

2.5.3.6 Detention

This entails keeping learners in detention at break time or after school. Its main advantage is that it is widely disliked by most learners, but it can also serve as an inconvenience to the teacher. Learners are not able to play with others during break; they can either make up missing work or do some extra studying.

Joubert and Squelch (2005:89) state that detention is a form of punishment used in schools, where a learner is required to spend extra time in School at a time when he or she would not normally be required. Detention usually takes place during a period after the end of the school day, or other times such as breaks. Detention is typically carried out in a room that offers no amenities for leisure so that learners serving detention will have no outlet to distract them from punishment.

2.5.3.7 Loss of privileges

A student is denied enjoying privileges that other learners may enjoy. Its main advantage is that it can be seen as vindictive and unfair. An example of loss of privilege is when an educator denies a learner to accompany others during school trips. Joubert and Squelch (2005:55) state that learners may be punished by withdrawing certain privileges, for example, preventing them from participation in a sporting activity or in a music group.

2.5.3.8 Isolation

A learner may be isolated from the rest of the class by ignoring him, by making him sit to one side or standing while others are sitting down. The teacher might move learner's desk at the front of the class.

Lessing and Dreyer (2007:123) state that greater understanding of a learner's emotions in the classroom may reduce ill-discipline, the creation of a positive attitude, encouragement and approval supporting learners to free themselves from behavioural roles that may impede their development.

2.5.3.9. Verbal violation

According to Ferreira and Badenhost (2007:71) it is difficult for some teachers to find an alternative to corporal punishment. Verbal violation sometimes takes the place of physical violation. Educators have to talk to learners instead of scolding and admonishment in order to establish more positive behavioural patterns.

2.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

Van Wyk (2001:200) contents that if South Africans are to have a positive culture of learning and teaching in their schools, the learning environment will have to be safe, orderly and conducive to learning. For this to take place, the departmental officials have to provide the schools with the necessary support, while school principals should provide active leadership as they manage a culture of positive behaviour. Such exposition of active leadership would require firm, co-ordinated and planned actions in the implementation of the general code of conduct for learners as well as school ethics.

On the other hand, educators should prepare well for their lessons so that such lessons undertaken can run smoothly and disciplined. Educators should acknowledge that learners admire and respect those educators who hold high expectations and standards, as long as they do so humanely. Educators should therefore realise that a classroom climate free of misconduct, and based on mutual respect within which learners feel safe and affirmed will decrease the need for disciplinary action, and develop the learner's abilities to practice self-discipline.

From the literature it is clear that schools should develop school-wide discipline plans involving all the relevant stakeholders, in order to be able to effectively manage learner behaviour, and to prevent school disciplinary problems. School involves more than just educators in classrooms; it involves a holistic approach where a number of people are involved.

Managing classroom discipline requires all stakeholders such as Department of Education, parents, educators and learners to be actively involved in maintaining discipline and reducing bad behaviour of learners in the school and classroom. Planned actions in the implementation of the code of conduct for learners should be provided. The achievement of a sound culture of teaching and learning depends on the involvement of all stakeholders. Educators should therefore realise that classroom climate should be based on mutual respect where learners would feel safe and affirmed. This will decrease the need for disciplinary action and develop the learner's abilities to practice self-discipline.

The next chapter focuses on research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on a review of related literature on the nature, categorization and causes of disciplinary problems in classrooms, the legal framework for managing classroom discipline, and management of classroom discipline in the South African education system. This chapter will focus on the research design, research strategy, and research methods employed in the study. The validity and reliability of data and research ethical considerations will also be highlighted.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:70) research design is a plan or strategy which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques to be used in the study, and the data analysis to be done. Therefore selecting a research design for this study was based on getting the best possible data from respondents on the topic. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:30) contend that research design describes the procedures for conducting the study, including when, from whom, and under what conditions the data will be obtained. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:78) state that research design is governed by the notion of fitness of purpose. This means that research design is determined by the purpose of the research. According to Mouton (2004:55) research design is tailored to address different kinds of questions. When one attempts to classify different kinds of studies, it is not surprising that it is done according to the kind of questions that have to be answered. In

this research study, the worldview of the participants (educators and learners) were explored in their natural setting with the view of understanding how educators manage behaviour and how learners respond.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:133) state that to answer some research questions, the researcher cannot skim across the surface, the researcher must dig deep to get a complete understanding of the phenomenon he/she is studying. In qualitative research, researchers do indeed dig deep. They collect numerous forms of data and examine them from various angles to construct a rich and meaningful picture of a complex, multifaceted situation. That is why research questions such as:

- What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?
- Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?
- Which disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators? What are the causes that contribute to classroom discipline problems?
- What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?

These questions are investigated in the study to get in-depth views of classroom management and discipline.

Since the main purpose of this research is to investigate the phenomenon of managing classroom discipline in Ngaka Modiri Molema District, with sub-objectives of:

- Determining the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline in Ngaka Modiri Molema District;
- determining strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom, to state and describe disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators in the classroom,

- exploring and investigating causes that contributes to classroom discipline problems; and to
- make recommendations and guidelines on the findings of the study with regard to managing classroom discipline.

The study focuses on a qualitative research design to carry out the empirical investigation. Punch (2009:112) indicates that research design situates the researcher in the empirical world, and connects the research question to data. Therefore the research design is the basic plan for the research.

3.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Research is conducted by making use of a particular approach or paradigm. A research paradigm is an all-inclusive system of interconnected practice and philosophy that define the nature of the investigation for along three elements of ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Terre Blanch et al. 2006:6). The two broad main conceptual frameworks of research paradigms are qualitative and quantitative research paradigm (Punch, 2009:114). The researcher regarded the qualitative approach as important to this study as most of the descriptions and interpretations are portrayed in words rather than numbers (Punch, 2009:3). The focus of attention is on the perceptions and experience of educators in managing classroom discipline. According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:78) qualitative research is naturalistic. Thus, the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest. In other words, research is carried out in real-life situations and not in an experimental situation.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:395) define qualitative research as an interactive inquiry in which researchers collect data in face to face situations by interacting with selected persons in

their environment. Creswell (2007:37) states that a qualitative approach involves the collection of data in a natural setting that should be sensitive to the people and places under study, and a data analysis that is inductive as well as establishing patterns or themes.

According to Creswell (2007: 38), the following characteristics provides for qualitative research:

- The researcher is a key instrument; applying the characteristic to this study, the researcher is the one who personally gathers the information.
- Secondly, there are multiple sources of data; in this study, the researcher gathers multiple forms of data through interviews, observations and documents, rather than relying on a single data source.
- Thirdly, there is interpretive enquiry; in the analysis of the enquiry of this study, the researcher interprets what she sees, hears and understands.
- Lastly, in qualitative research, participants attach their meaning to their responses. Throughout the research process, the researcher tried to keep a focus on learning and mastering the meaning that the participants hold about managing classroom discipline and related challenges experienced and not the personal meaning that the researcher brings to the research.

These characteristics of qualitative research as highlighted by Creswell (2007:37-38) became guidelines for this study in the sense that the researcher personally gathered information using interviews and observations as data collecting techniques.

Johnson and Christensen (2004:359) define qualitative research as research relying primarily on the collection of non- numerical data such as words and pictures. Ary et al. (2006:450) assert that qualitative research relies on the inductive mode of the scientific method and the major objective of this type of research is exploration or discovery. Schulze (2002:80) asserts that qualitative researchers do not aim at the generalisation of results, but at the extension of understanding .This study was descriptive, in so far it involved collecting data to answer questions concerning the

status of the subject of the study. According to Mcmillan and Schumacher (2001:397) a descriptive research study is aimed at describing and explaining the patterns related to the phenomenon by scrutinizing the events, beliefs, attitude and policies that impact on the phenomenon under investigation. Creswell (2007:37) holds that qualitative research begins with assumptions, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiry into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

Qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. Creswell (2007:37) states that a qualitative approach to inquiry involves the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:396) qualitative research is based on constructivist philosophy that assumes reality as a multilayer, interactive and a shared social experience interpreted by individuals. Qualitative research believes that reality is a social construction, that is individuals or groups derive meaning from specific entities, such as events, persons, process or objects. Since this study is concerned with the way educators managed learners discipline in their classrooms, the qualitative research method was employed to explore and gain an in-depth understanding of educators and learners perceptions towards existing classroom discipline management strategies and what can be done to improve existing practices.

All qualitative approaches have two things in common. Firstly, they focus on phenomena that occur in natural settings, that is, in the real world. And secondly, they involve studying phenomena in their complexity. Whilst many authors differ on the definition of qualitative research, they agree on the purpose of qualitative research. Babbie and Mouton (2004: 278) state that qualitative research focuses on studying human action in its natural context and through the perspective of the actors themselves.

3.3.2 Research Strategy

Qualitative data analysis is usually generated based on an interpretive philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of the qualitative data. According to Maree (2010:99), interpretive research tries to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences. In this study it focuses on educators and learners on managing classroom discipline, in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon. Interpretive research strategy is best achieved through the process of inductive analyses of qualitative data where the main purpose is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the raw data without the restraints imposed by a more structured theoretical orientation.

The research strategy for this study is an interpretive research approach. According to Henning and Van Rensburg (2004:21) an interpretive research is concerned with meaning and seeks to understand a member's definition and understanding of situations. An interpretive research thus seeks to produce descriptive analyses that emphasises deep interpretive understanding of social phenomena. In this study, the researcher sought to understand how participants, who are educators and learners, convey their knowledge, perception, experiences, understanding, attitudes and make meaning of the phenomenon managing discipline in the contemporary classroom.

3.4 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Best and Kahn (2003:12) define a population as any group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that is of interest to the researcher. De Vos et al. (2002:198) indicate that the selection of a population for a study refers to taking any portion of a general population as representative of that population. Therefore, everybody in the general population cannot be part of a study, but the views of the selected portion of a population can be generalised to the

general population. Tiwane (2010:70) contends that selection processes are used to determine who and what the researcher is going to study. The first step in designing is to choose the population that would participate in the study.

The population for this study is learners and educators of all primary schools within the Mahikeng APO. There are 54 primary schools in Mahikeng area office and they will be involved in this study. Central focus is on discipline management in the classroom amongst learners and educators of the 54 primary schools in the Mahikeng APO. The majority of educators in this area live in urban area such as Mmabatho and Danville.

3.5 SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

According to Tiwane (2010:70) sample comprises of elements with most features, representative of the typical attributes of the population. Sampling is defined by Zikmund (2000:338) as a process of using a small number of items or parts of a large population to make conclusion about the whole population. Nieuwenhuis (2010: 79) states that sampling refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for the study. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007:146) contend that in qualitative research, a sample of a population is selected for any given study. Terre Blanche et al. (2006: 49) define sampling as the selection of research participants from an entire population and involve decisions about which people, settings, events, behaviours and social processes.

A sample is a proportion of a population or an element of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study (De Vos, 2001:146). Sampling to this effect according to Maree (2010:79) refers to the process used to select a portion of the population for study. The reason for sampling in this study is feasibility, that is, time, money and effort can be concentrated to produce better quality research and get more in-depth information. According to Moles and Huberman (as cited

in Punch, 2001:54), “all empirical research involves sampling as one cannot study everyone, everywhere, doing everything”. For qualitative research, sampling is generally based on non-probability and purposive sampling rather than probability and random sampling approaches.

Since this research is of qualitative orientation, focus is on these two sampling techniques (non-probability and purposive sampling). According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:79) purposive sampling means that the participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that make them the holders of data needed for the study. Nieuwenhuis (2010:79) further states that purposive sampling decisions are not only restricted to the selection of participants but also involve the settings, incidents, events and activities to be included for data collection. Purposeful sampling, as a dominant strategy in the qualitative approach, has been adopted for this particular study. The general characteristic that requires the participants to be purposefully selected in this study is that the selected educators and learners to the study have experienced challenges with disciplinary issues and related managing strategies. The participants who are educators have at least five years of teaching experience during which they had experienced classroom discipline problems and are also members of disciplinary committees of their schools. The participants who are learners are prefects in the schools.

In this study, the researcher purposefully selected two primary schools. Two learners and two educators were selected from each of the selected schools. Thus, the total sample population is eight participants. Four from each school took part in the study. The defining characteristic for selecting the participating primary schools were primary schools that are in the researcher’s area of work. These schools were selected for convenience purposes. In each school; the researcher used purposive sampling and selected the educators and learners that could provide the best information for the research. The researcher is the deputy principal of one of the primary schools. The other school is the neighbouring school that is easily accessible.

Educators are in a good position to provide information in relation to most of the research questions. This is because one of the primary aims of the study is to find out the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline and determine strategies which they currently employed to establish discipline in the classroom. On the other hand, learners too have to provide information to confirm what the educators are saying. In order to have learners participate effectively, the researcher had to seek learners with experience of disciplinary issues. This was done to ensure that the effects of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds on classroom discipline are reflected in the study. These schools were chosen as a research site because the strategy that educator were using to engage their learners in learning activities and the manner in which educator manage learners' behaviour could serve as an example for other schools in Ngaka Modiri Molema District.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection involves the different techniques a researcher uses to gather information in research writing. There are three possible approaches to obtaining data in qualitative study: Firstly, you can observe learners and teachers as they work, secondly, you could verbally request information, and thirdly you could read or look for traces of other evidence to verify whatever you are investigating (Wilson & Fox, 2009:76). With interpretive approach, a variety of data collection methods may be employed such as interviews producing narrative data, literature survey, document analysis, reflective journals and field notes, participant and non participant observation, focus group interviews and ethnographic field work (Creswell, 1994:12). In this study the following data collection methods were used, namely observation, interviews and document analysis.

3.6.1 Interviews

Niewenhuis (2010:86) define an interview as a two way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participants. The aim of qualitative interviews is to see the world through the eyes of participants. Biggs and Coleman (2007: 208) share a similar definition and view an interview as a preferred tactic to explore people's views and report findings in their own words as reasonable as possible. Thomas (2009:162) states that interview questions can take the form of open and closed-ended questions. Open ended questions allow respondents to reply in whatever way they wish. Terre Blanch and Durrheim (1999:127) maintain that interviewing gives the researcher the opportunity to get to know the participants quite intimately as one will know how they think and feel. The purpose of interviews is to find out what is on someone else's mind. Participants were asked open-ended questions with the objective of not suggesting responses, but to access the perspective of the person being interviewed. Interviews are conducted to find out from people those things that cannot be directly observed like feelings, thoughts and intentions.

In collecting qualitative data through open-ended interviews, the researcher also recorded direct words of the interviews. Direct quotations are a basic source of raw data in qualitative inquiry, revealing respondents' depth of emotion, the way they have organized their worlds, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences and their basic perceptions. According to De Vos et al. (2002:292) qualitative interviews attempt to understand the world from the participant's points of view, to unfold the meaning. An interview is a flexible tool for data collection because it allows the interviewer to make adjustments as the situation requires.

Various types of interviews, such as structured and unstructured interviews can be distinguished in research studies. In the structured interview, the researcher takes the lead in the interview schedule and types of questions, while in the unstructured interview, the researcher conducts the interview without preconceived ideas. In this study, the researcher used in-depth, unstructured, individual interviews. The in-depth individual interview used in this study is sometimes called

the informal conversation or unstructured interview (Punch, 2009:147) as questions are not pre-formulated or identified before the interview takes place, but are developed spontaneously in the course of the interactions with the interviewer. It is used as way of understanding the complex behaviour of people without imposing any prior categorization which might limit the field of inquiry.

In-depth individual interviews to this study involved asking open-ended questions, listening to and recording answers, and following up answers with additional relevant questions (Bless and Smith, 2000:1). In this kind of interviewing, the researcher limited his contribution to an absolute research question as a starting point to gain an in-depth understanding of participant's experience and opinions on managing classroom discipline, challenges involved and strategies that can be put in place to foster effective classroom discipline practices. From the central research question, follow up questions were pursued and probing was used to gain inside in the study. When respondents deviated from the topic, the interviewer tactfully steered them back (Schulze, 2002:61).

Four sets of in-depth individual interviews were conducted with the educators and learners from each of the two selected schools within the Mahikeng Area Project Office, i.e. two sets of individual interviews per school (one for two educators and one for two learners in each school). In all, eight individual in-depth interviews were conducted in this study.

3.6.2. Observation

Nieuwenhuis (2010:83) state that observation is the systematic process of recording the behavioural patterns of participants, objects and occurrences without necessarily questioning or communicating with them. Observation as a data collection technique is different from interviews in the sense that the observation techniques relies on the researchers seeing, hearing things and recording, rather than relying on the subject's responses to the questions and their

statements. According to Cohen et al. (2007:396) observation offers a researcher the opportunity to gather live data from naturally occurring situations. It is characterised as non-interventionist, where the researcher does not seek to manipulate the situations or subjects, does not pose questions for the subjects, nor deliberately create new provocations. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:40-41), the researcher does not collect data to answer a specific hypothesis; rather the explanations are inductively derived from the field notes.

According to De Vos et al. (2002:280) participant observation refers to a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular community or situation. It further enables the researcher to obtain the participants perception of events and processes expressed in participants' actions as feelings, thought and beliefs. Observation as a data gathering technique in this study involves the observation of the classrooms of selected educators in the participating schools to witness practically how they handle classroom discipline. Issues that required critical attention to the observer included learners interruption of lessons, classroom disruption, defiance of authority during the general teaching and learning and educators strategies towards handling the above mentioned ill-disciplined behaviours.

The type of observation used for this study is the observant as a participant model which Maree (2010:85) describes as a researcher getting into a situation but focuses mainly on his or her role as an observer in the situation. The researcher only looked for patterns of behaviour amongst the educators and learners in the classroom to understand the assumptions, values, beliefs and experience in managing classroom discipline. But the researcher remained uninvolved and did not influence the dynamics of the setting. After observation, the researcher presented a thick description of what actually took place without criticizing judgments and reflecting on the process.

Both the researcher and the participants were aware of the fact that a field work relationship existed between them. To allow the flow of activities in a natural setting, the researcher tried to

gain the trust of the participants. Throughout the observation period in this study, the researcher remained on site for a direct, eyewitness account of the actions and settings before the school started until the end of the school day. As mentioned in previous paragraphs, the study targets two primary schools in the Mahikeng APO of the Ngaka Modiri Molema district and the researcher observed the strategies of classroom discipline management in two classrooms in each of the selected schools, making a total of 4 lessons observed.

3.6.3. Document analysis

According to Thomas (2009:170) gathering data from documents represents an entirely different proposition from gathering data from people. Nieuwenhuis (2010:83) contends that when a researcher use documents as a data gathering technique, he/she should focus on all types of written communication that may shed light on the phenomenon that the researcher is investigating. Written data may include published and unpublished documents, reports, memoranda, agendas, administrative documents, letters and reports, or any documents that is connected to the investigation. In selecting the documents to be analysed in this study, the researcher aligned to the ideas of Nieuwenhuis (2010:82) suggests that in selecting documents for research, the researcher must verify the following:

- What kind of document is he/she dealing with?
- What is the publication date?
- What was the purpose or intent of the document?

According to Henning and Van Rensburg (2004:98) many novice researchers are inclined to use documents only for their content value. Data from the documents are also the main analytical tool in the research process. Documents of a private nature, such as diaries need to be treated with the utmost care and with the full ethical implications in mind. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:451) artifacts are tangible manifestations that describe people's experience, knowledge in the form of personal documents such as letters and objects. Ary, Jacobs, Razavien

and Sorensen (2006:482) define documents as a wide range of written, physical and visual materials.

For the purpose of this research, the researcher had to analyse the classroom policies of selected schools, their code of conduct for learners and school policies. These documents were analysed to enable the researcher to correlate findings of the supposed strategies for educators in managing discipline as in the policies with the findings of the interviews and observation. There is need to find out if the ways in which educators perceive and manage discipline in their classrooms is in conformity to the code of conduct for learners and educators in the school and according to the policies of the school. Analysis of classroom rules, disciplinary policies, code of conduct for learners and educators and school policies will provide the measuring rod to evaluate the extent to which educators are conversant with managing classroom discipline.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:99) qualitative data analysis techniques is an ongoing and iterative process. This implies that the collection, processing, analysing and reporting of data are intertwined. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:467) contend that data analysis implies the integration of operations of organising; analysing and interpreting data. Once the data from interviews and observation have been collected, the next stage involves the analysing of data. Obviously the researcher had to work through the data to arrive at conclusions. According to Struwig and Stead (2004:169) data analysis methods enable a researcher to organise and bring meaning to a large amount of data. All the field notes, interview transcripts and documents should be available and completed. In this study, analysing data will be managed by breaking down data into four key stages: Organising data, coding, summarising data, transcribing and capturing data.

3.7.1. Transcribing and saving data

Audio tapes were transcribed verbatim. Nieuwenhuis (2010:104) states that all data collected by electronic or digital means must be transcribed. This was done by the researcher and will include some non-verbal cues in the transcript. Once the data was typed and sorted, the researcher made a copy of all of it and save data in a separate file.

3.7.2. Organising data

Organising data is a large process of cutting and sorting. According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:104) fields notes, video recordings, interviews and observations tend to be very lengthy and require intensive examination, understanding and reading. In order to keep a clear mind and not become overwhelmed by the sheer of the data, researchers need to approach data analysis in a highly organised manner. In this study, the researcher decided to familiarise herself with the collected data by rereading the field notes of the observation and interview notes and transcripts, continuously reviewing the documents that were required for analysis, and listening repeatedly to audiotapes. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:468) state that developing an organising system entails dividing the data into segments in order to create meaning. Thus, the researcher divided data into smaller segments relating to the research aims and research questions.

3.7.3. Coding data

According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:105) coding is the processes of carefully reading through transcribed data and dividing it into meaningful analytical units. Coding is therefore defined as marking the segments of data with symbols, descriptive words. It simply means that whenever a researcher finds a meaningful segment of text in a transcript, the researcher assign a code to signify that particular segment. For example, a coded interview will be as follows: Narrative from interview with educators (E) by researcher (R).

Coding was utilised for the purpose of data organisation. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:466) describe coding as the translation of question responses and respondent information to specific categories for the purpose of analysis. After coding all data, the researcher will place all units which have the same coding together. Struwig and Stead (2004: 169) state that codes should be interpreted within a certain context and in relationship to other codes. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:466) contend that coding is the process of dividing data into parts by a classification system.

In this study the researcher noted regularities in the setting and people chosen for study. The categories created were confirmed to be internally consistent but distinct from one another. Text segments that contain meaning units were identified, and a label created for a new category into which the text segment is assigned. Emerging categories were distinguished between upper and lower categories. Upper level categories were derived from research aims and sub-divided into research objectives derived from research aim. Data relating to how educators are conversant with legal framework for managing classroom discipline were grouped separately. Data that dealt with strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom were also categorized separately. Separate categories were allocated for data relating to disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators in the classroom. Lower level categories were derived from multiple readings of the raw data. Categories were created from meaning units and actual phrases used in specific text segments.

After transcribing data and haven't identified sentences and paragraphs from a transcribed interview that supported the story line (managing classroom discipline) underlined, central facts supporting the central theme of strategies used in maintaining classroom discipline, challenges encountered by educators in managing classroom discipline and strategies that could be put in place to enforce correct classroom discipline management principles were identified and sub-categorised. This enabled the researcher to realise the saturation of data when repetitive theme occurred. Thomas (2003:4) advises that researchers should search for sub-topics within each

category, including contradictory points of view and new insights. In such cases, the researcher would select appropriate quotes that convey the core theme or essence of a category. He further advises that the categories may be linked under a super ordinate category when the meanings are similar. The categories that have been identified in this study make up the essence of what the respondents conveyed.

After reading through the transcript on the separate categories created according to the different objectives derived from the main aim of the study, the researcher underlined those phrases in the data that provided new insight and core theme to the categories. In underlying key phrases, similar phrases were merged and outstanding phrases provided for sub-topics to the study. Emerging categories from the raw data were used as topics in the findings of the research.

3.7.4. Summarising data

According to Ary et al. (2006:499) the researcher will examine all entries with the same code and then merge these categories into patterns by finding links among them. The researcher investigated the strategies of managing learner discipline in the classroom; she then coded the data into categories of research questions as follows:

- Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators?
- What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?
- What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?
- Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?

3.8. TRUSTWORTHINESS

Trustworthiness refers to the way in which the inquirer is able to persuade the audience that the findings in the study are worth paying attention to (Maree 2010:299). This aspect is of utmost importance in qualitative research. The researcher needs to stick to recognised procedures to ensure the trustworthiness of the data analysis. Inviting individuals to participate in research means that the researcher must protect participants from harm and violation of privacy, whilst at the same time maintaining the integrity of the research and its ethical standards. The researcher pertaining to this study made sure that the participants fully comprehend the nature and outcomes of the research and they were assured anonymity and confidentiality. According to Bless, Higson-Smith, and Kagee (2006: 143), researchers usually assign a number to a participant's data instead of participant's name to ensure that the data remain anonymous. To ensure all these, the names of participants were not mentioned and participants were not forced to participate.

According to Tiwane (2010:74), trustworthiness of the research results, refers to their validity and denotes that readers of the research may believe what the researcher has reported. There are a few further pointers that researchers do to enhance the trustworthiness of their research, that is, verifying raw data and validating findings avoiding generalisation, triangulation strategies and reliability of the study.

3.8.1. Verifying raw data and validating findings

Maree (2010:299) describes internal validity as the accurate presentation of a particular event described by the researcher. According to Nieuwenhuis (2010:113) at the completion of interviewing or other data collection strategies, the researcher could submit transcript or field notes to the participant to correct errors of fact. During subsequent interviews with participants, the researcher may ask them to verify the data gathered in earlier interviews as to verify whether interpretation of what they have shared is correct.

Validating and verifying findings may be done by providing copies of a draft report to the participant and asking for written or oral comments on the report. Therefore, one way of establishing validity in a study is taking one's findings back to the subjects being studied to verify. This is called respondent validation. In this study, findings were taken back to the educators and learners of the participating schools for them to verify if what was captured was actually what they said. The same applies in the case of using observation as criteria for collecting data; the researcher used the member checking strategy. Maree (2010:86) refers to member checking as a situation where the researcher verify his/her understanding of what has been observed with those observed. All of the respondents confirmed that the data was captured accurately.

3.8.2. Reliability of the study

Reliability in qualitative research is regarded as a fit between what researcher's record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched, which is the degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of the coverage of the investigation process. It refers to what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being searched. The researcher triangulated all data collected during the research process, including the results of the interviews, field notes in order to search for common themes to provide reliable findings. The researcher strived to eliminate any bias that might be brought to the study by constantly reflecting on the research process.

Neuman (2003:184) adds to his definition of reliability the issue of dependability. Dependability of data was established by capturing all interviews on a tape recorder and transcribing it into writing form. During the transcription exercise, the researcher decided to eliminate only those parts of the respondent's stories that were not commensurate with the research topic or had no significance to the research. Attempts were however made to reproduce the interview scripts as accurately as possible. Following the transcription, the researcher listened again to the tapes while reading the transcript. Furthermore, the interviews were unbiased and the researcher took care not to ask leading questions or to be over-impressionistic in observations.

3.9. RESEARCH ETHICS

McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 420) state that qualitative research needs to be sensitive to ethical principles because of the research topic, face to face interactive data collection process, an emergent design, and reciprocity with participants. According to Babbie (2008: 66-69) ethical consideration is typically associated with morality and deals with matters of right and wrong. Goddard and Melville (2001:49) contend that collecting data from people raises ethical concerns, including taking care to avoid harming people, having due respect and dignity for their privacy and not subjecting them to unnecessary research. Research ethics as outlined by Bless et al. (2006:140) helps to prevent research abuses and assists investigators in understanding their responsibility as ethical scholars. Research ethics places an emphasis on the humane and sensitive treatment of research participants who may be placed at varying degrees of risk by research procedures.

Ethical guidelines include informed consent and voluntary participation, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. In this study, permission was obtained from all participants (see Appendix B). All parties were informed regarding the aims of the research project, research methods, and nature of participation, confidentiality, and possible publication of results. Participants' anonymity as well as voluntary participation in the research project was also assured. They were informed that they might withdraw their participation at any time without my penalty to them.

3.9.1. Informed consent and voluntary participation

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 421) informed consent is regarded as a dialogue and procedure in which individuals choose whether to participate after being informed of the purpose of the study and facts that would influence their decisions. Maree (2010: 300) emphasises that during the follow-up interview, the researcher must present the participant with a

letter of consent (see appendix 2 for letter of consent) in which the research will be described. The researcher will request the participant to read the letter, ask questions to gain clarity and sign the consent form if she /he is willing to be involved in the research. Participants will once again be reminded that they may withdraw at any time during the process if they wish to do so.

Maree and Van der Westhuisen (2010:41) state that it is important to highlight the ethical considerations with regard to the research. An essential ethical aspect is the issue of the findings of the study and the protection of the participant's identity. This could include obtaining permission to be interviewed and an undertaking to destroy audiotapes afterwards. The researcher familiarised herself with the ethics policy of the relevant institution. According to Thomas (2009:149) an important concept when considering the ethics of research is that of consent (see appendix B).

3.9.2. Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality is an ethical requirement in most research. According to Burns (in Maree, 2010:301) both the researcher and participant must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study. Participants were briefed of the nature and purpose of the study and it was agreed that participants' information and responses shared during the study were kept private and the results were presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants. Johnson and Christensen (2004:112) state that anonymity and confidentiality is important to avoid connecting the participant with any information that would be embarrassing or harmful.

3.10. SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the research design followed in this study. It was indicated that a research design is simply a map showing how the research will unfold. This study has adopted the

qualitative research design and an interpretive research strategy was used to answer the research questions.

Methods used for data collection, analysis and interpretation were all outlined. This chapter further outlined the study's approach to trustworthiness in order to render the results acceptable to other researchers and readers.

The subsequent chapter dealt with presentation and interpretation of the empirical data.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter discussed the research design of this study, the methods of recording and analyses of data were also discussed. The present chapter will focus on the presentation and interpretation of research data obtained from interviews, observation and documents analysis. It will describe and present an insight in understanding of educators' and learners' views and perceptions regarding the management of discipline in the classrooms of schools in the Mahikeng Area Project Office of the North West province.

The findings of the study on managing classroom discipline will unfold in different sections in chapter four. The data will be analysed in terms of the purpose of the investigation and categorised according to the four research questions into four interrelated themes. The researcher will report only on what is deemed significant for the purpose and objectives of the study.

4.2 INTERPRETATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Interpretation means relating one's results and findings to existing theoretical frameworks or models and showing whether these are supported or falsified by the new interpretation. It also means taking into account rival explanations or interpretations of one's data and showing what levels of support the data provide for the preferred interpretation (Mouton, 2002:109). Jacelon and O'Dell (2005:219) note that the successful interpretation of the data depends on the researchers' ability to creatively identify the findings.

Interpretation of data in this study was informed by the educators and learners experience and theoretical views of managing discipline in an educational environment and precisely in the classroom and the belief that deficiency in the management of classroom discipline is as results of lack of skills and training on how to undertake the function and may have negative consequences on teaching and learning in the classroom.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

In analysing the data, the researcher started by transcribing the recorded interviews. The whole transcript was read several times in order to get a sense of the interviews as a whole before dividing them into parts to determine emerging categories and themes. Similar topics were clustered together in all the interviews. Data were compared to established themes, trends and patterns. Emerging themes, trends and patterns were identified and written down. Emerging themes were cross-referenced with the research questions to ensure that the investigation stayed on track. The themes were categorised into topics. Related topics were categorised and data materials belonging to each category were grouped together. In this clean step-down, well-ordered process, the researcher is confident that the insight of the information this study is pursuing will be attained (see paragraph 3.7).

On this positive stand of confidence, the researcher beliefs that the coding process in inductive, qualitative analysis (as indicated in paragraph 3.2.6) is the best data analysis process in this study. It provided the study with findings which presents the innermost feelings in the expression of participants as they speak out visual words that carry their real feelings in their own words which are used in reported speech in many parts of the presentation of the findings in the next chapter and beyond.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL DATA

Research data was presented and discussed in three sections, firstly, data from interviews, secondly, data from analysed documents and thirdly, data from observations.

4.4.1 ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM INTERVIEWS

As explained in paragraph 3.7, the data collected from the interviews together with the reflections made by the researcher is categorized according to the four research questions, namely:

- Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators?
- What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?
- What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?
- Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?

As mentioned in paragraph 3.7, the analysis of this empirical investigation based on the main categories that emerged from data collected during the interviews which were aligned to the above research questions to the study, were organised and discussed under the following main headings:

- The concept discipline
- Classroom disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators.
- Guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom.
- Extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline.

- Disciplinary strategies currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom.
- Suggested strategies for managing classroom discipline

The findings discussed under each main heading are presented in sub-headings aligned to the sub-categories that emerged from the interview data and. The above specified headings capture and answer the research questions to the study.

4.4.1.1 The concept “discipline”

What is your understanding of the concept ‘Discipline’ as applicable in your school?

One participant indicated his understanding and application of the concept “discipline” in his school to mean “a child or adult must behave well at school and everywhere, even to an adult, if this is not done, then the child is not disciplined.” Another participant view attributed the concept discipline to “respect and kindness, good learner behaviour within the classroom, school and at home, good conduct, respect for oneself and others in school.” A more insight view of the concept discipline was indicated in the following statement as “the behaviour expected of learners in school that enhance learning to take place and for learners to concentrate in class through guidance and motivation.”

The response from the participants indicated that they are aware of and apply the root meanings attached to the concept of discipline in their respective school. The responses centred on the way in which the code of conduct for learners and educators are enforced in schools with the aim of establishing a purposeful learning climate. With the indication in mind that the participants are conversant with the concept of discipline, the study sought to find out the challenges faced in applying the concept in different classrooms.

4.4.1.2 Classroom disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators

Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators in your school?

Participants indicated the following to be the persisting classroom disciplinary challenges currently face by educators in classroom in the area. Display of inadequacy, power seeking, attention getting, revenge seeking, learners not doing their schoolwork, absenteeism, disruption of classes by noise making, learners not doing their home work, learners bullying fellow learners and even educators, learners moving in and out of the class without permission; like going to the toilet without permission, coming late to class, playing in the classroom, disrespecting teachers, using assaultive words to one another and even to teachers, lack of corporation in class especially during group work. A participant to this question went further to identify that certain challenges in the following words, “if teachers are applying some disciplinary measures like detention, writing or reading work, the learners don’t obey, but not only do classroom challenges came from learners, even educators too are the cause of some of the challenges they face, they came to class without preparing well, some use provocation words on learners which necessitate counter reaction.”

In response to this question, participants have identified a variety of classroom disciplinary challenges that educators face. According to the look on their faces and the tone of their voices when they speak during the interview, one can tell that these challenges are of great concern to the participants. The mentioned challenges have negative impact on the teaching/learning process. Although the topic focus attention on disciplinary challenges in the classroom, a participant indicated that “a bulk of the disciplinary challenges are performed out of class because there is no time to supervise discipline in playgrounds and the aftermath of the causes are brought to class like revenge and the like..”

From the response of the participants, it is evident that teachers and learners face many disciplinary challenges in the classroom that affects teaching and learning negatively. It can further be acclain that classroom disciplinary challenges are not only provoked by learners but also by educators.

4.4.1.3 The need and importance of discipline in schools

Do you think discipline is important and needed in your school?

In response to this question, a participant indicated that, “We need discipline in our schools because it enhances the morality of the learners from what they have from home”. Another participant further puts it that, “We need discipline because it is the core of excellent performing schools and learners’ morality and positivity is build through discipline.”

After having identified the disciplinary challenges that educators currently face in their classrooms, participants to this study are of the opinion that discipline is important and needed in their schools so that there should be order in both classrooms and the entire school premises. Discipline is important and needed to schools as it is the corner stone for effective teaching and learning in a conducive educational environment. Participants’ responses also indicate that, as of the moment, participants are not satisfy with the degree of discipline in their schools and thus demand effective disciplinary approaches in the schools. Contrary to the dominant opinion of enforcing discipline, a participant indicated that “discipline is not important and we don’t need it in our school because it is a bad rule in all schools, people should be allowed to act freely.” This implies that learners and educators should be allowed to behave as they wish in schools and classrooms. The use of rules to enforce discipline will only lead misconduct.

4.4.1.4 Guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom

What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?

Considering the persistent nature of the above mentioned classroom discipline challenges that educators face, there is need for proper guidelines for managing discipline in the classroom. Some of challenges are natural attributes associated with children which can be managed and controlled over time with good disciplinary guidelines. Guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in schools are nationwide accepted norms from the Department of Education on how to manage discipline in schools.

Participants indicated that they are familiar with the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in classrooms though they could not mention all the policies during the interview. A participant indicated that “the national policies and acts on the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom has been summarized and used to design our school code of conduct and our classroom rules or policies for managing discipline”. Another participant further indicated that: “Our guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom is the code of conduct of learners and the rules that appear in the classroom guide.” One other participant puts it that: “Our school has a code of conduct drawn according to SASA, parents know what is expected from their children and learners are punished when they do not comply with the rules. Learners know what is expected of them.”

Participants in this study seem to have documents of the guidelines and legal framework for managing schools and are familiar with the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom. Instead of mentioning the clauses and policies of the documents, they choose to hand over to the researcher some of their documents containing the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom. This constituted the documents used during the document analysis. Therefore, the focus will be more on the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom will be dealt with in the document analysis (paragraph 4.4.2).

4.4.1.4.1 Extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline

The participants indicated that most educators are not conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline except that most of them know they are not allowed to use corporal punishment on learners. Some educators still practice corporal punishment in their classroom behind closed doors. A participant indicated that “educators are more conversant with their classroom rules and code of conduct for learners in their respective schools and not the national acts and policies on managing classroom discipline”.

In view of the responses from participants, one can therefore conclude that educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline. This is true as the classroom rules and learners code of conduct of schools which the participants indicated educators are conversant to and implement the national acts and policy on classroom and school discipline. The continuous use of corporal punishment behind classroom doors may just be acts of disobedience on the part of educators to outline legal framework on discipline and not ignorance of the legal framework.

4.4.1.5 Disciplinary strategies currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom

What disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?

Some participants to this study indicated that the disciplinary strategies currently employed in their schools are in line with the national policies and are applied in relation to classroom rules

and school rules which are drawn from the national policies. These disciplinary strategies includes supervised detention of learners after school. A participant indicated that, “because corporal punishment is not allowed, teachers use different means of punishing ill disciplined learners, e.g. cleaning of classes after school and doing homework under the supervision of the teacher”. Another participant indicated that: “We teach our learners how to behave from the early grades. We teach them how to get a turn to speak in class, how and when to interrupt the educator and how to get help. All these methods help to reduce learners’ misconduct in our classroom.” Consistent reminders to learners on classroom procedures if they are not performing them correctly, telling learners in clear terms without being hostile to stop misbehaving, making eye contact with learners who misbehave, using verbal and written warnings, and teaching learners about discipline are other strategies used to establish discipline in schools (see paragraph 2.5).

Despite the above mentioned participant’s views and experiences of positive strategies used to counter misconduct in the classrooms, some participants are of the view that educators still apply the use of corporal punishment as a strategy to counter misconduct behind closed doors of the classroom. A strategy which is against the demands of the national policy on managing schools and classrooms as it is regarded as illegal. With the following words, a participant indicated “they take a stick and beat learners who misbehave in the classroom”. Another participant mentions: “Most educators apply corporal punishment in order to discipline learners and it is illegal. Most of them do not know other measures that could be taken to discipline learners”.

4.4.1.6 Evaluation of disciplinary management strategies applied in the classrooms

Are the disciplinary management strategies applied in your school classroom successful?

Participants’ responses to this question presented mixed feelings. Some of the participants are of the opinion that the current disciplinary management strategies applied in their schools are successful to an extent and needs to be reviewed. A participant presented his view in the

following words: “Some of the strategies are successful, like the disciplinary hearings, detention and dismissal but the others are not working”. Another participant indicated that “disciplinary strategies are working for some learners and for other learners, they aren’t, they ignore them”.

Other participants are of the opinion that the current strategies used to manage discipline in their schools are not working and needs to be revisited. One participant indicated that: “Our disciplinary strategies are not working because parents do not play their role at home; they bring their children to school to be disciplined by educators for the wrongs they do at home which means they are not helping”. Another participant mentions that “the strategies are not working, the learners are punished, yet they don’t change their behaviors, we need to try something new”. An analysis of all views draw this study to the bottom line that participants are not satisfied with current disciplinary strategies being employed in their schools and suggest that they should be revised at the level of the classroom, school and nationwide.

4.4.1.7 Suggested classroom disciplinary strategies

What other successful classroom disciplinary strategies you could suggest to be implemented in the classroom?

Participants to this study are educators and learners who are directly involved with what happens in the four walls of the classroom. The researcher therefore thought they should be given a fair opportunity to make suggestions on how they might want discipline in their classroom to be managed. Participants’ responses to this question also forms part of the recommendations of this and are as follows:

In response to this question, a participant indicated: “More powers should be given to teachers to handle learners’ illdiscipline in the classroom and not only to the SGBs. The duration of detention should be increased. Punishment for misconduct should also include punishment such

as cleaning the toilet and garden work for longer hours, sweeping of classes during break and after school, doing extra school work or doing assignments. Extreme ill-disciplined learners should be given leadership roles to perform in the classroom like checking whether classrooms and windows are locked after school. Another participant indicated: "Impose penalties privately - this will get parents also to work towards maintaining learners' discipline. For homework not done, learners should be given written reminder and a warning which will be entered in the black book (book to register learners' ill-discipline warnings). After three warnings, learners should be detained or the learner should stay out of class and complete the homework because if he/she is allowed in class, he/she may copy from others."

Moreover, a participant further indicated that: "Giving of awards to good, well-disciplined learners during meetings and in classroom is better done regularly, like monthly. Counseling of ill-discipline learners; discussing the problem or misbehavior calmly and politely and if the misconduct persists, they must be taken to school management for disciplinary hearings or be expelled. Teachers must not always compare learners to other learners and must not use nasty words to learners like 'you are stupid'."

4.4.2 ANALYSIS OF OBSERVATION DATA

The researcher visited the research sites (the two participating schools) several times to observe the actual sites, performance of classroom discipline management and to find out the classroom discipline challenges as they occur and the actions or strategies used by educators to handle such learner misconduct. The following observations were noted from the research sites:

4.4.2.1 Classroom disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators

Data from this study indicate that research sites educators experience different types of classroom disciplinary challenges on a daily basis. These challenges are indicated below:

Late coming: At all the lessons observed in the participating schools, a number of learners arrive late especially during the first period and after break time each day.

Absenteeism: From a cross-check of number of learners in the class list of the participating schools and class, and the number of those present in class during the period of observation which normally lasted the whole lesson, it was observed that the number of the learners names on the list outnumbered the learners present in class on all the lessons observed on daily basis. This is an indication that learners are absenting from lessons or classes. It has also been observed that these learners are frequently absent without informing educators and without letters from parents providing reasons for their absenteeism.

Incomplete task/homework and homework not done: During the observation period, some learners were victims of incomplete classroom tasks and homework when educators checked on their assignments. Throughout the observation, five learners (three from school A and two from school B) were involved in not doing their homework entirely.

Classroom disruption: Learners in some research sites cause minor and less annoying classroom disruption such as talking to a friend while the teacher is presenting a lesson, requesting to visit the toilet, seeking attention through minor complains, minor movements and/or engaging in a different activity.

Dishonesty: Two learners were found doing their assignments in class in the morning of the submission date. To make matters worse, they were copying from another student's work. Also, a good number of desks at all the participating schools and classes were found to have drawings

and inscriptions relating to some learning areas. The learners use these drawings during class test or examination.

Obscene language: Learners from all the participating schools and classes were heard using certain jargons or obscene language with one another. An educator was also observed to be using assaulting words on learners like “you are stupid”, “you are mad”.

Theft: In all the classrooms of participating schools visited, a number of learners complained of missing items such as pens, rulers, books and launch box. One learner reported missing money.

Vandalism: Vandalism in all schools is a major problem. In all the participating schools and classrooms, broken windowpanes, broken doors, damaged door handle, broken chairs and desks are all testimony of a high rate of vandalism in classroom.

Fighting: In to classrooms of one of the participating school visited, two learners were involved in a fight during the lesson on account of one accusing the other of having stolen his pen. On the other case, two boys result to fighting in class on account of one accusing the other of smacking him during break and ran away, so he choose to sought revenge in class and it resulted in a fight between the two.

4.4.2.2 Disciplinary strategies currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom

Disciplinary challenges in the classroom such as late coming, bunking classes, incomplete task/assignment/projects, dishonesty and classroom disruption at all the participating schools and

classrooms visited, were handled and dealt with by the educators who used the classroom rules as guidelines for discipline.

The educators of the observed classrooms where learners were victims of misconduct used the following disciplinary strategies:

- Verbal warnings;
- gave extra classroom work or additional task;
- supervise detention;
- not allowing learners to participate in extra-curricular activities; and
- denying the learners from accompanying other learners during school trips and offer of manual work cleaning and picking of papers around the campus.

4.4.2.3 Guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom

In all the classrooms of the participating schools observed, classroom rules were written and pasted on the walls of the classes, while each learner also had a copy of it. The classroom rules are well communicated to all the learners who seemed to be very aware of the rules. The classroom rules were in line and reflected the demands of the code of conduct for learners and the school policies and the South African School Act. The classroom rules served and acted as the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline the classrooms of the participating schools.

4.4.3 ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

Document analysis according to Briggs and Coleman (2007:281), as indicated in Chapter three, is a form of qualitative research that requires the researcher to locate, collect, interpret, analyse

data and draw conclusions that either describe, interpret, or explain what has occurred from written documents.

In this study, the researcher scrutinized and analysed the South African School Act on disciplinary procedures in schools and guidelines for the consideration of governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners, school policies, and code of conduct for learners and classroom rules, in attempt to respond to the research question raised.

4.4.3.1 South African School Act

All the participating schools have copies of the South African School Act which explains the disciplinary procedures to be applied in schools (both public and private school) and the guidelines for the consideration of the governing bodies in adopting a code of conduct for learners in schools and possibly extending to the classrooms (see appendix E).

4.4.3.2 School rules (policy)

All the schools have rules and regulation documents which included the schools' vision statement and mission statement (see appendix F paragraph 6). The school policies also indicate school times, uniform and payable fees. It also highlights the management and administration of the school, admission to the school and requirements for admission. Most importantly, the school policy has the code of conduct for learners which indicate the general rules of learners, punctuality, attendance and absenteeism, behavior, toilets, schools buildings and playgrounds, learners and peers.

4.4.3.3 Learners' code of conduct

All the participating schools have a learners' code of conduct as required by SASA. The learners' code of conduct were formulated and adopted by the SGBs of the respective schools

according to the guidelines for consideration in adopting code of conducts for learners as in SASA. The participating schools' codes of conduct indicate minor and serious types of misconduct and measures and procedures of handling misconduct within the school and classroom (see appendix F paragraph 6.1-6.60). A code of conduct is central and crucial to the management of discipline. Codes of conduct vary in the manner in which the mentioned acts of misconducts are handled.

According to the code of conduct for learners, the following points related to discipline and management thereof in the classroom were identified. These include general rules as every classroom must have its rules drawn by the class teacher who will be guided by other rules in the code of conduct, e.g, all learners are expected to be in class at all times, parents are expected to write letters of permission or come to school to report about the child who was or will be absent (cf appendix F,6.2), truancy, fighting, stealing, not writing in class, not doing homework, using vulgar words, bullying, stubbornness, haziness, sexual harassment, noise making, etc. (cf appendix F, 6.3).

4.4.3.4 Classroom rules

Classroom rules of all the participating schools are pasted on the wall corners of the classroom. It seems as if learners of each classroom have copies of their classroom rules. The clauses on the classroom rules appear to be depicted from the learners' code of conduct as stipulated in the school policy. All the clauses on the classroom rules are in the learners' code of conduct but are in simpler terms in the classroom rules for easy interpretation and understanding and are interpreted to reflect practical happenings in the classroom and not the entire school.

4.5 SUMMARY

This chapter analysed the presentations and discussions of data collected through empirical research methods. The researcher presented and discussed the data in sub-topics related to the categories derived from the research questions through an open coding analysis.

The next chapter will provide synthesized findings and recommendations in relation to the findings and conclusion to the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The previous chapter presented and discussed research data from qualitative research in line with research questions. This chapter will present and highlight integrated findings in relation to research findings as well as recommendations to interested parties, in particular, the classroom educators of participating schools. The recommendations will be made in combination with views from the literature review, as well as the view points of participants and the researcher.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

In the introduction of Chapter one (cf 1.1), the researcher gives a short overview of the sections that are addressed in this chapter. It also indicated classroom disciplinary challenges and related strategies to counter them as it forms a large part of the problem in this study and this seems to be particularly relevant in classrooms today. The background of the problem (cf 1.3) was discussed relating to as far back as with the abolishment of corporal punishment as a disciplinary strategy for learner's misconduct in the classroom. As a result of that dramatic change in South Africa, managing discipline in the classroom has also changed dramatically as most educators are still not comfortable of alternative strategies to manage discipline in the classroom.

The study aimed (cf 1.7) at investigating the phenomenon of managing classroom discipline in Ngaka Modiri Molema District and to determine the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline in this District. The study tried to determine strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom and then stated and described disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators in the classroom.

Recommendations were made and guidelines presented on the findings of the study with regard to managing classroom discipline.

In order to solve the problem, a qualitative research methodology (cf 1.8.1) was followed in which participants were purposefully selected from two schools to participate in the study. Three data collection techniques (cf 1.8.3) i.e. interviews, observation and document analysis were used to collect data in this study. Ethical considerations, which should be considered in conducting this research, were discussed in Chapter 1.11.

In chapter two, the literature study of managing classroom discipline as outlined in Chapter one, was supported by a literature review in relation to classroom discipline in general (cf 2.2) and included an analyses of the nature and categorisation of disciplinary problems in classrooms. Learner's misbehaviour was reviewed in detail in (cf 2.4) under causes that contribute to disciplinary problems in classrooms. As this study was conducted in the specific context of school policies, there was need to (cf 2.5) review the legal framework for managing classroom discipline. Paragraph 2.5.1 shed light on school rules and policies, paragraph 2.5.2 shed light on the South African School Act, Act 84 of 1996, and 2.5.3 focused on the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. Focus was on how these policies guide the management of discipline in the classroom. With all this information reviewed, solutions have to be found to prevent and manage classroom discipline by applying a legal framework in the class.

In Chapter three, the qualitative research design was described in detail (cf 3.2) and the research strategy was mentioned (cf 3.2.2). The population of the study which was purposefully selected was discussed in paragraph 3.2.3. The role played by trustworthiness and validity in qualitative research, and the achievement thereof, was mentioned in paragraph 3.3.

The chosen method of data collection was in-depth individual interviews with educators and learners, observation of discipline management in the classrooms and analysis of documents

which conform to managing discipline in classrooms in schools in South Africa (cf 3.2.5). The collected data were analysed through open coding (cf 3.2.6).

Chapter four presents presentation and interpretation of data. The code descriptors used for analysing the data are explain in paragraph 4.3. The data collected from interviews, observations and document analysis with the reflection made by the researcher is categorised according to four research questions namely (cf 4.4):

- Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators?
- What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom?
- What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?
- Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?

From the above mentioned questions, themes were formed under which the findings of the research were discussed. The first theme was current understanding and practice of the concept “managing classroom discipline” in schools, the second theme was classroom disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators. The third theme was guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom. The fourth theme was the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline. The next theme was disciplinary strategies currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom. The next theme was evaluation of current disciplinary management strategies applied in the classrooms. The next theme was suggested classroom disciplinary strategies.

5.3 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section combines significant data from the literature review in Chapter two with categories of themes that emerged from interviews, observation and analysis of documents during the study. The findings relate to managing classroom discipline in schools within the Mahikeng Area Project Office of the North West Province.

5.3.1 The concept 'managing classroom discipline' in schools

Findings from the research indicated that participants understood the concept "managing classroom discipline" in their school's classrooms. Educators and learners indicated to be aware of and apply the root meanings attached to the concept of discipline in their respective schools. The responses centred on the way in which the code of conduct for learners and educators is enforced in schools with the aim of establishing a purposeful learning climate in the classroom. Discipline was referred by participants to mean a child or adult must behave well at school and everywhere, even to an adult. The concept discipline was also attributed to "respect and kindness, good learner behaviour within the classroom, at school and at home, good conduct, respect for oneself and others in school." Classroom discipline is seen as creating and maintaining a learning atmosphere in which teachers can teach and learners can learn in an environment that encourages respect for teachers and classmates (cf 2.2). In a nutshell, discipline according to the findings of the study, refers to the behaviour expected of learners in school that enhance learning and for learners to concentrate in class through guidance and motivation (cf 4.4.1.1). Participants also regarded school discipline as the creation and maintenance of normal teaching and learning atmosphere through the formulation, implementation and observance of learners' code of conduct by teachers, learners and parents. It further involves the training and correcting of the character and behaviour of learners, aiming at producing self-controlled, self-respecting, obedient, responsible, accountable and committed learners (cf 2.2).

In classifying learners' behaviours in schools that were considered as ill-discipline, the study concluded that lack of discipline was identified to be problems that occur when learners' behaviours are at cross-purpose with educator's expectations and classroom rules (cf 4.4.1.1). Disciplinary problems are merely inappropriate behaviours (cf 2.2). Also, a small degree of disruptive behaviour is most likely to be visible from classroom educators and other teachers. Undisciplined behaviour is when learners or educators behave contrary to the school policy and classroom rules (cf 4.4.1.1.1).

With the knowledge and understanding of the concept "managing classroom discipline", participants to this study are of the opinion that well managed discipline is important and needed in their schools so that there should be order in both classrooms and the entire school premises. They believe that classroom and general learner discipline enhances the morality of the learners from what they have from home. They expressed the view that effective classroom discipline management is the core of excellent performing schools, learners' morality and positivity is build through discipline (cf 4.4.1.1.1).

Discipline is important and needed in schools and classrooms as it is the corner stone for effective teaching and learning and for a conducive educational environment. Findings to the study reveal that participants are not satisfied with the degree of classroom discipline management in their schools and thus demand effective disciplinary approaches. Contrary to the above popular opinion, some participants' belief that discipline is not important and needed in school because it is a "bad rule" in all schools full of challenges, rather, people should be allowed to act freely as they know what is good for them (cf 4.4.1.3).

5.3.2 Classroom disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators

Participants in this study admitted to varying forms of persisting ill discipline at their respective classrooms that are currently challenging educators (cf 4.4.1.2). They indicated some acts of misconduct such as displaying inadequacy, power seeking, attention getting, revenge seeking,

learners not doing their schoolwork, absenteeism, disruption of classes by noise making, learners not doing their home work, learners bullying fellow learners and even educators, moving in and out of the class without permission, “like going to the toilet without permission”, coming late to class, playing in the classroom, disrespecting teachers, using assaultive words to one another and even to teachers, lack of corporation in class especially during group work. When teachers are applying some disciplinary measures like detention, writing or reading work, the learners don’t obey, but not only do classroom challenges come from learners, even educators too are sometimes the cause of some of the challenges they face as they sometimes came to class late and without being well-preparing. Some teachers also use provocation words on learners which necessitate counter reaction (cf 4.4.1.2). In summary, the following four categories of classroom discipline seem to be very evident in the South African school situation: Verbal and physical aggressive acts, immorality, class disruption, and defiance of authority (cf 2.2.1-2.2.4).

Despite the focus of attention of disciplinary challenges in classroom, a bulk of the disciplinary challenges are performed out of class because there is no time to supervise discipline on playgrounds and the aftermath of the causes are brought to class in a form of revenge (cf 4.4.1.2).

5.3.3 Guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom

Considering the persisting nature of the above mentioned classroom discipline challenges that educators face, and as some of them are natural attributes associated with children, they can only be managed and controlled over time with good disciplinary guidelines. Therefore, there is need for guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom, which also are made available nationwide.

The literature review revealed that there are nationwide guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in schools as embedded in SASA (cf 2.4). Participants indicated to be

familiar with the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in classrooms though they could not mention all the policies during the interview (cf 4.4.1.4). The national policies and acts on the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom has been summarized and used to design school code of conduct and classroom rules or policies for managing discipline (cf 2.4.1). The guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom is the code of conduct of learners and the rules that appear in the classroom guide. Most schools have a code of conduct drawn according to SASA, parents know what is expected from their children and learners are punished when they do not comply with the rules. Learners know what is expected of them. Educators and learners indicated to have and know the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom and choose to hand over to the researcher some of their documents containing the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom (cf 4.4.1.4).

5.3.4 Extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline

Findings from interviews and observations indicated that most educators are not very conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline except for the fact that they know they are not allowed to use corporal punishment on learners (cf 4.4.1.5). There is doubt if educators are really conversant with the corporal punishment clause as some of them still practice it in their classroom behind closed doors. Most of the participants indicated that educators are more conversant with their classroom rules and code of conduct for learners in their respective schools but not on the national acts and policies on managing classroom discipline (cf 4.4.1.5).

It can therefore be concluded that educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline because findings from the document analysis indicate that the classroom rules and learners' code of conduct of schools, which the participants to this study indicated educators are conversant to, are drawn from the national acts and policy on classroom and school discipline. The continuous use of corporal punishment behind classroom doors may

just be acts of disobedience on the part of educators to outline the legal framework on discipline and not necessary ignorance of the legal framework (cf 4.4.1.5).

5.3.5 Disciplinary strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom

The literature review has also indicated that South Africa adopted a new, democratic constitution guaranteeing the right to dignity, equality and security for the entire citizenry (cf 2.4.3). The Department of Education followed the path of other democracies and passed legislation that outlawed the use of corporal punishment in schools and advocated alternative strategies. All forms of disciplinary measures have to be consistent with the legislative values and principles discussed in chapter two (cf 2.4.6). Currently, disciplinary measures that are inconsistent with the legislative requirements, principles and objectives, are prohibited. Every parent, educator, learner and members of the SGB at school should take into consideration constitutional obligations that the founding norms and values enshrined in the Bill of Rights placed upon them when dealing with school discipline (cf 2.4). This implies that classroom rules, learners' code of conduct, school policies and departmental policies and regulations should be enforced in line with the constitution. Schools are required to change punitive measures used to punish learners.

Findings to this study indicate that the disciplinary strategies currently employed in schools are partially in line with the national policies. They are applied in relation to classroom rules and school rules which are drawn from the national policies. Data indicate that most SGBs have drawn up and adopted learners' code of conduct after an open and democratic process of consultation and negotiation with educators, learners, and parents. Learners are compelled to abide by the code of conducts to ensure proper disciplinary process. Out of the code of conduct, educators have adopted the classroom rules that guide and manage discipline in the classroom. Educators are in charge of handling misconduct in the classroom, except in cases of severe misconduct where learners may be referred to a disciplinary committee. Because corporal punishment is not allowed, teachers use different means of punishing ill disciplined learners. All these disciplinary strategies are supposed to be in line with the national policy. These

disciplinary strategies as indicated by the participants includes: supervised detention of learners after school, cleaning of classes after school, doing of homework under the supervision of the teacher (cf 4.4.1.6).

Not only do educators use punishment as a strategy to maintain discipline every time learners are victims of ill disciplined behaviours, but they also teach learners how to be well-behaved learners from the early grades. Learners are taught how to get a turn to speak in class, how and when to interrupt the educator, how to get help. Educators provide consistent reminder to learners of classroom procedures if they are not performing them correctly, tell learners in clear terms without being hostile to stop misbehavior, make eye contact with learners who misbehave, use of verbal and written warnings, and the teaching of learners about discipline. All this has assisted to reduce learners' misconduct in classrooms (cf 4.4.1.6).

Some educators still apply the use of corporal punishment as a strategy to counter misconduct behind closed doors of the classroom. A strategy which is against the demands of the national policy on managing schools and classrooms as it is regarded as illegal (cf 4.4.1.6).

5.3.6 Evaluation of current disciplinary management strategies applied in classrooms

The findings to this study on participant's evaluation of current disciplinary management strategies in the classroom expressed mixed feelings. Some of the participants are of the opinion that the current disciplinary management strategies applied in schools are successful to an extent and needs to be reviewed. Some of the strategies are successful, like disciplinary hearings, detention and dismissal but other strategies such as detention, extra class or home work, and cleaning of class are not working effectively (cf 4.4.1.7). Some learners obey and respect the current strategies for managing discipline while others just ignore them. Therefore, there is need for revision of some current disciplinary management strategies and suggestions of some contemporary strategies which have worked for other successful schools (cf 4.4.1.7).

Other participants are of the opinion that the current strategies use to manage discipline in their schools are not working and thus, needs to be revisited (cf 4.4.1.7). Parents were cited for not playing their role at home in trying to discipline learners or curb some of the disciplinary challenges educators encounter in school which is within their power, like homework not done; they rather bring their children to school to be disciplined by educators for the wrongs they do at home which means they are not helping. Learners are punished, yet they don't change their behaviors which indicate that they are use to the punishments. Therefore, there is need to try new or different disciplinary strategies. An analysis of both participant views provide an indication that participants are not satisfied with current disciplinary strategies being employed in their schools and suggested that they should be revised at the level of the classroom, school and nationwide (cf 4.4.1.7).

5.3.7 Suggested classroom disciplinary strategies

Since participants to this study were educators and learners who are those immediately involved in what happens in the classroom, the research taught they should be given a fair opportunity to make suggestions on how they might discipline in the classroom to be managed. Participants' responses to this question, which is also part of the recommendations of this study, were as follows:

- Outlaw of corporal punishment as illegal, most learners dance with the rhythm of the cane better than any other disciplinary management strategy (cf 4.4.1.7).
- More powers should be given to teachers to handle learners' ill-discipline in the classroom and not only to the SGBs.
- The duration of detention should be increased.
- Punishment for misconduct should also include chores like cleaning the toilet and garden work for longer hours, sweeping of classes during break and after school, doing extra school work or assignments (cf 4.4.1.7).
- Extreme ill-disciplined learners should be given leadership roles to perform in the classroom, like checking whether classrooms and windows are locked after school.

- Impose penalties privately; this will get parents to also work towards maintaining learners' discipline (cf 4.4.1.7).
- For homework not done, learners should be given written reminder and a warning which will be entered in the black book (book to register learners' ill-discipline warnings). After three warnings, learners should be detained or let the learner stay out of the class and complete the homework because if he/she is allowed in class, he/she may copy from others (cf 4.4.1.7).
- Giving awards to good, well-disciplined learners during meetings and in classroom. This is better done regularly, like monthly.
- Counseling of ill-discipline learners; discuss the problem or misbehavior calmly and politely and if the misconduct persists, they must be taken to school management for disciplinary hearing or be expelled (cf 4.4.1.7).
- Elect a monitor who is very noisy to keep him/her quiet.
- Teachers must not always compare learners to other learners and must not use nasty words to learners like "you are stupid" (cf 4.4.1.7).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In this section, the researcher intends to provide recommendations to assist schools in Mahikeng Area Project Office to implement positive and effective classroom discipline management strategies.

- As has been established, the current educational dispensation requires educators to lead the process of learner discipline in the classroom. Some educators are not adequately conversant with the legislative or legal framework and guidelines for managing classroom discipline. It is therefore, imperative for individual educators to make efforts to locate the legislative documents that contain the current understanding and practice of managing classroom discipline. Educators should familiarise themselves with such legal

documents in order for them to establish and maintain positive classroom discipline management.

- The officials of the North West Department of Education (NWDE) at the area offices, and more specifically the Education Management and Governance Unit (EMGU), should distribute and make sure that schools and educators receive, customize and implement distributed legal classroom or general school disciplinary management documents. They should ensure that the entire school community is familiar with them.
- Educators should be trained in alternative strategies of managing classroom discipline. In this regard, the department should refrain from offering workshops with limited opportunities for continual support. Training strategies that include long term courses offered by accredited service providers may be implemented as a viable alternative.
- Educators should be encouraged to convey the attitude that all learners can achieve academically and behave appropriately as expected. In this regard, educators should obviously be provided with adequate resources, appropriate programmes to ensure that expectations are met. It should be understood that meeting such expectations is a responsibility all stakeholders including the learners, the school and the community.
- Learners whose parents are closely involved in their education are more likely to experience school success and less likely to become involved in antisocial activities. Educators should therefore make parents feel welcome at school, address barriers to their meaningful and active participation, keep them positively engaged in their support and address parents concerns about their children.
- It is also important that learners should feel safe when expressing their fears, and anxieties to educators. When they do not have access to caring adults, feelings of isolation, rejection, and disappointment are more likely to occur, increasing the probability of misconduct in class. Local communities can do a great deal to prevent ill-discipline of learners in schools and classrooms. Having in place safe and sound links with local communities assist children and enables educators to provide more efficient and effective services to those learners who need special support. Schools and educators should therefore have close ties to families, support services, community and the police.
- Currently, learners come to school with many different perceptions and misconceptions about school - and classroom safety. Educators therefore should reduce the risk of ill-

discipline in the classroom by teaching learners appropriate strategies for dealing with feelings, expressing anger in appropriate ways, and resolving conflicts. Educators should also teach learners that they are responsible for their actions and that the choices they make have consequences for which they will be held accountable.

- When learners are playing together, they often spend time talking about the “rules” of the game before starting to play. They talk about rules because rules provide them with a sense of expectation. They are more likely to strive to meet expectations and abide by rules when they sense that educators are consistent with rules. The development of rules should therefore, directly link to maintaining learners’ expectations both in so far as behaviour and academic excellence are concerned. The cornerstone of classroom discipline is to establish rules based on core values of the school and to ensure that learners understand the reasons for these rules.
- Attention should be given to developing school - and classroom rules. The process should provide for input by all stakeholders, particularly learners. Each learner should write a few rules; the educator should consolidate learners suggestions; agreement should be reached among learners and rules be displayed in the notice board.
- Schools should teach educators, learners and parents about alternative strategies of managing classroom discipline and possible contribution of all stakeholders to classroom disciplinary problems.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is important to conduct research on managing and motivating children in the classroom and classroom management. Tackling classroom discipline problems from the viewpoint of challenging learners and at the same time motivating them is of importance in contemporary classrooms.

The frequent recurrence of unacceptable behaviour in the classroom is a cause for concern for the whole schooling environment. The most important objective of any system in classroom management is the prevention of disciplinary problems. It is important to identify the nature of the disciplinary problems in order to effectively address the problem. Discipline ensures the safety of educators and learners and create an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Discipline must be maintained so that the culture of teaching and learning should run smoothly without any disruptive behaviour.

Today corporal punishment as a disciplinary tool is outlawed in South Africa. The outlawing of the use of corporal punishment, as indicated earlier, has some negative consequences on classroom discipline. Thus, to improve the situation, educators at times risk setting very rigid classroom rules instead of considering individual situations.

With this dilemma, it is imperative to seek proper methods to manage classroom discipline and to determine the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline. It is also of value to determine strategies currently employed by educators to establish discipline in the classroom and to state and describe disciplinary challenges currently faced by educators in the classroom in order to make recommendations and provide guidelines on the findings of the study with regard to managing classroom discipline.

In view of all the issues raised in this study, it can be concluded that educators and learners are plagued with varieties of classroom misconducts originating from learners and to some extent educators and these misconducts have direct effects on the teaching and learning process. To counter these classroom misconduct, educators are currently applying variety of classroom discipline management strategies, some of which are in accord with the legal framework and

guidelines for managing discipline in the classroom which have been summarised in the school policy and learners code of conduct and further narrowed down to classroom rules. Some educators still practice the use corporal punishment behind close door as a means of managing classroom discipline though this is consider illegal. In the light of the above statement, it may seem that educators are just conversant with few clauses in their classroom rules and school policies and not with national policies on managing classroom discipline though school policies are drawn from national policies.

Partly as the cause of some learners misconduct in the classroom is in their nature and cannot be avoided but managed, the study recommend that educators be trained by the Department of Education on proper ways to manage classroom discipline which conform with the legal framework on managing discipline nationwide and internationally. Moreover, management of classroom discipline is not the sole responsibility of teachers as is reflected in the findings of the study. Parents must also help in grooming learners at home in good behaviour and in conducting their assignment and attending of classes. These will help to reduce the rate of learners misconduct by learners.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATORS AND LEARNERS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LEARNERS

1. What is the concept discipline according to the context of your school? _____

2. How would you differentiate between student classroom behaviours that are considered to be contrary to classroom rules? _____

3. Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators in your school? _____

4. Do you think discipline is important in your school? _____

5. What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom of your school? _____

6. What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline? _____

7. Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?_____

8. Are the disciplinary strategies employed in your school classrooms in line with the demands of the Department of Education?_____

9. Are the current disciplinary management strategies applied in your school classrooms successful?_____

10. What other successful classroom disciplinary strategies could you suggest to be implemented in the classrooms of your school?_____

INTERVIEW QUESTION FOR EDUCATORS

1. What is the concept discipline according to the context of your school? _____

2. How would you differentiate between student classroom behaviours that are considered to be contrary to classroom rules? _____

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APPENDIX B

LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

NWU MAFIKENG CAMPUS

PRIVATE BAG X2046

MMABATHO 2735

SOUTH AFRICA

10TH OCTOBER 2011

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

Dear Sir/Madame;

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

I am a Masters in Educational Management (MED in EDUMAN) student studying at the North West University-Mafikeng Campus of the North West province (South Africa). I am currently conducting a research on the MANAGING CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE IN NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT of the North West province South Africa. This serves as part of the criteria for the degree of MED IN EDUMAN

Permission is hereby sought to go and conduct research in selected schools within the Mahikeng APO jurisdiction.

I hope that my request will be considered.

Thanks in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

Name: P.K. Molefe

Student number: 12725684

SUPERVISOR

Prof C. Van Wyk

APPENDIX C

PERMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE LETTERS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF CONFIRMATION OF CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS

APPENDIX E

REVIEWED DOCUMENTS (SASA)

APPENDIX F

REVIEWED DOCUMENT (SCHOOL RULES AND POLICIES)

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

INTERVIEW WITH EDUCATORS

1. What is the concept discipline according to the context of your school?

RESPONSE

“A child or adult must behave well at school and everywhere, even to an adult, if this is not done, then the child is not disciplined.” “Respect and kindness, good learner behaviour within the classroom, school and at home, good conduct, respect for oneself and others in school.” “The behaviour expected of learners in school that enhance learning to take place and for learners to concentrate in class through guidance and motivation.”

2. How would you differentiate between student classroom behaviours that are considered to be contrary to classroom rules?

“Lack of discipline is identified to be problems that occur when learners’ behaviours are at cross-purpose with educator’s expectations and classroom rules.” “Also, a small degree of disruptive behaviour is most likely to be visible from classroom educators and other teachers.”

3. Which classroom disciplinary challenges are currently faced by educators in your school?

“Display of inadequacy, power seeking, attention getting, revenge seeking, learners not doing their schoolwork, absenteeism, disruption of classes by noise making, learners not doing their home work, learners bullying fellow learners and even educators, learners moving in and out of the class without permission; like going to the toilet without permission, coming late to class, playing in the classroom, disrespecting teachers, using assaultive words to one another and even to teachers, lack of corporation in class especially during group work.” “A bulk of the disciplinary challenges are performed out of class because there is no time to supervise discipline

in playgrounds and the aftermath of the causes are brought to class like revenge and the like..”
“If teachers are applying some disciplinary measures like detention, writing or reading work, the learners don’t obey, but not only do classroom challenges come from learners, even educators too are the cause of some of the challenges they face, they came to class without preparing well, some use provocation words on learners which necessitate counter reaction.”

4. Do you think discipline is important in your school?

“We need discipline in our schools because it enhances the morality of the learners from what they have from home”. “We need discipline because it is the core of excellently performing schools, learners’ morality and positivity is built through discipline.” “Discipline is not important and we don’t need it in our school because it is a bad rule in all schools, people should be allowed to act freely.”

5. What are the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom of your school?

“The national policies and acts on the guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom has been summarized and used to design our school code of conduct and our classroom rules or policies for managing discipline.” “Our guidelines and legal framework for managing discipline in the classroom is the code of conduct of learners and the rules that appear in the classroom guide.” “Our school has a code of conduct drawn according to SASA, parents know what is expected from their children and learners are punished when they do not comply with the rules. Learners know what is expected of them.”

6. What is the extent to which educators are conversant with the legal framework for managing classroom discipline?

“Educators are more conversant with their classroom rules and code of conduct for learners in their respective schools and not the national acts and policies on managing classroom discipline.”

7. Which disciplinary strategies are currently employed by the educators to establish discipline in the classroom?

“Because corporal punishment is not allowed, teachers use different means of punishing ill-discipline learners, e.g. cleaning of classes after school, doing of your homework under the supervision of the teacher”. “We teach our learners how to be proper learners from the early grades. We teach them how to get a turn to speak in class, how and when to interrupt the educator and how to get help. All this help to reduce learners misconduct in our classroom.” “They take a stick and beat learners who misbehave in the classroom”. “Most educators apply corporal punishment in order to discipline learners which is illegal. Most of them do not know other measures that should be taken to discipline learners”.

8. Are the disciplinary strategies employed in your school classrooms in line with the demands of the Department of Education?

“YES”

9. Are the current disciplinary management strategies applied in your school classrooms successful?

“Some of the strategies are successful, like the disciplinary hearings, detention and dismissal but the others are not working”. “Yes, the disciplinary strategies are working for some learners and for other learners, they aren’t, they ignore them”. “Our disciplinary strategies are not working because parents do not play their role at home; they bring their children to school to be disciplined by educators for the wrongs they do at home which means they are not helping”. “No, the strategies are not working, the learners do the punishments given, yet they don’t change their behaviors, they are used to the punishments, we need to try something new.”

10. What other successful classroom disciplinary strategies could you suggest to be implemented in the classrooms of your school?

“More powers should be given to teachers to handle learners’ ill-discipline in the classroom and not only to the SGBs. The duration of detention should be increased. Punishment for misconduct should also include things like cleaning the toilet and garden work for longer hours, sweeping of classes during break and after school, doing extra school work or assignment. Extreme ill-disciplined learners should be given leadership roles to perform in the classroom like checking whether classrooms and windows are locked after school.” “Impose penalties privately; this will

get parents to also work towards maintaining learners' discipline. For homework not done, learners should be given written reminder and a warning which will be entered in the black book (book to register learners' ill-discipline warnings). After three warnings, learners should be detained or let the learner stay out of the class and complete the homework because if he/she is allowed in class, he/she may copy from others."

"Given of awards to good, well disciplined learners during meetings and in classroom. This is better done regularly, like monthly. Counseling of ill-discipline learners; discuss the problem or misbehavior calmly and politely and if the misconduct persists, they must be taken to school management for disciplinary hearing or expel. Elect a monitor who is very noisy to keep him/her quiet. Teachers must not always compare learners to other learners and must not use nasty words to learners like 'you are stupid'."